

Cabot School

Parent Handbook

2021-2022



**TAKE CARE OF OUR OURSELVES, TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER,
TAKE CARE OF OUR SCHOOL**

MISSION STATEMENT

To educate, prepare, and inspire all students to achieve their full potential as lifelong learners, thinkers, and productive contributors to our global society. [NPS Mission and Values](#)

Administration

The principal of the Cabot School is Mr. Eric Sprung. The front office is staffed by the secretary, Ms. Monika Nixon. They will be able to assist you if you come into the school for any reason. If you need to contact the school by telephone during school hours, the telephone number is (617) 559-9400. The office personnel are available from 8:00am to 3:30pm.

After School Programs

After School Programs take place at Cabot School and in the community. These programs are run by outside organizations and are not affiliated with Newton Public Schools. Please contact these programs directly for program and timing. Classes are offered in a variety of areas. Each program runs for several weeks and there is a nominal fee for each one.

CASP - 617-964-2749

Boys and Girls Club - 617-630-2066

YMCA Newton - 617-244-6050

Oak Square YMCA - 617-645-4509

Animal/Pet Policy

http://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browser2.html?showset=newtonset&collection=newton&documentid=193#ID_IMG

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Service Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guideline for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. In the case of the use of the service animal for a disability-related need, the Newton Public Schools will respond in a manner consistent with the applicable regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Due to safety, allergies, and student comfort level with animals, non-approved animals/pets will not be permitted in a school building or on school property; this includes the school playground, and other public areas outside of a school. This includes a pet on a leash.

Please adhere to the school committee policy on student safety in relation to animals in and around schools.

Attendance Policy/Absentee Verification Procedure

All students are expected to attend school each day that school is in session, except in cases of illness or family emergency.

1. When your child will be absent or late, it is best to use the [on-line notification system](#) by 8:00 AM which will inform the office and classroom of your child's absence or tardiness. If necessary you may call the absentee line (617-559-9390) before 8:00 AM, giving the information requested on the recording.

2. The message will be compared to the school's absentee list for that day. In the event that your child's name is on the school's absentee list and a call has not been received, we will:

a) Call your home.

b) If verification is not received from home, we will refer to the list of names you have supplied to the school on your child's emergency card and call the names in the order given to verify your child's absence.

c) If verification is still not received after the above attempts have been made, we will call the Police Department.

The absentee web link and phone line is available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. **Absence due to a prolonged illness, lice, injury requiring medical support upon return or a communicable disease should be cleared with the school nurse on readmission. A written excuse is required for all students who have been absent, tardy, or dismissed.** Children who have been absent should bring a note on the day they return. Notes for being tardy can arrive the following day.

Upon any further absences, the school may schedule a parent conference to discuss and/or investigate the issue further.

Before School Program

Cabot offers a before school program that runs from 7:20 AM – 8:10 AM. To register for this program please go on-line at <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/domain/66>.

Behavior (Student)

Discipline

One of the most important lessons education should teach is our core values: take care of ourselves, take care of each other, take care of our school. While it does not appear as a subject, it underlies the whole educational structure. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people.

We utilize the CARES program to teach our school values. In order to be successful in and out of school, students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies—cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control—and a set of academic competencies—academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.

With an understanding of the purposes of discipline in a school, the child forms a correct attitude toward it and does his/her part in making school an effective place of learning and, at the same time, develops the habit of self-restraint which will make him/her a better person. A set of NPS policies regarding consequences for infractions is available on the NPS web site here:

<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/2915>.

Goals

- To teach children that they are responsible and accountable for their behavior
- To teach children how to make decisions
- To teach children to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate behavior
- To give children an opportunity to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility for their actions
- To create a positive and non-threatening atmosphere conducive to the learning process
- To foster cooperation between parents and teachers by keeping lines of communication open between school and home
- We will emphasize positive reinforcement and teaching positive replacement behaviors.
- Students will Take Care of Themselves, Take Care of Each Other, Take Care of Our School

Expectations

It is expected that the students of Cabot Elementary will demonstrate role model behaviors while in school. There are clear expectations for all areas of the school that students are expected to demonstrate. The staff of Cabot will be taking time over the first 6 weeks of school to teach and model these behaviors for students. It is our goal that taking time at the beginning of the year to focus on behavior will create a learning environment that is safe and respectful for all learners.

