

Zervas School Family Handbook

2022-2023



30 Beethoven Avenue Waban, MA 02468

School Office: 617-559-6750

School Nurse: 617-559-6755

Absentee call in line: 617-559-6760

Dear Zervas Families,

Welcome to a new year at the Zervas School! Zervas is an exciting environment where we truly believe in the importance of a cooperative partnership between home and school to support the learning and development of all of our students. The collaborative efforts of the Zervas parents and teachers have created a community where high academic achievement and commitment to excellence in all areas is an expectation.

The curriculum at Zervas is rich and exciting. Throughout the years our students develop their academic as well as social skills. As fluent readers, students will have a strong understanding of and the ability to critically analyze what they read. Students will learn to write clearly, competently, and with style for a variety of audiences and purposes. In mathematics, we expect our students to become efficient and accurate problem solvers as they develop their skills in computation, analytic and visual-spatial reasoning, and critical thinking. Through their study of science and social studies students will expand their knowledge of the world; observing and thinking as they develop and test hypotheses based on real and authentic interactions with their environment. We expect our students to develop the social skills necessary to work well with others, to understand and respect differences, and to make a positive contribution to their school and community. Most of all, we hope that students leave Zervas with a true love of learning, curious about the world, and with the skills and the desire to make a positive difference in their school, community, and in the world.

This handbook will familiarize you with some of what happens on a daily basis at Zervas School. We hope it helps answer all of your questions about our school community. We urge you to read the handbook thoroughly, and visit our school and PTO websites for up to date information about our programs and policies. These will also introduce you to the PTO and the countless ways this organization supports teaching and learning at Zervas. We encourage all families to become actively involved at Zervas by staying informed about school activities, reading the PTO's newsletters, coming to as many PTO functions as you can and joining a PTO Committee. Your child's educational experience will be enhanced by your involvement.

We are excited about the coming school year. We look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Regards,

Diana Beck, Principal, and the Zervas School Faculty

All About Zervas

Zervas School Vision Statement and High 5

The Mission of the Newton Public Schools is to educate, prepare, and inspire all students to achieve their full potential as lifelong learners, thinkers, and productive contributors to our global society.

The **Zervas High 5** exemplifies the vision for our students, staff, and families to care about each other and the world, and help each other learn and feel successful. These values help us to guide our teaching, learning, and interactions with each other. By always striving to keep the High 5 in the forefront of our minds, we will create a school culture that is safe, nurturing, and conducive to learning.

Zervas High 5:

- Choose Kind
- Aim High
- Work Hard
- Think First
- Be Flexible



School-Wide Rules and Expectations

Creating a culture of positive behaviors can be achieved by establishing routines and norms. Teachers follow principles of Responsive Classroom to develop a positive school culture, establish routines, norms and rules, and build a classroom community that welcomes and respects all members.

These Responsive Classroom principles are followed throughout the school and allow students and teachers to use common language and expectations when interacting with one another. To this end, a set of rules for expected behavior is detailed for specific common areas- playgrounds, bathrooms, hallways, buses, and lunchtime. The general rules and common area rules are:

Throughout the School

- Follow directions
- Welcome others
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Speak respectfully
- Respond to all school signal

Hallway

- Walk safely
- Walk quietly
- Stay to the right

Stairs

- Walk safely
- Walk quietly
- Step on each stair
- Stay to the right

Water Fountain

- Follow hallway expectations
- 5 count turns ("5...4...3...2...1...Done")

Bathrooms

- Use toilets appropriately (Remember to flush)
- Use sinks appropriately (Wash hands, turn off water, throw out trash)
- Return to your classroom quickly

Cafeteria

- Eat your own food politely
- Stay seated
- Raise your hand if you need help
- Clean up your space

Playground

- Play safely
- Include others
- Take turns
- Return all equipment

Buses

- Wait safely for bus
- Stay in your seat
- Use quiet voices
- Wear your seatbelt
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Follow directions of adults in charge
- Keep the bus litter-free

By learning and reflecting upon our school expectations, students will develop a sense of community, confidence, and accomplishment; learn to take risks; make and learn from mistakes; and ultimately embody the skills needed to be active and responsible members of society.

Feeling safe and secure at Zervas allows students to be successful learners and active participants in education. In order to do this, staff and families practice and articulate clear, consistent and meaningful expectations, and logical consequences.

Students learn to be responsible for their own actions. All staff model, explain, and teach the desired school-wide expectations, support students as they learn to internalize these expectations, and implement logical consequences as they are needed.

Basic Information

Zervas School Within The Newton School System

The Frank Zervas School, named in honor of our first principal, is one of 15 elementary schools in Newton. Originally built in 1954, Zervas started as a one-floor school with 16 classrooms, housing an average of 320 students and 50 staff. Rebuilt in 2017, Zervas currently has 24 classrooms and ample learning and programming spaces, with an enrollment of more than 420 students and 90 staff. Zervas is home to the southside district STRIDE program for students with significant communication disorders. After fifth grade, Zervas students attend Oak Hill Middle School for grades 6-8 and Newton South High School for grades 9-12.

