Zervas School Family Handbook
2019-2020

30 Beethoven Avenue
Newton, MA 02468

School Office: 617-559-6750
School Nurse: 617-559-6755
Absentee call in line: 617-559-6760
www.newton.k12.ma.us/zervas
www.zervaspto
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 their years at Zervas, 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 human 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 weekly newsletters, coming to as many PTO functions as you can and joining a PTO Committee. You can also attend School Council meetings, which are open to the public. 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 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 (Noise Level 0):
- Walk safely
- Walk quietly
- Stay to the right
Stairs (Noise Level 0):
• Walk safely
• Walk quietly
• Step on each stair
• Stay to the right

Water Fountain (Noise Level 0):
• Follow hallway expectations
• 5 second turns (“5...4...3...2...1...Done”)

Bathrooms (Noise Level 2):
• Use toilets appropriately (Remember to flush)
• Use sinks appropriately (Wash hands, turn off water, throw out trash)
• Return to your classroom quickly

Cafeteria (Noise Level 2):
• Eat your own food politely
• Stay seated
• Raise your hand if you need help
• Clean up your space

Playground (Noise Level 3-5):
• 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 will lead to students being 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 are ultimately 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 was a one-floor school with 16 classrooms, housing an average of 320 students and 50 staff. Rebuilt in 2017 with 24 classrooms and ample learning and programming spaces, Zervas currently has an enrollment of more than 380 students and 75 staff. Zervas is home to the Citywide STRIDE Program for students with severe 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 administered by 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 opens at 8:20 am. Students who arrive after 8:30 are considered tardy. Those who arrive prior to 8:20 must wait outside until the first bell rings to enter the school. There is no adult supervision available prior to 8:20. Students should not be dropped off early unless they are enrolled in the Early Morning Program. Students arriving after the second bell at 8:30 are considered late and must sign in at the office. The dismissal times are as follows: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday dismissal is at 3:00 and on Tuesday dismissal is at 12:30.

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 7:30am until 8:20am 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:

1. Your child’s name
2. Your child’s teacher and grade
3. Dates/times 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 8:30. 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. If the child cannot be located or accounted for, the school will contact the Newton Police immediately. 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 8:30 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 busy place and it may be difficult to ensure that messages regarding any changes get to children in a timely manner.

Busses: Based on where you live, some students are eligible to ride the school bus 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 taking a bus home, teachers will ensure that they get to their designated bus.

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 to 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. 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 AM radio stations WBZ (1030) and WRKO (680), as well as TV channels 4, 5, 7, 56, and Newton Cable TV. You may also log on to www.newton.k12.ma.us or call 617-559-9699 for a recorded message. 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 are more than welcome during the school day to participate in scheduled volunteer opportunities and other classroom events. All visitors 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 8:30. 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 and her responsibilities sometimes require her 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 note in the morning 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 foyer by 10:30. Any item that is dropped off at this table will be delivered to your child within a timely fashion. Parents are not permitted to deliver items directly to their child’s classroom after 8:30 as this may interrupt instruction.

**Lunch at School**
All children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 eat lunch at school every day, except Tuesdays. Students have the option of bringing lunch from home or signing up for the school lunch program. Lunch menus and payment options are sent home monthly. For more information, visit [https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/799](https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/799) or call the Food Service Director at 617-559-6315. Milk is included in the cost of lunch or can be purchased separately.

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 Kindergarten 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 Tuesdays). 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.

**Recess Guidelines**
In order to have students play safely on the equipment, there are specific equipment rules that must be followed. These rules are reviewed by teachers at the start of the year and throughout the year as needed.

**Valuables**
The school is not responsible for any valuables, 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 considerations by families and teachers.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Daily Expectations</th>
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| 1. Kindergarten | • Read to child approximately 15 minutes a night  
• Interact with child, converse about work that is sent home and information in newsletters |
| 2. First grade | • 25 minutes total (including 10 minutes of reading)  
• Literacy academic choice weekly packets (adult initialed)  
• Math & science HW as needed |
| 3. Second grade | • 30 minutes total (including 20 minutes of reading)  
• Literacy and math academic choice weekly packets (adult initialed) |
| 4. Third grade | • 40-50 minutes total (including 20 minutes of reading)  
• Reading and Math Log  
• Weekly spelling, reading responses and choice of selection |
| 5. Fourth grade | • 50-60 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading)  
• Literacy and Math nightly HW  
• Projects-book reports (2 per year) |
| 6. Fifth grade | • 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 homework 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. Wearing hats in school is not permitted unless worn for religious reasons. 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 Tuesdays, which takes them on special field trips. ZASP also offers special programs on early-release Thursdays and during school vacations in December, 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 are invited to their child’s classroom 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 introduces the faculty present. 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 25th.

