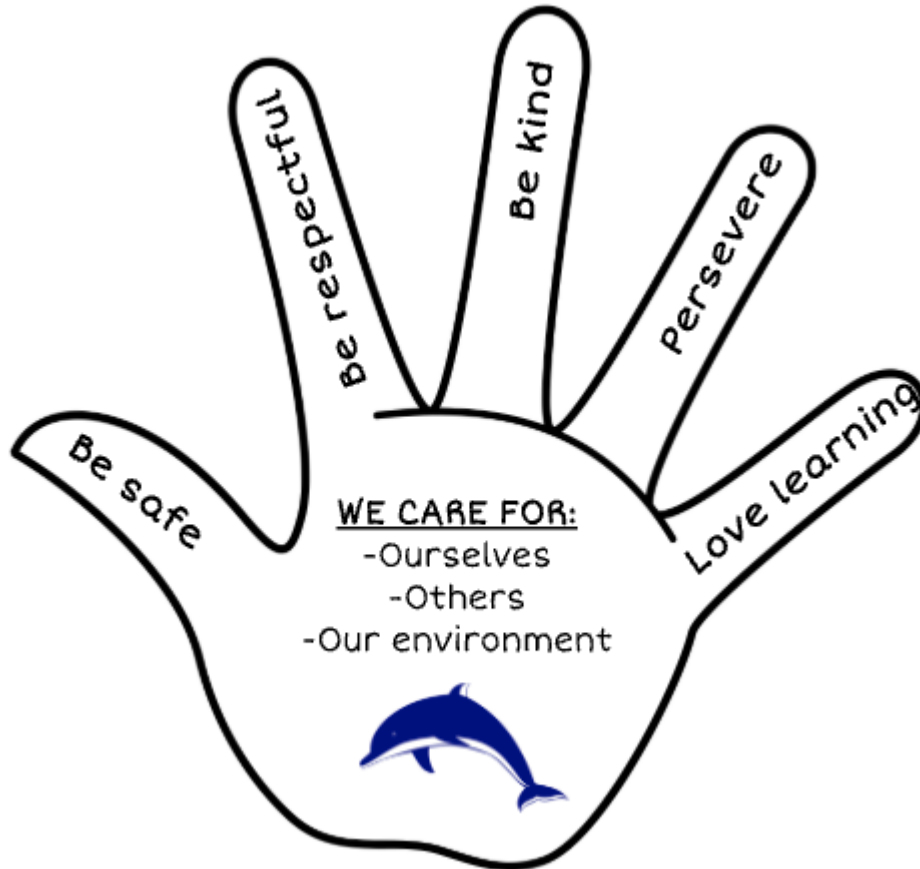


Ward School Family Handbook



10 Dolphin Road
Newton, MA 02459

School Office: 617-559-6450
School Nurse: 617-559-6453
Student Absence Line: 617-559-6470
[Ward School Website
www.wardpto.org](http://www.wardpto.org)



Dear Ward Families,

Ward 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 Ward families and teachers have created a community where kindness, inclusivity, high academic achievement, and commitment to excellence in all areas are expectations.

We are a dynamic community of learners working together to help all of our students grow as creative and compassionate citizens, effective communicators, and critical thinkers. Our Core Values are "Be safe, be respectful, be kind, persevere, and love learning." These remind us that our educational goal is not just the attainment of knowledge, skills, and concepts, but also the development of wisdom about how we can make the world a kinder, healthier, and happier place for everyone.

Children at Ward enjoy a rigorous curriculum in the context of a nurturing school environment that builds on their strengths, supports them in areas of challenge, and emphasizes the joy of lifelong learning. In addition to Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science, our curriculum also includes high-quality experiences with Music (General, Choral, and Instrumental), Physical Education, Health and Wellness, Visual Arts, Library/Research Skills, and Technology Integration. We also join the other Newton schools in providing a rich social-emotional learning as well as a commitment to equity and anti-racism in our schools. We strive for students to leave Ward with a true love of learning, curiosity about the world, and the skills and the desire to make a positive difference in their school, community, and in the world.

We invite you to use this handbook as a quick reference for important information regarding life in our school, and we wish all of you a wonderful experience at Ward School!