Computer and Internet Usage Guidelines



The Newton Public Schools use technology as a tool in education. Students use

computers for word processing, collecting and disseminating data, and doing research. As more and more computers are being used in schools, it becomes necessary to identify the acceptable uses of technology. The Newton Public Schools Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students is located [here](#).

“Acceptable Use Guidelines” are contained in a written agreement between the Newton Public Schools and its students and staff. They outline the appropriate uses for technology in the district as well as the consequences for failure to adhere to the guidelines.

All families are encouraged to use our website for e-mail updates and pertinent information from school, PTO, School Council, and classrooms. This can be accessed through the district’s home page. You will need a password from school to set up your account.

Website ~ District home page: <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Domain/4>

Cabot’s Home Page: <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/17>

Conditions and Rules for Technology Use

As more and more computers are being used in schools, it becomes necessary to identify the appropriate uses of technology. Acceptable Use Guidelines are contained in a written agreement between the Newton Public Schools and its students and staff. They outline the appropriate uses for technology in the district as well as the consequences for failure to adhere to the guideline.

Appropriate Uses for Technology

Technology in the Newton Schools will be used in collaboration with the curriculum. Computers and other technology equipment are tools used as part of the teaching and learning process. Their use is regarded as a privilege, not a right. Students and staff will be responsible for following all conditions and rules of technology use as presented by the Newton School District. Any violation of the conditions and rules may result in revocation of technology privileges.

Consequences

Failure to adhere to the technology conditions and rules may result in the following consequences:

Revocation of access to any computer in the building

Revocation of network privileges

Revocation of network access

Possible disciplinary action

Possible legal action

Disclaimer

The Newton School District makes no warranties of any kind for the technology services provided. The District will not be responsible for repair or replacement of equipment maliciously damaged by an individual. Protection of data is the responsibility of the user. The district will not be responsible for any loss in service or data. Use of all technology and networks is at your own risk. The District is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of any information obtained through the technology or network.

Newton Public Schools - Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907692/Centricity/domain/1062/protocols%20procedures%20and%20guidelines/StudentAUPGuidelines.pdf>

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Requirements

All employees, volunteers, chaperones, as well as contractors working on school property are subject to a CORI check by the school department. Any information on the CORI report other than “no record found” will result in the individual being denied employment, volunteering, chaperoning school

activities or working on school property. Parents wishing to volunteer at the school or at any school event or activity are required to complete the CORI check every three years. Forms may be obtained in the main office.

Curriculum Night (September)

Curriculum Night parents are invited to visit their child's classroom to greet the teacher, meet the parents of their child's friends, and see the work being done in the room. In order to meet all the parents, the teacher can spend only a few minutes with each family. These visits are not meant for discussion of problems; if there is a concern, which necessitates parent-teacher discussion, this is an excellent time to make an appointment for a conference.

Debts (Student)

Students who owe the Newton Public Schools money for lost or damaged books, for vandalism damage or for any other reasons, will be expected to pay as promptly as possible.

Dismissal Policy

Cabot created a document which outlines our school dismissal policy [here](#).

Any child being dismissed early must be met by a parent or other authorized person at the school office and be signed out before leaving the building. **Any child dismissed on or before 11:30 AM will be marked absent for the day ~ except on Tuesday when a child will be marked absent if dismissed on or before 10:30 AM.**

Dress Standards

All pupils are expected to dress properly for school. The appearance of the student body is recognized as a major factor in the overall appearance of the school. Clean, neat appropriate clothes, along with the basics of good grooming, are recommended to every student in order to maintain the high standards of the school.

Students are not allowed to wear hats in the building. For health and safety reasons, students should not wear "flip-flop" sandals, rollerblade sneakers, and beach attire.

Dress for Physical Education

For the safety of each child, we require that sneakers be worn during physical education classes. It is suggested that students wear appropriate and comfortable clothing on the days they are assigned to have physical education classes.