All schools are part of the Newton School Department under the direction of the Newton School Committee. The Newton School Committee sets policies, decides on an operating budget, maintains school buildings, and appoints the Superintendent. The eight members of the School Committee, one from each ward, are elected at large, are non-salaried, and serve for a maximum of four consecutive two-year terms. The Mayor is the ninth voting member, ex-officio. The Mayor and City Council set the budget amount available to the schools and make final approval of costs and capital expenditures.

Regular meetings of the Newton School Committee are generally held at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday evenings of each month, from September through June at the Education Center, 100 Walnut Street, Frazier Room 210 Newtonville. They are cablecast live on New TV (see page 8.)

You can contact the School Committee by writing to Chair, Newton School Committee, 100 Walnut Street, Newton MA 02460, or via email at schoolcommittee@newton.k12.ma.us. There is also a link to the School Committee on the NPS website – www.newton.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee.

School Hours

School doors opens at 8:10 am with arrival time between 8:10-8:20. Students who arrive after 8:20 are considered tardy. Those who arrive prior to 8:10 must wait outside until the first bell rings to enter the school. *There is no adult supervision available outside prior to 8:10. Students should not be dropped off early unless they are enrolled in the Early Morning Program.* Students arriving after the second bell at 8:20 are considered late and must sign in at the office. The dismissal times are as follows: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday dismissal is at 2:50 and on Wednesday dismissal is at 12:20.

Early Morning Program

The Newton Public Schools offers an Early Morning program for students in grades K through 5 in each of the elementary schools. The program provides a needed service by giving parents the

opportunity to bring their children to school prior to the beginning of the regularly scheduled school day. Within the program, each elementary school offers supervised before-school care from 7:20am until 8:10am when the school day begins. You may choose a single day of the week, multiple days, or all of the days of the week. It is important to note that once you have chosen your days, you may not change them without the consent of your school principal and program directors. Interested families can find more information, register online, or download an application on the Newton Public Schools website at <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/feebasedprograms>

Absence/Lateness

If your child will be absent or late, you must notify the school by calling the Zervas Absentee Line at 617-559-6760 before the opening bell. Please provide the following information:

- Your child's name
- Your child's teacher
- Dates/times and reason of absence or lateness

A child who is late to school must sign in at the office before going to the classroom. Attendance is taken in each classroom at 8:20. If your child is not in school and you have not called the absentee line or notified your child's teacher, the school secretary will call your home for an explanation of the absence. In the case of an anticipated absence, such as for an appointment or vacation, please notify your child's teacher in writing in advance. In addition, you may call the Absentee Line with this information when you know it. Children arriving after 8:20 are marked tardy.

Early Dismissal

If you need to have your child dismissed early, you can update this information in our on-line School Dismissal Manager system or email/call the school office or your child's teacher providing the date and requested time of departure. Please call the office when you are on your way and we will have your child waiting for you in the school office. You will need to make an entry in the Sign-Out Log. As part of Zervas' Safe Dismissal program, the school will not release children during the school day except to a parent or to another adult designated by the parent in writing or by a call to the office. The school cannot release your child to another parent or adult unless we have a note.

Regular Dismissal

At dismissal, all students are escorted to the designated bus, pick up area, blue-zone area or ZASP. All students should be aware of their dismissal plans prior to coming to school in the morning. Parents can manage their student's dismissal plans through our on-line School Dismissal Manager system. Please enter all changes by 11:00 each day. We are able to accommodate last minute changes to your child's plans in the event of an emergency, but please understand that our office is a busy place and it may be difficult to ensure that messages regarding any changes get to children in a timely manner.

Busses/Vans: Based on where you live, some students are eligible to ride the school bus/van to and from school. All children riding the bus must have a bus pass. Please visit <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/214> for more information and to apply for a bus pass. If your child is riding a bus/van, teachers will ensure that they get to their designated bus/van.

All students are expected to follow the expectations of our Bus Safety Pledge.

School Bus Pledge

I agree to ride the bus SAFELY.

- I will stay seated until I arrive at my final destination.
- I will wear my seatbelt at all times.
- I will talk in a soft quiet voice.

I agree to show RESPECT on the bus.

- I will listen to my bus driver and follow the rules.
- I will put my backpack on the floor in front of me.
- I will keep my hands and feet to myself.
- I will help other students and use kind words at all times.

Parents should discuss with their children the need to cooperate with the bus driver and follow these expectations for the safety of all concerned. Please refer to the Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook for specific information on consequences.