We look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Truly,

Becca Brogadir, Principal, & the Ward School Faculty



Table of Contents

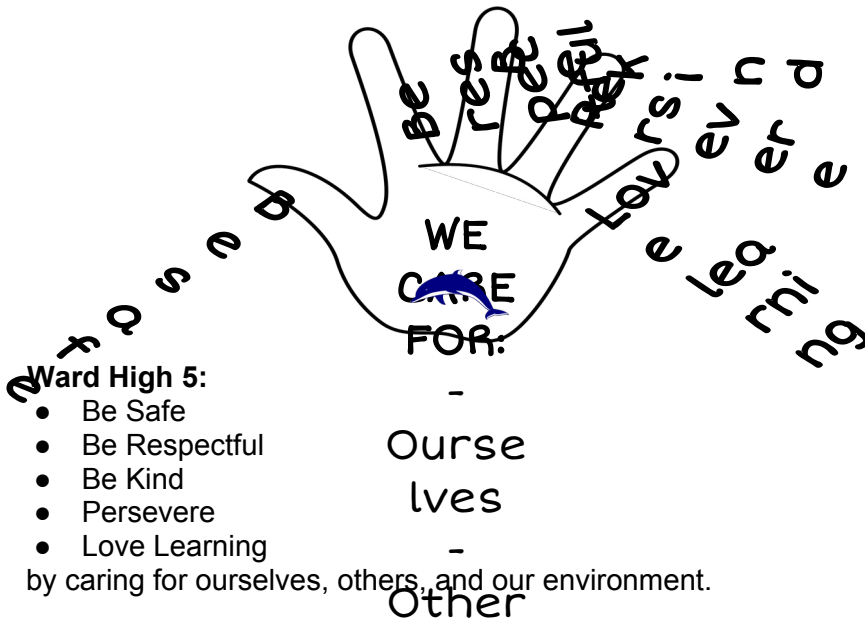
All About Ward	4
General School Information	4
School Hours.....	5
Early Morning Program.....	5
Attendance Policy.....	5
Absence/Lateness.....	5
Dismissal Procedures:.....	6
Buses:.....	6
Pick-Up Area:.....	6
Blue Zone:.....	7
“No School” Announcements.....	7
School-Wide Rules & Expectations:	7
Discipline And Consequences	9
NPS Philosophy on Discipline.....	9
Bullying Prevention & Intervention.....	10
Non-Discrimination Policy & Reporting.....	10
Visitors, Meals And Other Rules	11
Visitors During School Day.....	11
Communication/Deliveries for Staff and Students.....	11
Lunch at School.....	11
Snacks.....	12
Daily Recess.....	12
Valuables & Electronics/Personal Devices.....	12
Lost and Found.....	13
Homework	13
Homework Expectations.....	13
Advancing Work/Homework for Student Absences.....	14
Dress Code	14
Home/School Communication	14
Health & Safety	15
School Programs & Resources	19
Ward After School Program	21
Ward School Council	22
Ward Parent Teacher Organization (Pto) & Volunteer Opportunities	22

All About Ward

Ward 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 **Ward 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.



Ward High 5:

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Kind
- Persevere
- Love Learning

by caring for ourselves, others, and our environment.

General School Information

Ward School Within The Newton School System

The John Ward School, named in honor of one of the first settlers of Newton, was built on land owned by the Ward family for 7 generations. It is one of 15 elementary schools in Newton. Built in 1927-28, the original building had eleven classrooms, one kindergarten, two playrooms, an auditorium, an office, and a book and storage place. The architect planned the school to fit into the residential style of the neighborhood. Over the years several additions and alterations have been made to the original building to accommodate educational needs and the changing population of the area. Ward currently has an enrollment of approximately 190 students and 50 staff. After fifth grade, Ward students attend Bigelow Middle School for grades 6-8 and Newton North 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.

Meetings are typically held in Room 210 in the Education Center at 100 Walnut St., unless otherwise noted on the agenda. Meetings and agendas are posted on the City's [Electronic Posting Board](#) or the [School Committee Calendar](#).

The public may also attend meetings virtually by logging in via Zoom as follows:

Zoom meeting link: <https://zoom.us/j/390017072>

Call-in information: 1-646-558-8656

Call-in meeting ID: 390 017 072

You can contact the School Committee by writing to Chair, Newton School Committee, 100 Walnut St., 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.

School Hours

School opens at 8:10 am. 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 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, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday dismissal is at 2:50 pm and on Wednesday dismissal is at 12:20 pm.

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 8:10 am 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 [Elementary Early Morning Program](#) website.

Attendance Policy

The NPS attendance policy is available in the [NPS Students' Rights & Responsibilities Handbook](#) (p.6).

Reporting Absence/Lateness

If your child will be absent or late, you must notify the school by calling the Ward Attendance Line at **617-559-6470** 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
4. Reason for absence (i.e. sick, doctor's appointment, traveling, etc.)