Dropping Items off for Students or Staff

In an effort to protect instructional time and to minimize classroom disruptions, all visitors/parents must check-in at the office and leave any items for students/staff in the office. This includes homework/projects, lunches, birthday snacks, etc. Office staff will contact the students or staff to pick up the items at a time that is convenient and does not disrupt instructional time. We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this. Please review [these procedures](#) provided by Newton Public Schools.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Any pupil bringing, drinking, in possession or under the influence of alcoholic beverages in a public school or on school grounds or on a school bus shall automatically be suspended from school. Parents will be notified by phone and/or letter. A conference will be held with the parents, student and the principal. The



student is subject to possible exclusion or expulsion from school by the building principal. Any pupil bringing, carrying, taking or under the influence of illegal and/or harmful drugs or narcotics in a public school or on school grounds or on a school bus shall automatically be suspended from school and is subject to possible exclusion or expulsion from school by the building principal.

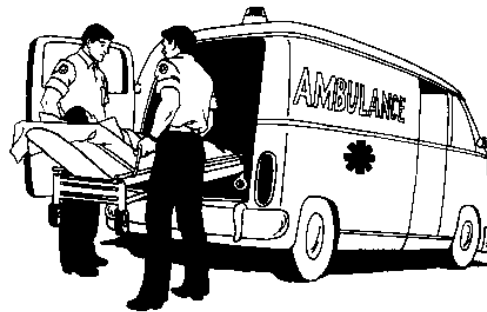
Notice of Non-discrimination

<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907692/Centricity/domain/1062/protocols%20Oprocedures%20and%20guidelines/OCR%20Approved%20Protocol%20May%202018%20revised.pdf>

Emergency Procedures

Accident Procedures

Whenever any student becomes injured in school or on school grounds, that student should immediately go to the nearest teacher or to the office and report the injury. If an injured student is not able to report an accident, the first student to learn of the accident should notify the nearest teacher or the office. **Never** attempt to move anyone who has been injured.



Fire Drill/Safety Drill Procedures

During the first day of school, teachers will explain the proper procedure of evacuating the building in the event of fire or other emergency. Fire drill procedures are posted in every classroom. Every student should become familiar with the route and exit to be used in each class. To ensure that everyone knows how to evacuate the building in the most orderly and efficient manner possible, fire drills will be held from time to time. These drills: Lockdown, Evacuation, Hostile Event, Shelter in Place are usually unannounced. Students should remember to walk out of the building quickly and without talking. Visitors in the school building or outside on the school grounds should join the nearest class group and remain with this group until the fire marshal delivers the signal to re-enter the building.

Field Trips



Student trips are planned as a significant aspect of the ongoing educational program and are considered to be an educational learning activity. Before a child may go on a school field trip, parental permission must be granted. This ensures parental attention to such factors as the student's health, possible disruption of family schedule, etc.

The school will provide supervision by teachers and parent chaperones as necessary. The PTO and/or the parents supplement transportation and admission charges in many cases, but parents

may be asked to pay admission or bus fees. Every class will have one or two trips per year with a maximum expense of \$50. If a parent is unable to pay for any fee please contact the teacher or principal. Money will not be a reason for a child not being able to attend as the school is able to support families in need.

FORJ

Families Organizing For Racial Justice is a volunteer organization run by parents. Please contact the PTO if you are interested in joining this organization. The website is [here](#).

Gifts to School Personnel

The practice of giving gifts by parents or children to members of the professional staff is discouraged in order to lessen the likelihood of hurt feelings on the part of those children who cannot afford to bring gifts. PTO room parents will share additional information regarding gifts and the MA state law for conflict of interest for public employees. <http://cabotpto.org/class-gift-giving/>

Health Program

The school nurse may be reached at 617-559-9404.

Please refer to the following information regarding the health programs of the Newton Public Schools. In addition, you may also call the school nurse with questions relating to your child's health. The school nurse will work to implement the district's Nutrition and Physical Activity Guidelines.