Pick-Up Area: If you are picking up your child, please park in the designated parking spots outside of the Blue Zone and meet your child at the appropriate location for your child's grade. The parking lot is not available to parents. Please do not enter the Parking Lot area during arrival or dismissal times. If you are late for pick-up, your child will be sent to the main office to wait for you.

Blue Zone: The Blue Zone is a designated area located on Beethoven Avenue (indicated by a painted blue line on the sidewalk), designed to serve as a ***live drop off and pick up area for students in grades 2-5 who can independently exit and enter the car.*** Parents and guardians using the Blue Zone may not leave or park their cars. Students using the Blue Zone at dismissal will wait at the front of the Blue Zone line and staff will guide them to the appropriate car as it moves up in the line.

ZASP: If your child is attending ZASP after school, the classroom teacher will take your child to the cafeteria to meet ZASP staff.

"No School" Announcements

When school sessions are canceled or delayed, you will receive an automated phone call early in the morning from the Newton Public Schools. Announcements are made over local TV and radio stations. AM radio stations. You may also log on to www.newton.k12.ma.us. Please do not call Zervas or the Newton School, Fire, or Police Departments. If a "delayed opening" is announced, normal school procedures apply, allowing for the one- or two-hour delay.

Visitors During School Day

Parents and volunteers visiting during the school day to participate in scheduled volunteer opportunities and other classroom events or meetings must come to the office to sign in and wear a visitor badge while they are in the building. For security, all doors will be locked starting at 8:20. Visitors need to ring the bell, be identified, and be buzzed in to enter the building during the day. You may be asked to present identification. Please realize that our office staff consists of one person with responsibilities that sometimes require them to be out of the office. You may need to wait for a response at the front door.

Communication/Deliveries for Staff and Students

If you wish to contact a staff member, you may call the office during school hours and leave a message. Your call will be returned in a timely manner. Please remember that teachers are busy with students during the school day. E-mail messages to staff are welcome at any time and allow staff to contact parents at a time that is convenient for both parties. If the message to the teacher is time-sensitive, a call to the office is preferred, as teachers often do not have time during the day to check emails.

We encourage families to make adequate plans for their child each day and make sure children are prepared for the day before leaving school. However, if parents need to deliver an item (e.g., lunches, musical instruments) during the school day, they must bring them to the school office and drop them off at our "Drop-Off Table", located in the front office. Any item that is dropped off will be delivered to your child within a timely fashion. Parents are not permitted to deliver items directly to their child's classroom as this may interrupt instruction.

Lunch at School

All children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 eat lunch at school every day, except Wednesdays. Students have the option of bringing lunch from home or choosing lunch from the school lunch program. Lunch menus are posted on the Food Services website monthly. For more information, visit <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/799> or call the Food Service Director at 617-559-6315. For the 2022-2023 school year, the first lunch for each child is free of charge for all families. Second lunches and snacks have costs associated with them.

A Lunch Manager and two attendants administer the lunch program. Students eat lunch in the cafeteria and are supervised by the lunch attendants.

Snacks

Every class has snack time either in the mid-morning or mid-afternoon. We strongly encourage students to bring in a healthy snack every day to sustain them until lunch or until school dismissal. Fruit, cheese, crackers, and other such items, plus a drink such as water or juice, are healthy choices. Make sure the snack does not contain nuts if your child is in a "nut free" classroom. All K and grade 1 classrooms are "nut free". Grade 2-5 classrooms are "nut free" as deemed necessary for specific students.

Daily Recess

Students at Zervas enjoy recess on a daily basis. In good weather, children normally have two outdoor recess periods each day (one on Wednesdays). Classroom teachers and/or lunch attendants supervise students during recess. All students need to be dressed appropriately for the weather. During the winter, students with snow pants and boots will be allowed in the snow; otherwise students can play on the black top areas of the playground. If physical activity should be limited, for example due to illness or injury, please contact the nurse or office with an explanation.

Valuables

The school is not responsible for any valuables brought to school, although reasonable care is taken to protect children's belongings. If your child brings money, iPods, tablets, phones, or other such valuables to school, they should be entrusted to the care of the teacher until the end of the day.

Lost and Found

All students' clothing and personal items should be labeled, and children are responsible for their own possessions. The lost and found is located in bins in the cafeteria. Small items found such as glasses or jewelry are given to the school secretary for safekeeping. Several times a year, all lost and found items are put on display for students to look through. Any unclaimed clothing is donated to charitable organizations.

Homework Expectations

Rationale: The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills learned at school by providing practice at home. This helps families understand the learning that's happening in school. In addition, homework helps students learn routines at home to be responsible students and develop time management skills.

Time Allotments & Types of Homework: The time allotted will increase gradually from grade to grade. The guidelines below should remain flexible. Individual differences among children may be taken into consideration by families and teachers.