A child who is late to school must check in at the office before going to the classroom. Attendance is taken in each classroom at 8:20 am. If your child is not in school and you have not called the attendance line or notified your child's teacher, you will receive an automated phone call from the school system seeking a return call with 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, please call the Absence Line with this information when you know it. Children arriving after 8:20 am are marked tardy.

Dismissal Procedures:

Early Dismissal

If you need to have your child dismissed early, call the school office and email your child's teacher providing the date and requested time of departure. Please ring the front entrance bell when you arrive for pick up. You will need to make an entry in the Sign-Out Log. As part of Ward's Safe Dismissal

program, the school will not release children during the school day except to a guardian 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 Ward After-School Program. All students should be aware of their dismissal plans prior to coming to school in the morning. Parents are expected to complete a dismissal plan form for each child at the start of the school year. With communication, 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. For this reason, email is not acceptable for communicating "day of" changes. You must place a **call** to the office.

Buses:

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 [the NPS Transportation page](#) 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 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 my lap or 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 Dolphin Rd. (indicated by a painted blue line on the sidewalk), designed to serve as a live drop-off and pick-up area for students 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 on the field near the Blue Zone line and staff will guide them to the appropriate car as it moves up in the line.

Dismissal to Ward After-School Program:

If your child is attending Ward After-School, your child will be dismissed directly from their classroom to meet the after-school staff in the cafeteria/after-school rooms/playground.

"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 Ward 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.

School-Wide Rules & 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 in large group/1 when with partner):

- Walk safely
- Walk quietly
- Stay to the right

Stairs (Noise Level 0):

- Walk safely
- Walk quietly
- Step on each stair (feet on ground at all times)
- 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 3-4):




- 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.

**Ward Elementary School
Behavior Expectations**

<i>Ward School Values</i>	<i>Ward School Rules</i>	<i>Learning Spaces</i>	<i>Recess</i>	<i>Cafeteria</i>	<i>Hallways and Stairs</i>	<i>Restrooms and water fountains</i>	<i>Technology</i>	<i>School-wide events</i>
Be safe Be respectful Be kind Persevere Love Learning	Care for Self 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push in chairs • Keep hands and feet to myself • Do my best work 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to myself • Stay in area • Line up safely • Follow the rules of games 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Stay seated • Raise my hand and get permission from an adult to leave seat 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Stay in line • Keep hands and feet to myself • Walk one foot at a time on stairs 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Keep floors clean and dry • Take a break efficiently 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment properly • Stay on task 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate • Stay with my group • Listen with my whole body
	Care for Others 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions given by any adult • Be prepared with necessary supplies • Listen with my whole body • Cooperate • Use kind words 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions given by any adult • Wait my turn • Ask permission to go inside • Include others • Take care of others 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions given by any adult • Keep track of my belongings • Include others • Use kind words 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk directly to where I am going • Follow directions given by any adult • Keep my eyes forward • Use kind words • Hold the door for others 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands • Throw paper towels in the trash • Respect the privacy and space of others 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions given by any adult • Use the assigned programs/apps • Make safe choices 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow appropriate voice level • Follow directions given by any adult • Transition quietly
	Care for Environment 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise my hand to speak • Use appropriate voice level • Use materials appropriately • Respect how others learn 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave nature where it is • Share • Show good sportsmanship • Use equipment properly • Take all of my belongings when I leave 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use voice level 2 or below • Recycle and throw away trash • Wait my turn in line • Clean up 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use voice level 2 or below • Stay in line • Keep my items in my space 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure toilet flushes completely after use • Respect school property • Report messes to my teacher or the office 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use clean hands • Carry my device with two hands • Put my food and drinks away • Return equipment to appropriate location • Charge my computer when I'm finished 	I will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter and exit quietly • Keep hands in my own space • Take all of my belongings when I leave

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 Ward 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.

Discipline And Consequences

NPS Philosophy on Discipline

NPS is invested in supporting each student's right to access education by preventing and responding effectively to any acts of discrimination, and also by limiting the use of suspensions and other punitive measures that remove students from instruction. We are committed to taking a holistic approach to discipline that is supportive and reparative.

The goal of our disciplinary interventions is to increase adaptive behavior while building and maintaining our relationships with students and staff in service of seeking to create strong, caring and healthy communities as a whole.