**Conferences and Progress Reports**

Parents/guardians are invited to an individual student conference in November and March. 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 a 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**

The Principal sends out a newsletter once or twice a month. This electronic newsletter provides important information about school events, policies, and school curriculum. Questions, comments and constructive feedback are welcome by the principal.
Zervas Notes
Zervas Notes is a weekly publication containing information about school and community activities, including a reminder of upcoming meetings and events. There are separate publications for Zervas-specific and community listings. Publication deadlines and the publications are on the PTO website: www.zervaspto.org

Principal’s Coffee
The Principal’s Coffee is a morning forum held several times a year with our Principal, Dr. Diana Beck. The co-presidents of the PTO usually attend. 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 8:30 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 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.

In the event of an evacuation, all members of the Zervas community will exit the building and travel on foot or by bus to the Winsor Club. 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 Volunteers
Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Sexual Offender Record Information (SORI) checks are required for all parents volunteering 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. An authorization form will be sent home in September. If you plan to volunteer in the classroom or go on field trips, please fill it out and return it to the main office 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:

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<tr>
<th>Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:50 a.m. - 8:35 a.m.</td>
<td>7:50 a.m. - 8:35 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.</td>
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**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 must be on file in the school office.

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. Information is also available online at www.ci.newton.ma.us/health/school_health.htm. Children who have been identified as having head lice are excluded from school until they are treated.
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

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. 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 thirty-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 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 the Literacy Program. 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, the literacy specialist coordinates Zervas’ implementation of the Literacy Program, a program that provides supplementary help for students in Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2. 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 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 Building Interventionist who provides supplemental math instruction to small groups of students.

School Psychologist
The Zervas Psychologist is part of the school’s special education team. In addition to being involved with children who may have special educational needs, the psychologist helps 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 psychologist is 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 psychologist is 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 psychologist often shares 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 psychologist may evaluate a student through a series of assessments. Parental permission is always obtained before a school psychologist tests a child or works 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 psychologist 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, team specialist, special education teachers, a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a school psychologist, a social worker, a physical therapist, an inclusion facilitator 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 supports. An Inclusion Facilitator is assigned to Zervas to 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 supports and receive almost all of their instruction though 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 that busses children from Boston to 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 Maricel Sheets at (617) 559-6132 or refer to the METCO website at [www.newton.k12.ma.us/metco](http://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 PTO and Volunteer Opportunities**

**2018-2019 PTO Board**

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<td><a href="mailto:maggie@maggieschmidt.com">maggie@maggieschmidt.com</a></td>
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<td>Suzanne Afergan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ska@afergan.com">ska@afergan.com</a></td>
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**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. 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, and the purchase of books for the library. We also use our funds to support community-building activities.
for families including the Family Picnics, Halloween Dance, Game Night, Movie Night, and Family Cultural Night.

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. Below, you’ll find an overview of PTO communication methods, followed by brief descriptions of the current committees and fund-raising events that rely solely on parent volunteers. If you see something that intrigues you, please contact the PTO presidents by emailing zervaspto.org. They will be happy to talk to you about your interests and help find the right volunteer job for you.

**Communications**

**Zervas Directory:** The Zervas Directory is published each fall and includes contact information for all Zervas families who wish to be included. It is available online through MembershipToolkit (formerly MySchoolAnywhere). We collect this information electronically, and you will receive a link to confirm your information at the beginning of the school year. The Zervas directory is for internal use only. It is not to be shared or used for any marketing purposes.

**Email communication: Zervas Notes and Community Notes:**

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.

2. **Community Notes** (published weekly on Thursdays): Announcements relating to events or activities in the broader Newton community, including those sponsored by other Newton schools.

If you would like to publish an announcement of an upcoming event, please follow the instructions on the PTO website: [www.zervaspto.org](http://www.zervaspto.org).

**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](http://www.zervaspto.org).

**Message Board:** Upcoming events are listed on the message board located at the beginning of the path leading to the front door of the school.

**Community Events**

**Family Picnics:** Volunteers organize and run the two PTO-sponsored family picnics which are held in the fall and spring.

**Halloween Dance:** This committee organizes an evening dance for Zervas students and their families, with pizza, a DJ, and Halloween arts and crafts. The dance is usually held the Friday before Halloween.

**Destination Dinner:** This community-building event takes place each fall and gives Zervas parents a chance to socialize and meet new and old friends over dinner. The committee organizes a
progressive dinner, which begins with a cocktail party at one home, followed by dinner in small
groups at the homes of volunteer hosts, and concludes with dessert and coffee at a final
destination.