Grade Level	Daily Expectations
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read to child approximately 15 minutes a night• Interact with child, converse about work that is sent home and information in newsletters
First grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 minutes total (including 10 minutes of reading)• Literacy academic choice weekly packets (adult initialed)• Math & science HW as needed
Second grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30 minutes total (including 20 minutes of reading)• Literacy and math academic choice weekly packets (adult initialed)
Third grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40-50 minutes total (including 20 minutes of reading)• Reading and Math Log• Weekly spelling, reading responses and choice of selection
Fourth grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50-60 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading)• Literacy and Math nightly HW• Projects-book reports (2 per year)
Fifth grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading)• Mixture of daily/ weekly/ long-term assignments

Responsibilities:

Students:

- *Aim High-* show effective effort and attempt challenges

- *Work Hard*- complete it as independently as possible
- *Think First*- hand-in work you are proud of and communicate with teacher if it is unfinished or missing
- *Be Flexible*- try first and persevere even if it's hard
- *Be Kind*- take care of self and be kind if others need help

Parents:

- Create and establish homework routines (time, place, etc.) and help student with time management/ weekly planning
- Allow child to work as independently as possible
- Communicate to teacher if child needs extra support or if they are unable to complete homework (either email or a note)
- Know your students' homework expectations (from Curriculum Night, School website, emails, etc.)

Teachers:

- Communicate homework expectations to students and parents
- Assign homework that reinforces and practices already taught skills
- Modify homework for individual students

Vacation Homework: If your child will miss school for a significant amount of time, please let the teacher know before you leave. However, please be aware that teachers cannot accommodate requests for homework in advance. Missed work may need to be made up upon return.

Dress Code

There is no formal dress code at Zervas; however, children are expected to be neat and clean in their appearance and wear clothing that is appropriate for school and weather conditions. A smock is suggested for art and sneakers are required for physical education.

The Zervas After School Program

The Zervas After School Program (ZASP) provides quality childcare and offers a challenging range of quiet and active experiences for children. Through ZASP, the physical, social, emotional, and educational needs of the children are served in a supportive and nurturing atmosphere.

Whenever possible, ZASP offers separate programs to better meet the varied needs of the wide age range being served. Children in grades 3-5 are also eligible for ZASP's RAD program on Wednesdays, which takes them on special field trips. ZASP also offers special programs on NPS early-release days and during school vacations in February and April.

ZASP is a non-profit corporation governed by a nine-person board of directors. Any parent whose child is enrolled in the program for the current or following year is a member of the corporation and is eligible to serve on the board. Election of board members and voting on the following year's budget take place at the spring membership meeting in May.

For tuition and program information, contact the Director, Mike Shuley at (617) 965-2655 or e-mail ZervasASP@gmail.com. ZASP has a sliding fee scale, and families who feel they have a need should contact Mike Shuley before registering.

Home/School Communication

Curriculum Night

Each fall, parents/guardians are invited to Curriculum Night where the teacher explains the curriculum and answers general questions about the year. Teachers also use this opportunity to inform parents of expectations, policies, and procedures unique to their classroom. Curriculum Night is not intended for discussion of individual children or their progress. If necessary, these discussions should occur by special arrangement with the teacher or at the regularly scheduled conference in the fall.

During the evening, the school principal also addresses parents and provides an overview of the school's goals. Please note that these evenings are designed for parents to attend without their children. This year's Curriculum Night will be held on Wednesday, September 21st.

Conferences and Progress Reports

Parents/guardians are invited to an individual student conference in fall and spring. The purpose of the conference is to discuss your child's academic and social progress. At any time throughout the year, parents/guardians may also request an additional conference with their child's teacher.

Progress reports are available to parents/guardians midyear and at the end of the year. They are available electronically. Parents/guardians will receive email notification when progress reports are ready for viewing. Progress reports assess each student's progress toward the grade level standard in all academic areas. Work habits, social and behavioral development and effort is also assessed. Teachers add comments in their assessments about student progress.

Principal Newsletter

Diana Beck, Principal, sends out a newsletter to families twice a month. This electronic newsletter provides important information about school events, policies, and school curriculum. Questions, comments and constructive feedback are welcomed.

Zervas Notes

Zervas Notes is a weekly publication containing information about school and community activities, including a reminder of upcoming meetings and events.

Principal's Coffee

The Principal's Coffee is a morning forum held several times a year with our Principal, Diana Beck. The co-presidents of the PTO serve as co-hosts. The goal is to provide an informal opportunity to exchange thoughts or information. The principal may choose to address a topic she feels is of particular relevance or concern to the general school community. The dates are announced in the Principal Newsletter, Zervas Notes and on the PTO Calendar.

Health and Safety

Building Security

Visitors must check in at the school office, sign in, and pick up a visitor's badge. Any adult without a badge will be asked to check in at the office. If you wish to bring something to your child during school hours, please take it to the office. If your child is to be dismissed early, please meet him/her in the office. The office will call the classroom to have your child come and meet you.

