



**NEWTON**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Where every student can thrive*

# *Students' Rights & Responsibilities Handbook*

*Including Administrative Policies and Procedures*

2025-2026

# District Phone Numbers

617-559-extension

## Elementary Schools

Angier	<b>9300</b>	Franklin	<b>9500</b>	Peirce	<b>9630</b>
Bowen	<b>9330</b>	Horace Mann	<b>9510</b>	Underwood	<b>9660</b>
Burr	<b>9360</b>	Lincoln-Eliot	<b>9540</b>	Ward	<b>6450</b>
Cabot	<b>9400</b>	Mason-Rice	<b>9570</b>	Williams	<b>6480</b>
Countryside	<b>9450</b>	Memorial Spaulding	<b>9600</b>	Zervas	<b>6750</b>

## Middle Schools

Bigelow	<b>6800</b>
Brown	<b>6900</b>
F.A. Day	<b>9100</b>
Oak Hill	<b>9200</b>

## High Schools

Central High	<b>6016</b>
Newton North	<b>6400</b>
Newton South	<b>6500</b>

## Other Important Numbers

NECP	<b>6050</b>
Transportation	<b>9051</b>
School Committee	<b>6110</b>

## On the Web

- Newton Public Schools: [www.newton.k12.ma.us](http://www.newton.k12.ma.us)
- School Committee: [www.newton.k12.ma.us/school-committee](http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/school-committee) or email to [schoolcommittee@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:schoolcommittee@newton.k12.ma.us)
- Follow us on Facebook and Instagram. Search for "Newton Public Schools."

## Newton Public Schools

(617) 559-6000 (main number)

### **Extension Leadership Title & Person in Charge**

<b>x6100</b>	Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Anna P. Nolin
<b>x6105</b>	Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education	Dr. Ayesha Farag
<b>x9025</b>	Assistant Superintendent of Business/CFAO	Liam Hurley
<b>x6125</b>	Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning	Dr. Gina Flanagan
<b>x6025</b>	Assistant Superintendent for Student Services	Casey Ngo-Miller
<b>x6115</b>	Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education	Dr. Eugene Roundtree
<b>x6114</b>	Director of Communications & Family Engagement & Communications	Christina Maryland
<b>x6005</b>	Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Staffing	Dr. Joany Santa
<b>x6132</b>	Director of Newton METCO	Lisa Gilbert-Smith
<b>x6043</b>	Director of English Language Learners (ELL)	Allison Levit
<b>x9025</b>	Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Kathy Lopes
<b>x6190</b>	Director of Information Technology & Library Services	Steven Rattendi
<b>x9000</b>	Director of Facilities	David Stickney

Please call the ELL teacher at your child's school if you need this document translated.

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

In the Newton Public Schools, we strive to meet the learning needs of all students by ensuring that the K-12 curriculum offers a coherent course of study yet remains flexible enough to allow for differentiation according to children's needs. In addition to this academic goal, we are committed to creating a responsible school community and providing a safe, respectful, and legally compliant learning environment for all students. To that end, the school system has adopted a number of policies and procedures to ensure that all students and staff members understand what is expected of them.



This handbook outlines Students' Rights and Responsibilities. It is important to review this booklet with your child, as it is through the shared understanding and acceptance of our district policies and guidelines and family framing of expectations in alignment with the district's that we promote the orderly environment that is so conducive to student learning.

### **Mandated Forms: Your Attention and Signature Required!**

[The Student Information Update Instructions](#) will guide you on how to log in to Aspen and complete the Annual Student Information Update. Please pay attention to the section at the back of the handbook containing information regarding electronic forms that must be completed by September 30, 2025, and require your signature. Please pay special attention to the new Opt-Out Permissions for the 2025-2026 SY that require review and preference selections.

In any society, there is a critical balance to be struck between freedom and responsibility. We seek to achieve this balance through the daily implementation of the policies and guidelines contained in this handbook. Each year, this handbook is reviewed and updated to reflect changes in State and Federal law, as well as recently enacted School Committee policies. Please familiarize yourself with the handbook's contents. In addition, a complete version of all our [district policies](#) are available on our website.

Parents are able to update their emergency contact information directly within our Family Access website, a feature of our Aspen student information system. Required emergency contact information includes current home addresses and phone numbers, parents'/guardians' work and cell phone numbers, email addresses, and the names and phone numbers of two neighbors or nearby relatives who can be called in the case of an accident or emergency, should the school be unable to locate the parents/guardians. It is vital that this information be kept up to date and accurate. Parents/guardians should adjust/update this information, (e.g., change of address, phone number, business, marital status) on an ongoing basis. Accurate information is extremely important, as this is used to update all of our communication systems.