**Variety Show:** There are two shows at which Zervas students have the opportunity to showcase
their talents, one for the younger students and one for the older kids. Volunteers work with music
teacher Mr. Mignone to coordinate the student participants and manage the event.

**Family Cultural Night:** The Family Cultural Night is a potluck with a performer in the spring that
celebrates the many cultural heritages of Zervas families. The Committee lines up the performer,
organizes the food, and publicizes the event.

**Community Support**

**Hospitality:** The hospitality committee provides beverages and food for parent meetings including
the monthly Friday PTO/Principal coffees.

**Social Action:** The Social Action Committee organizes social outreach initiatives including an
annual Coat Drive to provide opportunities for the community to assist organizations outside of
the school.

**Educational Enrichment**

**Creative Arts and Sciences:** This committee works to enrich the school curriculum by bringing
outside programs in music, dance, drama, fine arts, multi-cultural studies, social studies, and the
sciences to Zervas. The committee works closely with teachers to select a variety of programs
appropriate for the entire school as well as programs reflecting the curriculum of individual
grades. In addition to selecting the programs, the committee is responsible for booking and
coordinating the program visits.

**Understanding Our Differences:** Understanding Our Differences is a Newton wide program
teaching elementary students to develop an understanding and respect for fellow students with
physical, sensory, and developmental disabilities. The committee organizes parent volunteers to
present educational programs on a variety of topics to the third, fourth, and fifth grades, as well as
to coordinate visits from guest speakers for each topic.

**Zervas Community Connections:** The vision of this committee is to connect all of the diverse
families of Zervas into one community, encouraging everyone to appreciate each other’s
differences while celebrating our similarities. The committee is comprised of a group of dedicated
parents and staff whose mission is to organize social and educational experiences that bring
Zervas families, including those from surrounding towns and cities, together. Members are
committed to creating opportunities to build bridges and deepen understanding among all
members of the Zervas community while having fun getting to know another.

**Color Day:** This committee helps the Zervas physical education teacher to run the annual field day
for the students in June. Parent volunteers run games and activities while each classroom rotates
around the field. The committee coordinates parent volunteers and assists in set-up and clean-up.

**School Support**

**Fifth Grade Graduation:** This committee manages a wide range of activities which the fifth graders
take part in as they celebrate their final year at Zervas.
Room and Grade Parents:

Room Parents: A link between the teacher and families by assisting teachers in communicating with families about upcoming events and recruiting volunteers for field trips, donations and other activities, organizing a schedule for library volunteers for the class and coordinating holiday and year-end gifts for teachers and classroom aides.

Grade Parents: Coordinators of social activities to help the families in each grade get to know each other.

Picture Day: This committee organizes the student picture day which takes place in the early fall each year.

Library Gift Book Sale: The Library Gift Book Sale takes place twice a year, in the early winter and spring. Parents purchase books to donate to the library to provide additional reading materials for the students.

Safe Routes to School: This committee promotes pedestrian and bike safety and works to encourage students and their families to walk or bike to school. The Committee organizes events to promote and encourage safe and efficient ways of getting to school such as walking, biking, carpooling and taking the bus.

Teacher Appreciation Events: This committee organizes special events to show our appreciation to our hard working Zervas staff. These events include breakfasts and luncheons during the school year, the annual holiday cookie swap, and the monthly appreciation activities sponsored by different grades.

Newton Serves: This committee organizes a team of Zervas volunteers to work on various school improvement projects during the annual Newton Serves Day in late April.

Green Committee: This committee oversees sustainability at Zervas and welcomes volunteers.

Fundraising

Kindergarten Soccer: Several hundred kindergarten and pre-kindergarten children take part each year in the soccer program which is organized by a team of Zervas volunteers. In addition to providing a valuable Newton community service, the soccer program is a major fundraiser for the PTO.

Zervas Online Auction: The Zervas Auction is another significant fundraising event for the PTO. The online auction items include sports tickets, gift certificates, and summer camp. Many volunteers are needed.

Zervas Spring Fling: The Spring Fling is a party for Zervas parents in late spring and features a silent auction with community items including themed dinners and parties hosted by Zervas families. The Spring Fling Committee plans the party and organizes the silent auction and community events.

Teacher Raffle: Our wonderful teachers and staff offer unique opportunities and activities with them for students to participate in (craft or sports parties, lunches, principal for a day, etc.) Raffle tickets are sold and winners are drawn at random.

PTO Dues: In the fall, we ask all families to contribute $30 to support the PTO.