Screening

In accordance with state mandates, vision and hearing screenings are conducted annually. Parents are notified of problems detected by the school nurse. Students are weighed and measured each year. Postural screening is conducted for students in Grade 5. The purpose of this program is to find early signs of possible spinal problems. It is not a diagnostic service but a program to identify children who should have further medical evaluation.

Medication Policy

If any medication is to be administered by school personnel, the following requirements must be met. This includes over the counter medications such as aspirin, cough medicine, or cough drops. The administration of medication in schools are subject to the provisions of 105 C.M.R. § 210.006. The requirements include:

Written medical orders by a physician, including diagnosis, name of drug, dosage, time to be administered and possible side effects.

Written permission from parent or guardian for school personnel to administer the medication.

Medication must be in the original prescription container, clearly labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug, and prescribed dosage.

No child may transport medications to or from school. It must be brought to the office at the opening of the school day by the parent/guardian or designated adult.

Health Services

A "Nurse's Office" is located in the building and a nurse is always either in the building or on call. In addition, first aid supplies are available in the Nurse's Office, and someone in the office will administer first aid when and if it is needed. Should a student suffer any kind of injury, or if he/she simply does not feel well, the student should report to the Nurse's Office. We have Band-Aids, antiseptic, and, if necessary, a place for students to lie down.

Food in School

In an effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all students, snacks for an entire class are not allowed. During times when there are whole class celebrations students are to provide their own snack for that celebration. We follow the [Newton Public Schools Allergy Guidelines](#).

Illness

If a child demonstrates symptoms of an illness requiring dismissal from school, the parent or responsible party shall be notified. Parents are expected to make the necessary arrangements to have their child picked-up from school on the occasion their child is ill.

Tutoring while absent

If your child will be absent for more than 14 days for medical reasons, contact the school nurse or principal to discuss the procedures for obtaining tutorial service.

Homework

Aside from the immediate need to strengthen and reinforce academic learning, it is hoped that the long-range effect of homework will instill in the child the discipline, self-reliance, and responsibility of

budgeting time for independent study.

As the children progress through the upper grades, the amount of homework increases accordingly. Since assignments are based on individual and specific needs, the amount and type will vary. Most homework is due the next day. Of course, there will be times, especially in upper grades, when long-term projects are required, such as researching a topic, writing a report, or reading a book.

Tips for Parents

- Consider homework a top priority in organizing your child's time.
- Provide a quiet, well-lit area free from distractions, such as television or radio.
- Try to establish consistent routines such as a regular homework time and a designated area.
- Take an active interest in the work your child is doing.
- Provide the tools necessary to complete homework (pencils, paper, reference books, calculator, etc.).
- Limit outside activities that involve a great deal of time during the school week.
- Monitor students to ensure they are completing their homework and passing it in on time. In the case of long-term assignments, parents should help students manage their time.
- Assist students with assignments by answering questions and encouraging them without doing their work for them.
- Encourage regular visits to the library.
- Encourage reading for enjoyment. Read aloud to your child and have older children read to younger ones.
- Establish a location for the student to keep completed homework assignments so that they will remember to return them to school.

Help your children balance their homework and other activities in their daily routine. Parents should recognize that the amount of time needed to complete homework varies among students. Any concerns about homework should be shared with the classroom teacher.

Students who are absent for several days should make arrangements with their teacher to complete any missed assignments and to receive any needed extra help.

Hours

Parents are encouraged to plan their child's arrival to promptly coincide with the opening bell, which is at 8:20 AM.

School begins at 8:20 AM and ends at 2:50 PM each day with the exception of Wednesday when the school session ends at 12:20 PM for the children. The early closing every Wednesday enables teachers to participate in various workshops, planning sessions, scheduling conferences, etc. Lunch will not be served on Tuesday.

Guidelines for Parents [access into the building](#).

All doors will be locked during school hours for safety reasons. Parents and visitors must use the front entrance buzzer to enter through that door and then sign in at the office. Please do not ask teachers or children to let you in another entrance.

Library

Your child will be able to check out books and magazines from the school library and take them home. We hope that you will read and enjoy these materials with your child. Please contact the Library Media Specialist if you are interested in volunteering in the Library/Media Center.