All doors will be locked at 8:20 am. All doors can be opened from the inside of the school to allow exit to the outside. School dismissal of children is conducted through the front and side doors. We ask that parents/guardians wait outside.

Safety Drills

Throughout the year, several safety drills are conducted to familiarize students with the proper procedures to use in the case of an emergency. The drills include fire drills, bus evacuation drills, lockdown drills and evacuation drills. By state law, fire drills must occur four times during the school year. All other drills must occur once a year or every other year.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, all members of the Zervas community will exit the building and travel on foot or by bus to the Winsor Club, 1601 Beacon Street, Waban. All emergency information, including medical information, will travel with the principal and the nurse. The Principal will make an automated phone call notifying parents/guardians of the evacuation and will provide instructions for student pick up.

CORI/SORI Checks for Parent/Guardian Volunteers

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Sexual Offender Record Information (SORI) checks are required for all volunteers in the school. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all schools to conduct these background checks on current and prospective employees, volunteers, school transportation providers, and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. These checks are good for three years. If you plan to volunteer in the classroom or go on field trips, please contact the school's main office to fill out the required forms at the start of the year. Requests for last minute CORI/SORI checks may not be honored due to the time required to complete the check.

Dogs on School Grounds

Dogs are not permitted on school grounds during the school day. This refers to all grassy areas around the school as well as the pathways, playgrounds and parking lots surrounding the building. It does not refer to the public sidewalks.

Dogs should not be left unattended. Dog owners should remain with their dogs at all times. Please do not tie up your dog along the fence or on a tree along the sidewalk. This can cause a barrier for a child trying to walk along the sidewalk.

Keep the entrance area of the school clear of any dogs. This is the area where the front door path and the sidewalk meet. Keeping this area clear of dogs will allow those who need to enter or exit a safe area to do so.

Crossing Guard Information

Crossing guards are stationed at the intersection of Beethoven Ave and Beacon and Woodward Streets. Their scheduled times are as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	Wednesday
7:40 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.	7:40 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.
2:50 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	12:20 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Nurse

Zervas has a full-time school nurse, Deana Salameh, R.N. Every attempt is made to have the health room covered at all times. In the event that the health room is unattended, children who are not feeling well or are injured should go to the main office. The nurse may be contacted directly during the day at 617-559-6755.

Medical Records and Examinations

The Newton Public Schools keeps medical records for your child from Kindergarten through Grade 12. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires periodic examinations of every school-aged child. Newton complies with this regulation by requiring examinations in Kindergarten and Grade 6 and/or upon entrance to the Newton Public Schools. An interval health history and physical are required in Grade 3. Please send a copy of your child's physical record to the school health room as early as possible in the school year.

Required Immunizations and Screening Tests

By state law every child attending public schools must be immunized. Upon entrance to Kindergarten, or upon entrance to the Newton Public Schools, your child must have physician documentation of the following:

- DPT (diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus) – 5 doses
- Polio – 4 or 5 doses
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) – 2 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella – 2 doses or physician documentation of disease.
- Record of lead testing; preschool records are acceptable.

Children will be EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL until proper immunization documentation is provided to the school nurse.

Allergies

If your child suffers from any allergies, whether seasonal, environmental, food and/or drug, please notify the health room in writing. Parents are responsible for providing emergency medications, i.e., Benadryl and/or Epi-pens. Teachers and other staff are trained each year in the use of Epi-pens. These pens will be taken on field trips.

Illness and Accidents at School

As specified in the citywide "policies and procedures" handbook, you should keep your child at home for their own welfare and for the protection of others, if he or she has:

- A fever over 100 degrees during the past 24 hours
- A cold in the active stages
- A sore throat and/or swollen neck glands
- An undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Head lice that have not been treated

The school nurse will determine whether your child should be sent home because of an illness or condition that begins during school hours. Please do not send your child to school when you suspect a fever, rash, or other signs of illness.

Since accidents can happen, the school secretary must have at least three local telephone numbers of friends or neighbors who might be reached in the event that you are not home in an emergency. These numbers should be listed and kept up to date in your child's Aspen records.

Medication for Students during School Hours

Every attempt should be made to give your child needed medication before or after school. If medications must be administered at school or during authorized field trips, it must be done under direct and written orders from a licensed physician and with the parent's written permission. Forms are available in the nurse's office or online. Medication must be brought to school in the original container provided by the pharmacist.

The school nurse, when present, has general and overall responsibility for the administration of medication and for the implementation of these procedures. Designated school personnel will administer certain medications to your child under the supervision of the school nurse.

Head Lice

Head Lice are a common problem among school children. If you find that your child has them, please notify the school nurse so that preventive measures can be taken. If you are unsure of whether your child has lice or do not know how to treat the condition, please inform the nurse so that instructions on how to identify and treat lice will be given.