Within the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#), there is a list of actions that result in suspensions. There are other possible consequences for breaking Ward School rules. Classroom teachers explain the rules of the classroom and the school rules at the beginning of the school year. Teachers often have their own process for consequences. There are times when teachers will send students to the office for a time-out. Some of the consequences might look like this:

- Meeting with the other party involved in a dispute to settle differences with the principal as the mediator
- Writing an apology
- Alternative recess(es)
- Rebuilding or repairing the community/building in some special way
- Meeting with parent(s), teacher, student and principal
- Being excluded from a special school activity or field trip
- Being suspended at home or in school at the discretion of the principal

Bullying Prevention & Intervention

Bullying is serious and will not be tolerated in the Newton Public Schools. If you wish to report an incident of alleged bullying, either contact the principal (assistant principal or housemaster) or select the school on [this NPS page](#) and complete this online form so that staff can investigate the matter. In addition, we encourage you to work directly with school staff as they take steps to resolve problems and assure the safety of all parties. This form can be completed anonymously. The form is also available to download and report in person.

Non-Discrimination Policy & Reporting

The Newton Public Schools are committed to providing equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Our [policy](#) against all forms of discrimination is clear and can be found on our policy database.

Any form of discrimination based on race, color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or any other category protected by state or federal law is not tolerated. In line with our [NPS Non-Discrimination Protocol](#), NPS will promptly report, investigate and respond to all allegations of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, to the fullest extent possible and take appropriate disciplinary, corrective, and remedial measures necessary to ensure a safe and equitable learning and workplace environment for all school community members. NPS will also report such incidents to the appropriate authorities when applicable and share major incidents and patterns with the community affected.

Although we always prefer that reports go directly to a trusted adult or NPS employee, there is also an option to submit a report via our [Online Reporting Tool](#). This tool is accessible to any NPS community member and will go directly to the DEI Department for review and follow up. This also includes an anonymous option, but we encourage you to share your identity as anonymous complaints may inhibit our ability to process a

thorough investigation.

Visitors, Meals And Other Rules

Visitors During School Day

Guardians 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 8:20 am. 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. Email messages to staff are welcome at any time and allow staff to contact parents at a time that is convenient for both parties. However, do not expect teachers to respond to emails during the school day in which it is received; teachers often do not have time during the day to check emails. If a message to the teacher is time-sensitive, a note in the morning is preferred. If a change in dismissal is needed; please call the main office at 617-559-6450.

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 am. 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.

Lunch at School

All children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 eat lunch at school every day, except Wednesdays. Students are welcome to bring their own lunch to school or take advantage of the school lunch on any given day.

Massachusetts now provides free school meals – one breakfast and one lunch daily; however, there are program requirements that all families need to understand.

One free breakfast and lunch daily

The FIRST meal - both breakfast and lunch - is free for all students each school day. However, SECOND meals and A LA CARTE ITEMS (at middle/high school) must be paid for with cash or through your student's MySchoolBucks account.

What is the cost of a SECOND meal?

The student charge for second meals is \$5.25 for elementary students.

Lunch menus and payment options are sent home monthly. For more information, visit <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/799> or call the Food Service Director at 617-559-6315. Milk is included with a full lunch or can be purchased separately. Please create or check your family [MySchoolBucks](#) lunch account to ensure there are funds available if your child purchases a second meal.

A Lunch Manager administers the lunch program. Students eat lunch in the cafeteria and are supervised by Ward staff lunch/recess 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.

Daily Recess

Students at Ward 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.

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. Families can familiarize themselves with [Ward School Recess Expectations & Rules](#) through these linked slides.

Adherence to the following rules will help ensure a safe and friendly environment for all students.

- Any activity that an adult feels poses a threat or danger to you or others is not allowed. Do not throw any objects (snow, ice, sticks, rocks, or anything hard) that could hurt someone.
- Tackle football, rugby or rugby-like games, and hardball games are not allowed.
- Roller blades/skates, skateboards, hard balls, and hockey sticks are not allowed.
- Remain within the playground or on the designated area of the blacktop/field.
- Remain within the playground area for the entire recess time, unless you are given permission by an adult to enter the school.
- Do not retrieve any playground equipment that goes outside of the playground area. Ask an adult for assistance.
- Be responsible for school playground equipment; return it to the shared bins or classroom.

Valuables & Electronics/Personal Devices

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.

- **Cell phones:** For a variety of reasons, **students may not use cell phones at school**. Phones must be turned off and kept in a backpack/locker (or entrusted to the teacher).
- **Smart Watches:** While these can be a helpful tool, they can also be distracting for students and for the learning environment in the classroom. Please encourage students to keep their smart watches at home. If a smart watch is worn to school, it should be used only to tell time (not used for any communication, game playing, etc.) during the school day.