Lost and Found

The Lost & Found container is located in the cafeteria. Small objects, which

have been found, are kept in a box in the office. Once a month the unclaimed items will be donated to charities. Families will be given notice to check the lost and found before the items are donated. Parents are encouraged to come in and look through the articles in the lost and found box at any time, after first checking in at the office. **It would aid us greatly if you could mark your child's name on the inside of lunch boxes, bags, rain coats, jackets, hats, boots, and other small articles of clothing with your child's name (but not conspicuously on the outside so that a stranger might learn your child's name).**

The school is not responsible for any lost items. It is parents' and students' responsibility to periodically check the Lost and Found for any missing items.

Lunch Programs

Nutritionally balanced lunches are available to all children at a reasonable cost. If preferred, a well-marked bag lunch may be brought to school; milk and water may be purchased separately. We currently have no cost for school lunches. Menus for the month are published on the school website and sent home to families. If your child forgets to bring his/her lunch to school, they will be provided school lunch for that day.

School lunch program [web site](#).

Lunch Tickets – Point of Sale System

The lunch program sponsored by Whitsons uses a “point of sale” (POS) system allowing parents to pay money into a student account which can be used as a debit system to purchase lunch. The lunch menu is located on NPS [website](#). The cost of lunch is \$3.30. All students are assigned a checkout card which they use to pay for lunch. Your student may pay with cash at the register. Or if you prefer, you can add funds to your child's “meal account” via check or at [MySchoolBucks.com](#), our online meal account information system. Their purchase will then be charged against this meal account. Further information on the POS system is available on the district website under [Food Services](#).



Free and Reduced Price Lunches

In September, forms concerning eligibility criteria for free milk, free meals and reduced price meals are issued to every child. Completed forms are to be returned to the office. All information is treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Rules for using the cafeteria

- Respect the space, feelings, and belongings of others so that everyone can enjoy his/her lunch. This includes using an indoor voice, kind words, appropriate language, and no “put downs”.
- Walk at all times. Please follow the traffic pattern of the cafeteria.
- Remain seated at all times until instructed by an adult to throw away trash and to be dismissed for recess.
- Raise your hand if you need assistance.
- Eat the lunch that you brought, not something from another student.
- Do not give or lend money to other students.
- Pick up all trash on, under, and around your seat.
- Raise your hand to get permission before using the bathroom.
- Remember the *Stop, Look, and Listen* signal and give your complete attention to any adult speaking to the group.

METCO

The Metropolitan Council of Educational Opportunity, Inc. (METCO), founded in 1966, is a private non-profit organization that places minority students (African-American, Asian, and Hispanic) from Boston in various suburban schools.

METCO is funded through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the Racial Imbalance Act and is the nation's oldest voluntary school desegregation program. Its mission is to provide students with educational opportunities to enrich their academic, personal and interpersonal experiences. Its purpose is three-fold: to provide educational opportunity for students of color, to provide a new learning experience for suburban children, and to promote closer understanding and cooperation between urban and suburban parents.

A key component of METCO is the Partner Parent Program. This bridges the cultural gap between the two communities, and provides Boston students with of means a participating in after school activities. Ideally, it is best to match Reading students with METCO students in the same grade, however, other options are considered.

No School Policy

It is the policy in Newton to have school on all scheduled days and for parents/guardians to decide when conditions are such that it would be unwise for their child to attend. However, when travel conditions are such that buses cannot run or the school yards cannot be opened or other extraordinary conditions exist, school may be canceled. It is also possible for the opening of school to be delayed. If a delay is announced, students should arrive at school no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the designated time. They will follow the schedule of the day and be dismissed at the regular time. The decision to cancel or delay opening will be made by the Superintendent of Schools. School cancellation announcements are made on the radio, network television, and announced through the emergency announcement system.

No School communication



Newton Public Schools has implemented a telephone messaging service called School Messenger. The service enables the district to personally communicate with parents/guardians about emergency situations, school cancellations, school events and important issues impacting your child and our schools. It allows the district to send personalized voice messages to your family's home, work and/or cell phones. It gives the Superintendent the ability to make one phone call to reach everyone in the entire district within minutes.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The purposes of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) shall be to foster a closer relationship and increase cooperation between the home and the school, thereby enriching the experiences of all children enrolled. The objectives of the PTO are to work toward enhancing communication between parents and school personnel, to complement the activities and policies of the school whenever possible, and to provide financial support for school programs.