Food Allergies

Zervas Elementary School, in keeping with the Newton School Committee policy statement, will set age-appropriate guidelines to minimize the risk of exposure to harmful allergens for students with life-threatening food allergies so that they can participate fully in school activities. The Newton Public Schools Life-Threatening Food Allergy Guidelines will be followed with individualization, where appropriate. The Food Allergy policy statement is as follows:

It is the policy of the Newton School Committee to set age-appropriate guidelines for students and schools within the Newton system that minimize the risk for children with life-threatening food allergies (LTA) to be exposed to offending allergens that may trigger a life-threatening reaction. Such

guidelines shall include: building-based general medical emergency plans, life threatening food allergy emergency plans, individual healthcare plans for all students diagnosed with LTA, appropriate training of staff, availability on site of medical equipment for quick response to life-threatening allergic reactions, and such other guidelines that will ensure that students with LTA can participate fully in school activities without undue fear of harm from exposure to life-threatening food allergens.

It is the School Committee's expectation that specific building-based guidelines/actions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the School Committee's belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children with LTA to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines shift as children advance through the primary grades and through secondary school.

Newton School Committee -- May 10, 2004

The Food Allergy Guidelines may be found at
<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/1429>

NPS Life-Threatening Food Allergies Guidelines can be found at
http://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browser2.html?showset=newtonset&collection=newton&documentid=238#JD_JLCG

Resources and Programs

Art

Art class meets once a week for 45 or 55 minutes. Students will explore line, shape, color, and texture through paint, paper, ceramics, and other media. The children are encouraged to express themselves, discover the joy of creativity, and extend the boundaries of their familiarity with the arts. Stories and music stimulate creativity and involve children in the expression of their art. Kindergartners are asked to bring in their own smock.

Library

Each week, classes visit the library for 30 or 45 minutes. During this time, the librarian might read a story or talk about books or library life, such as the parts of a published book, how to care for books, or where to find books on certain topics. At the end of the period, children may check out books, with the help of parent volunteers. Students are expected to be responsible for their borrowed books and return them to school by the next library period.

Music

The music teacher instructs classes for a 30 minute block each week. This session incorporates vocal and instrumental music as well as storytelling to help children enjoy and appreciate the music of the world. In later grades, Zervas students learn to play the recorder (Grade 3), receive instrumental instruction (Grade 4), and attend chorus (Grade 4 and 5) and band (Grade 5).

Physical Education

Students in grades 1-5, meet with the physical education teacher twice a week for 30-minute classes. Kindergarten meets for two 45-minute classes. Physical education is an important part of a child's overall education. Classes are designed to teach fundamental motor skills, sequential gross motor activities, physical fitness, and social skills. Students must wear sneakers to PE class.

Literacy Specialist

The Zervas full time Literacy Specialist works with the Principal and Assistant Principal to oversee the reading and writing programs. Students are monitored from grade to grade, and children who might be having difficulty are given additional support through literacy interventions. The Literacy Specialist consults with classroom teachers, parents, and other specialists about the program and the progress of individual children. In conjunction with the Principal and Assistant Principal, the literacy specialist coordinates Zervas' implementation of the literacy interventions, which provides supplementary help for students in K-3. All children benefit from this inclusive program as trained instructors provide additional help in each class to small groups of children, usually for three or four 30-minute sessions weekly.

Math Coach

The Zervas part time Math Coach works with the Principal and Assistant Principal to oversee the math program K-5. She supports classroom teachers through consultation, peer modeling, and by providing appropriate resources. Students are closely monitored in their development of mathematics concepts and the Math Coach supports teachers in ensuring that all children make progress towards the grade level expectations. The Math Coach also oversees the math interventionist who provides supplemental math instruction to small groups of students.

School Psychologist

The Zervas Psychologists are part of the school's Social-Emotional team. In addition to being involved with children who may have special educational needs, the school psychologists help in responding to children's issues that are part of normal development. These issues may include entry to school, making and keeping friends, dealing with conflicts, or coping with a difficult event in the news. Sometimes the psychologists are called upon to help when children are dealing with a special life situation, such as a loss or a serious illness, or when a child is having behavioral difficulties at school.

The school psychologists are available as a consultant to parents and teachers, and may at times offer short-term individual counseling, or lead small or whole class groups which focus on social skills or on a particular issue. The school psychologists often share these activities with the school social worker. In addition, as part of a multi-disciplinary team composed of both school staff and parents, the school psychologists may evaluate a student through a series of assessments. Parental permission is always obtained before school psychologists test a child or work directly with a child on an ongoing basis outside of the classroom unless needed in an urgent situation. Parents are welcome to contact the school psychologists directly through the school office or through their child's teacher.