Any of our administrators are available to answer questions about how this set of responsibilities works in our schools. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us for questions and consultations. We know you are your child's first teachers, and we partner with you on their learning journey.

Concerns? Here is [a flow chart that identifies the appropriate point people](#) to help you resolve any concerns you might have as your student moves through the year. I share in the prologue strategies on how to best collaborate with the Newton Public Schools on all levels.

Best wishes for an excellent school year.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anna Nolin", is positioned above the printed name.

Anna Nolin  
Superintendent of Schools

# Introduction

The Newton Public Schools value open communication and collaborative problem-solving, and understand that effective communication and partnerships between home and school are essential for student success. When questions or concerns arise, we believe in addressing these matters at the most immediate level, escalating only when necessary. Parents/caregivers are advised to first discuss the issue or question with the staff member most directly involved. Your child's teacher(s) are most frequently the first line of communication. If the matter remains unresolved, you may then follow the relevant communication chain, which may include a department head, dean, assistant principal, principal, or district administrator.

As we navigate these concerns, we emphasize the importance of maintaining a thoughtful, respectful approach to communication and expect all parties—staff, families, and students—to engage in discussions with civility, empathy, and a focus on understanding perspectives and constructive problem-solving. By engaging in respectful, constructive communication, we model important skills for our students, strengthen the vital relationships and partnership between home and school, enhance mutual understanding, and ultimately create a supportive community that benefits all learners.

# Family-School Communication Guide

For raising questions or concerns in Newton Public Schools



## Class-Based Communication

Connect directly with teachers to discuss...

- Questions about student performance
- Questions about homework
- Questions about student programs or social development
- Scheduling parent-teacher conferences

*Each school website has a Staff Directory, or Classrooms & Staff, tab where you will find teacher email addresses.*



## School-Based Communication

Connect directly with a building administrator to discuss...

- School discipline or safety matters
- Questions about school programs and staffing
- Questions or concerns about school policies
- Questions or concerns classroom teachers cannot address\*

*\*We always encourage you to start the conversation with your student's teacher first.*



## District-Based Communication

Connect with district administration or the School Committee to discuss...

- A concern or question that cannot be addressed satisfactorily by the classroom teacher, department head, dean, assistant principal, or principal closest to the issue.
- In addition, you may connect with central administration or School Committee on issues related to: district policy, curriculum and assessment, student services, employment opportunities, human resources, business or financial, food services, or transportation.

## District Communication Channels

### Website

[www.newton.k12.ma.us](http://www.newton.k12.ma.us)

Find school and staff directories on the district and school websites.

### Email

We use the email addresses you provide via Aspen (our student information system.)

### Text

Messages are sent during school emergencies and snow days.

Make sure your phone number in Aspen is accurate.

### Social Media



@newtonps



@newton\_ps



@newton\_ps

## Our Mission

We are an inclusive learning community that empowers all students to thrive as they embrace challenges and shape their futures with confidence, curiosity and joy.

## Our Vision:

Every student, every day, nurtured, challenged, and empowered.

## Our Core Values:

Diversity | Love of Learning | Student Well-being | Equity | Empathy | Inclusion | Excellence | Opportunity