The PTO will engage in fund-raising activities approved by the PTO Board to accomplish its objectives and to cover ordinary expenses. Some of these fund-raising activities may include book fairs, theme fairs, dues, bake sales, direct donations, walk-a-thons, silent auctions, and adult socials.

The money raised may be applied toward field trips, enrichment assemblies, classroom equipment, technology, class parties, coordinating the volunteer program, library books, safety programs, open house evenings, teacher appreciation activities, the school's PTO Newsletter, and other activities as well.

Personal Possessions

We work hard to make the Cabot School a safe and secure environment. We urge children to leave toys and items such as iPods, spinners, headphones, handheld electronic games, cell phones, skateboards, rollerblades, aluminum or wooden baseball bats, Pokeman cards, jewelry, and other valuable

possessions at home. Cell phones are not permitted to be used during the school day. If a child uses a cell phone to school it will be held in the office until a parent or guardian retrieves it from the office. Having these things at school can sometimes interfere with the learning in the class or can lead to conflicts on the playground. Toys representing weapons or violence are not to be brought to school unless a teacher gives specific permission. Students who bring valuable items to school do so at their own risk.

Photograph and Video Taping Permission

On occasion students will be photographed or videotaped at school for the local newspaper, cable channel, the school website, or some other publication. **Please indicate on the ASPEN student portal your preference for having your child photographed or videotaped.**

Newton policies, procedures, protocols

For a list of commonly referred to or utilized policies, procedures, and protocols, visit [this page](#) on NPS website.

Disciplinary Due Process

<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907692/Centricity/domain/1062/protocols%20Oprocedures%20and%20guidelines/Bullying%20Prevention%20Intervention%20Plan%20.pdf>
http://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browser2.html?showset=newtonset&collection=newton&documentid=215#JD_IICFB

Recess

Fresh air and exercise are also important for children's development and learning. Therefore, students will go outside for a brief recess at lunch time and may at the discretion of the teacher go out for another short time, about 15 minutes, during the day. This makes it important that students come to school with clothing appropriate for the outside weather conditions. This is especially true during the colder months, when a warm hat, snow pants, mittens or gloves and an insulated jacket or coat are needed. Students may also go outside to take a break, to interact socially with one another, and to get some fresh air and exercise. To ensure that everyone can have a safe and enjoyable recess period, we expect students follow the rules listed below.

Recess Rules

- Enjoy yourself in a safe manner on the playground.
- Remain within the identified recess area.
- Take care on the climbing equipment. Do not sit or stand on the monkey bars or high bars.
- Use swings as they are intended. Jumping off, standing or kneeling on, and twisting the swings are not allowed.
- Use the slide one at a time only. Be sure the person before you is completely off the slide before going down. Only use the slide in a sitting position; never walk up or climb on the slide.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Stones, sticks, sand or snow may not be picked-up or thrown.
- No aggressive or violent behavior will be tolerated.

Be kind and respectful to others:

- Say kind things to all.
- "Put-downs" are not allowed.
- Include others in your activities whenever possible.
- Share playground equipment.



- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Return the school's playground materials to your classroom at the end of the recess period.

RULES FOR THE PLAYGROUND

1. PLEASE DO NOT RUN ON THE PLAY STRUCTURE AREA
2. 1 PERSON DOWN THE SLIDE AT A TIME. REMEMBER NO DOUBLE SLIDING! DON'T FORGET ON YOUR BOTTOM AND FEET FIRST.
3. PLEASE DO NOT JUMP OFF THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT.
4. HAVE FUN!

If you notice a safety hazard or need assistance with something that occurs during recess, speak directly to an adult supervising the playground.

Student Records

Students records request is [here](#).

Report Card/Conferences

Parents are informed of their children's scholastic achievement, conduct and attendance in writing two times during the year (January and June).

Conferences in October/November and March where parents are expected to attend a conference with the teacher. Either teacher or parents are encouraged to schedule a conference whenever the need arises.