In accordance with the NPS Policy, cell phones, smart watches, etc. are **not allowed** to be used by students during school hours and must remain in the child's backpack (or entrusted to the teacher). If a child is found to be using a device during the school day without administrative approval, it will be confiscated and a parent/guardian will be called to pick it up.

[NPS Management of Personal Electronic Device Policy– Grades Pre K-8](#)

The use of Personal Electronic Devices in all school buildings during the School Day is strictly prohibited.

All Personal Electronic Devices that arrive at school should be turned off and placed in areas and

locations designated by the principal including but not limited to: phone holders, vaults, lockers, or locking pouches. Families and caregivers should not send Personal Electronic Devices to school with students with the expectation that they will have access to them at any point during the School Day.

The "School Day" is defined as the moment the student enters the building and ends when the last class of the day concludes. Additionally, school meetings, activities, events, and trips are considered extensions of the School Day and this policy therefore applies to these activities as prescribed by the principal.

Lost and Found

All students' clothing and personal items should be labeled, and children are responsible for their own possessions. It is strongly recommended that families label all items their children bring to school. The lost and found is located in the closet and bins in the front foyer. 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. Ward Afterschool maintains a separate lost and found for the afterschool program.

Homework

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	Read to child approximately 15 minutes a night Interact with child, converse about work that is sent home and information in newsletters
First grade	15 minutes total Reading log - read to self, read to someone, listen to a book read aloud
Second grade	30 minutes total (including 20 minutes of reading) 20-30 minutes of reading Skills practice: Math facts
Third grade	40-50 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading) 30 minutes of reading Skills practice: Math facts, keyboarding Long-term projects: book reports
Fourth grade	50-60 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading) 30 minutes of reading Skills practice: Math facts, keyboarding, geography Long-term projects: regions of the U.S.
Fifth grade	60-70 minutes total (including 30 minutes of reading) 30 minutes of reading (10 minutes aloud for fluency OR 20

	minutes of reading plus a reading response) Skills practice: Math practice and review (ST Math or curriculum practice worksheet)
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Responsibilities:

Students:

- *Be Safe*- Work with your family to set up a focus space and time that works well for you.
- *Be Respectful*- Hand-in work you are proud of and communicate with teacher if it is unfinished or missing.
- *Be Kind*- Take care of self and be kind if others need help.
- *Persevere*- Try first, complete it as independently as possible even if it's hard.
- *Love Learning*- Show effective effort and attempt challenges.

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 student's 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.

Advancing Work/Homework for Student Absences

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 missed school and homework in advance. Missed work may need to be made up upon return.

Dress Code

There is no formal dress code at Ward; however, children are expected to be neat and clean in their appearance and wear clothing that is appropriate for school and weather conditions (allows for movement and play). 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.

Durable, washable, comfortable clothing, **labeled with your child's name (we don't want the items to end up in the lost and found)**. Backpacks should be roomy enough for folders, children's work, lunch boxes, and extra clothing (kindergartners), without wheels, and able to fit into a locker. Students go outside almost every day and should dress appropriately for the weather. Unclaimed lost and found items will be collected and donated periodically throughout the school year.

Home/School Communication

Back to School 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 who are present. Please note that these evenings are designed for parents to attend without their children.

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 are 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 curricula. Questions, comments and constructive feedback are welcome by the principal.

Classroom Newsletters

Classroom teachers communicate in various ways including email, phone calls, and conferences. While frequency of general classroom communication varies slightly, all classroom teachers send a newsletter including information about curriculum and classroom events at least one time per month.

ForWard

ForWard is a weekly publication facilitated by the Ward PTO containing information about school and community activities, including a reminder of upcoming meetings and events. There are separate publications for Ward-specific and community listings. Publication deadlines and the publications are on the PTO website: www.wardpto.org.

Principal's Coffee

The Principal's Coffee is a morning forum held several times a year with our Principal, Rebecca Brogadir. 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, ForWard and on the School and PTO Calendars.

Student Birthdays

If families celebrate birthdays, student birthdays will be recognized in their class and by the principal. Each child will also receive a birthday card and a small surprise (like a pencil or sticker). Summer birthdays will be recognized in June and September, or birthday cards will be mailed to them. No food is allowed to be sent in by families, nor can birthday party invitations be sent to school to be distributed.