School Social Worker

The part-time social worker at Zervas is available to parents for consultation on family issues, especially those that affect a child's learning. The social worker is also knowledgeable about community resources that can be helpful to children and families. As a member of the Special

Education Team, the social worker works closely with the Principal and meets with families to get a sense of their concerns and to gather medical, family, and developmental information that can be helpful in planning an Individual Educational Plan for a child. The social worker may also be available to parents and students for short-term counseling, groups, and collaboration with community agencies.

Special Education Services

The Special Education team at Zervas consists of the principal, assistant principal, team specialist, special education teachers, a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a school psychologist, a social worker, a physical therapist, and classroom teachers. The Special Education programs assist children with special needs, in accordance with state law and Federal Law 94-142, IDEA, a Special Education law that guarantees all children an equal right to an appropriate educational experience. Whenever possible, this education should be provided in the local public school with as much integration as possible into the regular classroom. The law provides for a thorough evaluation of the child, parent involvement in the development of an educational plan that addresses identified special needs and the right of review and appeal for parents who feel that the plan does not meet their child's needs.

If you have questions or wish to refer your child for a special education evaluation, please talk with your child's classroom teacher. You may also contact the school principal or school psychologist if necessary.

Neighborhood Inclusion Program

In 1990, Newton Public Schools established the Neighborhood Inclusion program, designed to integrate students with significant special needs in the neighborhood schools. Since that time, students with a wide range of disabilities have had the opportunity to be members of typical classrooms and to advance with their classmates through the grades. In order to make this possible, it has been important to provide the appropriate support. Zervas special ed teachers work with classroom teachers, adapting the curriculum and developing plans to promote the success of all the students in their classrooms. Additionally, each student may receive the support of a classroom assistant, as well as services from other specialists as required by the student's individualized education plan.

STRIDE Program

STRIDE stands for Structured Teaching through Research and Intensive Developmental Experiences and is a citywide specialized program for students who require intensive behavioral, academic and communication support and receive almost all of their instruction through the methodology of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The services in this program include but are not limited to individualized instruction, small group activities and incidental teaching across settings and opportunities for supported inclusion as appropriate. The program uses systematic reinforcement systems and consistent behavior management programming. The goal of the program is to increase the student's independence and skill level across domain areas (academics, social, communication, daily living, leisure, gross and fine motor) while providing intensive behavioral supports to facilitate appropriate social behavior, emotional control, and the use of functional alternatives to challenging behavior. These skills are approached in a variety of settings to promote generalization of the skills.

English Language Learner Program (ELL)

English language instruction is tailored to the individual linguistic, cultural, and educational needs of the student. In addition to regular instruction in the mainstream classroom, all English Language Learners (ELL) receive instruction by specialized ELL teachers and instructional aides. Newton's ELL Program is designed to create an interactive setting where students are taught strategies to help them master English as quickly as possible, develop appropriate academic and social skills, and progress in content areas without loss of achievement due to English proficiency level. Instruction integrates skills and concepts of the mainstream curriculum in the belief that language learning best occurs when the content is meaningful and useful to students. In an interactive setting, teachers can respond to a variety of learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and language levels.

METCO Program

Like all Newton schools, Zervas is an active participant in the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program, a state-funded educational program enrolling children from Boston in surrounding suburban metropolitan communities. In September of 1966, 220 children from Boston's communities of Roxbury and the South End were enrolled in seven suburban communities. The school committees of Arlington, Brookline, Braintree, Lexington, Lincoln, Newton, and Wellesley elected to be the initial participants in this unique plan. The school systems determined the number of children they could enroll and which grades they would include.

The initiative for this program can be traced to the concern for quality education in the African American community, as demonstrated by the Boston Chapter of the NAACP. In 1963, the NAACP's Education Committee challenged the Boston School Committee on educational policies, including the racial imbalance of the schools. Subsequently, legislation was filed making imbalance illegal and penalizing school systems by withdrawing state appropriations until suitable plans to alleviate racial imbalance had been approved by the State Department of Education. The Boston Public Schools were among the entities penalized. Suburban communities realized that their children were inadequately educated as well because of racial isolation. This combination of concerns resulted in the establishment of the METCO program.

In 1966, the Newton School Committee voted unanimously to participate in METCO. The program began here in September 1966 with 50 African-American students in grades 3-6, attending seven schools in Newton. Newton now sponsors the largest METCO program with all 21 schools involved and an enrollment of 431 students in grades K-12. When the program began, it was intended for African-American students only. It has expanded over time to include Latino, Asian, and Native American students as well.

METCO students are brought to and from Zervas by bus from various Boston communities. For further information about METCO in Newton, call Newton METCO Director Lisa Gilbert-Smith at (617) 559-6132 or refer to the METCO website at www.newton.k12.ma.us/metco.