Access ASPEN to see your child's progress <https://aspen.newton.k12.ma.us/aspen/logon.do>

Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are held to explain your child's academic progress for the first marking period. We encourage all parents to make every effort to attend the scheduled conference with their child's classroom teacher. The main advantage of the conference is that it gives parents an opportunity to discover firsthand how their child is progressing and, at the same time, it encourages involvement in their education.

For those parents who cannot attend a conference at a scheduled time, every effort will be made by the teacher to reschedule the conference to a more appropriate or convenient time. It must be emphasized here that parents should not always wait for a teacher to initiate a conference. Whenever a need arises or you have an immediate concern, do not hesitate to call the school to arrange a talk with one of the teachers.

How to Prepare

In order to get the most from your conference, come prepared. Confirm the appointment time and, if at all possible, try to arrange a time when both parents can attend. Think of what you want to learn about your child from the teacher and write down specific questions. Formulating your list of questions is the most important part of your planning. Be specific; ask your child if he/she has any questions they would like you to ask the teacher.

Questions You Might Want to Ask

"Is my child doing as well as he/she should be in school?"

"May I see some of his/her work?"

"Does he/she display any particular aptitude or interests that I should encourage? --"What can I do to help him/her?"

"How is he/she getting along in individual subjects?"

"What kinds of books is he/she using?"

"Have you noticed any signs of initiative, originality, and responsibility in the classroom?"

At the Conference

Arrive promptly; do not stay any longer than the scheduled time. If you need to talk more, arrange for another conference. It is best to let the teacher take the lead; then at your first opportunity, let her/him know you have a list of questions. Keep the attention focused on your child's strengths, weaknesses,

and study habits, and how you can assist both child and teacher. Discuss any family issues that could affect your child's school performance. Listen well, and be open to suggestions from the teacher, who sees your child as a student, and who also understands your intense interest in your child. Follow-up on the conference; check back in a few weeks to see how your child is progressing. Remember that parents and teachers are working together in an educational partnership.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

As part of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 the Newton Public Schools have developed a School Council in each school. This representative group is composed of teachers, the principal, parents with children in the school, and a member of the community who does not have children at the school. The School Council is an advisory group, which has the responsibilities of identifying the educational needs of our students, developing educational goals for the school, formulating a School Improvement Plan, and reviewing the annual school budget. All meetings are open to the public.

SEPAC

<https://newtonpac.org>

The Newton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (Newton SEPAC) is an all-volunteer group of parents of children with disabilities in Newton, MA. As mandated by Massachusetts law, we provide feedback to the School Committee and school district on special education programs and policies, and participate in their planning and development.

Newton SEPAC also serves as a liaison between parents of students with special needs and school district administrators. We offer information to the community on a range of disabilities, resources, remediation approaches, and education issues. Topics presented at our monthly meetings include parents' rights under special education laws and regulations, effective collaboration with teachers and administrators, and strategies for parenting and teaching children with disabilities. Meetings are open to all parents, teachers, specialists, and others with an interest in education.

Summer Hours

Cabot School is not open during the summer months. Registration information is available on the Newton Public School [website](#). The principal and executive administrative assistant return to work a few weeks prior to the first day of school and will respond to messages upon their return.

Tardiness Policy

Any student who arrives after 8:20 AM is considered late. Any student who is late should sign in at the office before going to his/her classroom.

Being late for school hurts a child's learning. A student who is late 10 minutes every day will miss 30 hours of instruction during the year! Please make every effort to ensure that your child is on time to school every day.

Telephone Policy

The phone system and the office personnel are very busy during the day. Therefore, we do not, as a rule, allow students to use the phone except in the case of an emergency. Emergencies **do not** include things such as students phoning home to ask permission to visit a friend or to have a parent bring in homework or gym shoes for physical education classes. Students will need to make visiting arrangements before coming to school; they will need to bring required materials to school for all their classes.

Transportation – Walkers, Drop off, Bike Policy

Cabot School has a transportation and dismissal document outlining our school expectations. Please visit the following [link](#) to see our transportation routines.