If your family does not observe birthday celebrations, your child will be recognized for being an important part of our school community and will be able to select a small surprise (like a pencil or sticker) once during the school year.

Health & 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 them 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. Parents and guardians are expected to 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 emergency evacuation, all members of the Ward community will exit the building and travel on foot to Temple Emanuel. 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 anyone volunteering in the school or on field trips. 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, with a copy of your driver's license, 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 or during the After-School Program hours. 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 in which to do so.

Crossing Guard Information

A crossing guard is stationed at the intersection of Ward Street and Waverly Avenue. Their scheduled times are as follows:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	Wednesday
7:50 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.	7:50 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.
2:50 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	12:20 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Nurse

Ward 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 617-559-6453.

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 [NPS policies, procedures and protocols](#) and according to the [City of Newton's School Health Department](#), 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 recorded in Aspen.

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.

Head Lice

Head Lice are a common problem among school children. If you find that your child has an active case of lice, 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. Children who have been identified as having head lice are excluded from school until they are treated.

Food Allergies

Ward 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*

Some helpful links:

Newton Health & Human Services: School Health:

<https://www.newtonma.gov/government/health-human-services/school-health>

[Food Allergy Guidelines -
Life Threatening Food Allergies Policy](#)

School Programs & Resources

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 a book, 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, Ward students learn to play the recorder (Grade 3), receive instrumental instruction (Grade 4), and attend chorus (Grades 4 and 5) and band (Grade 5).

Physical Education, Health and Wellness

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 Ward 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 Ward's implementation of the Literacy Program, a program that provides supplementary help for students in Kindergarten, Grades 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 15 to 30-minute sessions weekly.

Math Coach

The Ward part-time Math Coach works with the Principal to oversee the math program K-5. He 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 Interventionist who provides supplemental math instruction to small groups of students.

School Psychologist

The Ward part-time 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 Ward 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 Ward consists of the Principal, Team Specialist, special education teachers, a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a school psychologist, a social worker, a BCBA, 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

At Ward, and throughout the Newton Public Schools, we respect and celebrate the differences in our abilities and our different ways of being in the world. No one way of being or learning is better than another.

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 abilities are members of our classrooms. In order to make this possible, it has been important to provide the appropriate supports. Special Educators work with classroom teachers, adapting the curriculum and developing plans to promote the success of all the students in their classrooms. Additionally, students may receive the support of a classroom assistant, as well as services from other specialists as required by the student's individualized education plan.

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 a specialized ELL teacher. 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, Ward is an active participant in the Metropolitan Council for Educational

Opportunity (METCO) program, a state-funded educational program that buses 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 Ward 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](#).

Ward After School Program

The Ward After-School Program is a private, nonprofit program located within Ward School and is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. It is governed by a parent board of directors and the program is managed by an Executive Director and Staff. While the program is a separate entity from Ward School and Newton Public Schools, the Program and School work collaboratively together for the best interest of our shared students.

The Program is geared to the needs of the school-age child in grades K-5 and is designed to cultivate the child's social skills as well as interests in art, drama, music, creative play, science, physical activity, etc. Information on enrollment, fees and scheduling can be requested from the Director, Donna Marohn: donna@wardafterschool.com or 617-965-3087. Visit [the program's website](#) for more information.

Ward School Council

Ward School Council meets periodically, 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 include community representation. The building Principal acts as co-chair. Elections are held annually with members serving 3-year terms.

The Ward 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.

Ward Parent Teacher Organization (Pto) & Volunteer Opportunities

2023-24 Ward PTO Board

Co-Presidents:

Elizabeth Loehr- elizabethloehr@wardpto.org

Elizabeth Weinberg - elizabethweinberg@wardpto.org

Treasurer: Kristin Golden- kristin@wardpto.org

Purpose and Goals of the [Ward PTO](#)

The Ward PTO is committed to promoting the core values that guide the school. Our efforts focus on fundraising to support 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 Family Picnics, Fall Festival, Art Show, and Family Cultural Night.

All Ward 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 Ward, 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 Ward 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. For any question about volunteer opportunities please contact the PTO presidents by emailing copresidents@wardpto.org. They will be happy to talk to you about your interests and help find the right volunteer job for you.

Communications

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

PTO Email Communication: ForWard

ForWard (published weekly/bi-weekly on Sundays): School & PTO announcements and information about events or activities at Ward or organized or sponsored by the Ward PTO. This includes community notes relating to events or activities in the broader Newton community.

If you would like to publish an announcement of an upcoming event, please follow the instructions on the [PTO website](#).