Zervas School Council

Zervas School Council meets each month, October through May, under the Massachusetts state requirements of Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993, the Education Reform Act. It is the expectation that the School Council be comprised of equal representation from the faculty and parents and includes

community representation. The building Principal acts as co-chair. Elections are held annually with members serving 3-year terms.

The Zervas School Council is charged with assisting and advising the Principal in the following areas:

- Adopting educational goals for the school
- Identifying the educational needs of the students, including class size
- Reviewing the annual school budget
- Formulating the school improvement plan

The Newton Public Schools requires that the School Council be collaborative and identify how the school intends to meet system-wide goals. All meetings are open to the school community.

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Volunteer Opportunities

2022-2023 PTO Board

Contact the Board at any time with questions, comments, and ideas at pto@zervaspto.org.

Co-Presidents	Jillian Jurilla Jacob Eidsmoe
Vice Presidents	Brandy Blakely Delia Cheung Hom Kristin Jonash Mark Jurilla Bill Malaguti, Kindergarten Parent Representative Jenny Wallach
Treasurer	Shruti Bansal
Assistant Treasurer	Open
Secretary	Kate Cox
Legal Advisor	Open

Purpose and Goals of the PTO

The Zervas PTO is committed to promoting the core values that guide the school. Our efforts focus on strengthening our sense of community by bringing families together, identifying and matching volunteers with PTO committees and events, and raising money to support teachers and students by providing special programs to enhance the education of our children.

All Zervas parents, faculty and staff are automatically members of the PTO. The PTO depends heavily on parents to fill the many and varied roles in our organization. There are many opportunities for involvement at Zervas, even if you have only a small amount of time to volunteer. We welcome your help, as parent participation plays a significant role in making Zervas a better place for all of our children.

The PTO is a dynamic organization; the composition of the parent community changes each year, as families with graduating children move on and new families join us. We are always in need of new volunteers with new energy and ideas. Based on your talents, interests, and availability, you can play a valuable role in a wide range of activities and programs. Please visit our PTO Parent Handbook to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

If you have any questions, ideas, or want to learn more about volunteering with the PTO email pto@zervaspto.org.

Communications

The PTO publishes an online directory each year via Membership Toolkit. Interface is available online and through the Membership Toolkit app. At the start of the school year, the PTO will send out a link for families to update their contact information, add in their assigned teacher (this has to be done by each family as the school is unable to tell the PTO which student is assigned to which teacher), and update privacy settings. It is critical to update your information so that you may receive emails from the PTO, your Room Parents, etc. Everyone in the directory will receive emails even if you chose not to make your information viewable to others, however, you need to opt in to receiving communication. The Zervas directory is for internal use only. It is not to be shared or used for any marketing purposes.

The PTO communicates with our families through various channels:

1. **Zervas Notes (published weekly on Tuesdays):** School announcements and information about events or activities at Zervas, or organized or sponsored by the Zervas PTO. Community Listings can be found at newtonptocouncil.org/community. You will only receive this weekly newsletter if you opt in receiving them through Membership Toolkit.
2. **Website:** The Zervas website has information about the Zervas PTO and school activities, including an online calendar. Please check out the site at www.zervaspto.org.
3. **Outdoor Bulletin Board:** Upcoming events are listed on the message board located at the beginning of the path leading to the front door of the school.
4. **Social Media:** Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram: **ZervasPTO**
5. **Room Parents' Email:** Your Room Parents will share class specific and PTO community announcements monthly. Be sure to opt in through Membership Toolkit to receive room parent communication.

Fundraising

The funds which we raise each year support a wide variety of educational activities and resources, including Creative Arts and Sciences programming, professional development and special grants for teachers, the purchase of books for the library, and general administration of PTO including our online directory. We also use our funds to support community-building activities for families including the

Family Picnics (including our much loved ice cream truck at the Spring Picnic), Halloween Dance, Game Night, Movie Night, and Family Cultural Night.

The PTO raises funds through a number of ways including:

1. **PTO Dues:** We ask that each Zervas family pay PTO dues annually. These dues are different from the class dues you will be asked to support in your child's classroom. We suggest a \$30 donation per family which can be paid via Membership Toolkit. Our goal is 100% participation at a level that is comfortable for your family. It is because of the money raised by Kindergarten Soccer that the Zervas PTO is able to run all our annual programming and only ask for \$30/family versus our peer schools who ask for considerably more.
2. **Newton Kindergarten Soccer:** Newton Kindergarten Soccer is our PTO's biggest fundraiser and runs during the fall and spring seasons. It is run and managed completely by the Zervas PTO and open to all children in Newton in Kindergarten or entering Kindergarten (spring season only).
3. **Auction:** Zervas runs an online auction every spring as well as a silent auction at the Spring Fling. Together these auctions account for a significant amount of funds raised per year.

Other fundraising includes the annual Teacher Raffle, Tasty Takeouts, and many more!