Bicycle Policy

Children are required to wear a helmet (state law) and to walk their bicycles at all times when on school grounds. A bicycle rack is provided at the rear of the building and children are instructed to securely lock their bicycles to the rack. Parents are encouraged to reinforce safe riding habits: riding on the right side of the road near the edge of the pavement, walking the bicycle across the street at marked crosswalks, wearing a helmet, not riding “double”, and reminding children to always walk the bicycle on the school grounds.

Skateboard and Rollerblade Policy

Skateboarding, roller-skating, and rollerblading will not be allowed in the parking lot, on the ramps, walkways, stairs, or railings of the school. Children wearing rollerblades or roller-skates must change into shoes before coming on school grounds when arriving to or departing school. Children wishing to use rollerblades or skateboards after school must wait until the buses leave the property and stay away from the stairs and loading dock area. The parking lot remains very active throughout the afternoon and evening hours so caution and supervision are advised.

Understanding our Differences

This program is designed to provide children with the knowledge and insight to understand and be sensitive to the needs of those with disabilities whom they will meet throughout their lives in an integrated world. The program seeks to banish fear and misunderstanding through helping children understand what it might be like to have a disability and through discussions of ways to be helpful to someone who may have to do things in a different way. The program emphasizes the similarities between all people.

The curriculum covers Blindness and Low Vision, Deafness and Hard of Hearing, Autism, Physical Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, and Chronic Medical Conditions including Allergic Conditions, Asthma, Diabetes, and Epilepsy.

If you would like to learn about ways you can assist when we visit your child's classroom, or about other ways to help with the program, please contact the PTO.

Vacations

Families are strongly urged to plan vacations during designated school breaks (December, February, and April) and not extend vacation periods. Consistent attendance is a key factor in academic success. Should a parent choose to keep a student out of school for reasons other than illness or extenuating family circumstances, teachers will provide the normal range of assistance upon the student's return to school. However, it will be the responsibility of the student to ensure the make-up of all necessary work. Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments to students, and the school and individual teacher(s) are not required to assume responsibility for providing individual tutoring or extensive individual help for the student when he/she returns. The teacher will identify a reasonable timeframe during which the work must be made up. **Please make every effort to ensure your child will not be on vacation during MCAS testing. The schedule will be available on our website once dates are confirmed.**

Visitation Policy

Cabot School welcomes visitors. Anyone wishing to visit the school is encouraged to make an appointment through the office. This way, someone can be available to show you around and teachers can be notified so that student learning will not be unduly interrupted. When you come to visit the

school, even briefly, please first introduce yourself at the office, sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge. Please return the badge and sign-out before leaving the building. Please schedule appointments to meet with school staff as well. The teachers have numerous demands each day on their time so we respectfully ask that you do not "drop in" to talk during the school day.

School Volunteers

Parent volunteers are valued members of the Cabot Community. They provide support in and out of the classroom, enhancing education of the student, and assisting the classroom teacher. During the 2021-2022 school year this routine is amended to align with COVID school committee policy. Parents may assist in some of the following activities:

At the school:

- Listening to children read aloud
- Working with small groups of children
- Performing simple clerical tasks
- Photocopying for staff
- Assisting with the publishing room
- Assisting with the writing process
- Holding book discussion groups
- Helping with plays and musicals
- Monitoring children in the cafeteria and at recess
- Assisting with technology
- Sharing a special talent or expertise

At home:

- Stapling
- Cut and paste activities
- Organizing classroom projects.

Please let your classroom teacher know if you are interested in volunteering within the school. Please see the school nurse for information. Volunteers must also complete a CORI form through the office. As volunteers and parent representatives, it is important to maintain **a high level of confidentiality** in and out of the school environment. All volunteers and visitors to the building are required to sign in at the office, wear a visitor badge, and sign-out upon leaving.

51A Reporting system

A 51A is a report of suspected child abuse or neglect that is filed with the Department of Social Services. Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis. So that all staff are aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect, and the Principal, on a yearly basis, informs all professional staff of their obligations to report cases of child abuse and neglect as specified in M.G.L. Chapter 119, §51A-51F and M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37L.