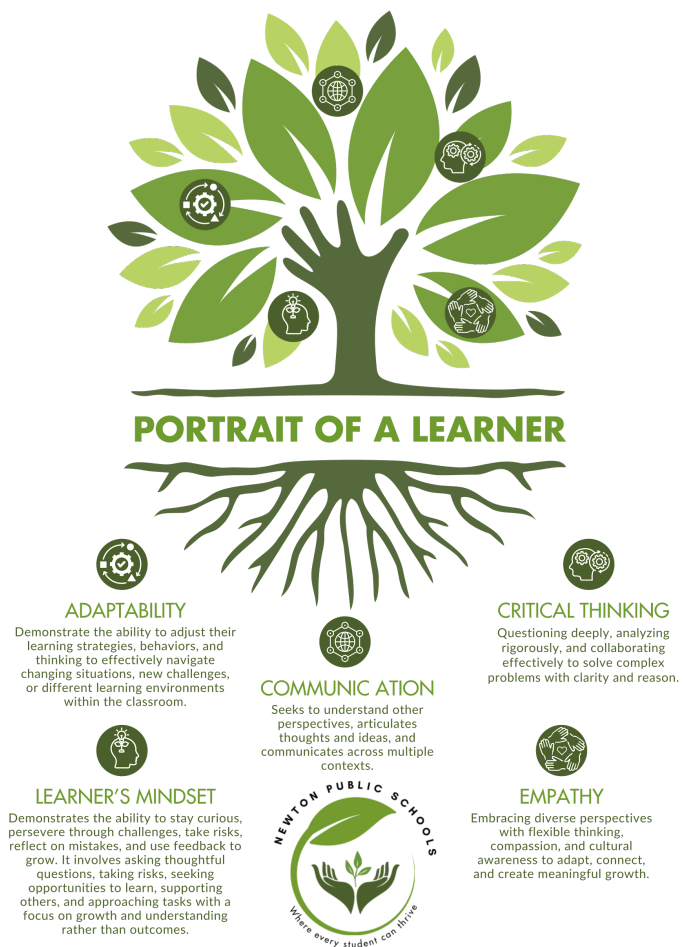
## Our Portrait of a Learner

Our Portrait of a Learner is a collective vision that articulates our community's aspirations for ALL of our students and helps frame a clear vision for our school system.

The competency traits that had resounding support to frame the Portrait are:

- Adaptability
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Empathy
- Learner's Mindset

Descriptions about these competencies, along with the core design of the Newton Portrait, are available for viewing by the public on the [NPS website](#). These competencies will help create a wraparound understanding of what a future ready Newton learner should be learning throughout their time in the Newton Public Schools.



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# I. Right to an Equal Education

All students in the Newton Public Schools, regardless of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law will be given equal access to educational services, including school admission, admissions to courses, access to course content, access to guidance services, and participation in extracurricular and athletic activities.

## A. Non-Discrimination Policy Summary, Including Harassment and Retaliation

The Newton School Committee and Newton Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Following the [Protocol for Investigating Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation](#) found on our webpage: [Responding to Incidents of Bias or Discrimination](#). NPS will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights. Where it is determined that discrimination has occurred, NPS will act promptly to address the conduct and will take developmentally appropriate restorative, corrective, and/or disciplinary action.

Newton Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, including traits historically associated with race including hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to all designated youth groups, as indicated in our [Nondiscrimination Policy](#). Newton Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

You can view the District's Nondiscrimination Policy, including Harassment and Retaliation, as well as all District' policies via the [Online Policy Manual](#). Inquiries concerning the Newton Public Schools' policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may be directed to the Superintendent and/or Administration Team.

Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, E-mail: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov).

## B. Procedure for Filing Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment including Title Complaints

All members of the school community are responsible for reporting any incident that they believe to be discrimination. Any school staff member can receive a complaint, and ultimately the school principal, or the designated investigator, will be notified of the complaint in order to begin the investigation. Complaints will be thoroughly investigated, and a finding will be made whether discrimination has been substantiated.

The principal or other administrator who investigates the report of discrimination will follow the specific steps of this [Protocol for Investigating Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation](#) using the detailed processes in the appendix sections to ensure that all parties are aware of what is happening and have a chance to share any relevant experiences. There are specific expectations for

communication during and after an investigation so that anyone impacted or involved can be aware of the process and the outcomes that are relevant to them.

The Protocol for Reporting and Investigating Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation, including reporting forms, can be found on the NPS Website, on the [Policies, Procedures and Protocols](#) page.

The assistant superintendent for student services is designated as the District ADA, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Newton Public Schools. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

Casey Ngo-Miller  
Assistant Superintendent for Student Services  
100 Walnut Street, Room 320  
Newton, MA 02460  
(617) 559-6025

The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Newton Public Schools, and can be reached at:

Dr. Joany Santa  
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Staffing  
100 Walnut Street, Room 201  
Newton, MA 02460  
(617) 559-6005

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations issued by the Secretary of Education (effective August 14, 2020, and reinstated in January 2025) are intended to effectuate Title IX's prohibition against sex discrimination by requiring recipients to address sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination in education programs or activities. Accordingly, Newton Public Schools has developed and implements a [Protocol For Reporting and Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX \(Feb 2025\)](#).

The Title IX Coordinator, for complaints and investigations of sexual harassment concerning students falling within Title IX, can be reached at:

Kathy Lopes  
Title IX Coordinator  
lopesk@newton.k12.ma.us  
(617) 559-6140

The Title IX Coordinator for complaints and investigations of sexual harassment concerning staff falling within the Title IX, can be reached at:

Dr. Joany Santa  
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Staffing/Title IX Coordinator  
100 Walnut Street, Room 201  
Newton, MA 02460  
santaj@newton.k12.ma.us  
(617) 559-6005

## II. Students' Rights

Students in the Newton Public Schools are afforded the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with these rights, there are also responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

### A. Civil Rights

All students possess the right to an equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination, harassment and retaliation, as well as have the responsibility not to discriminate, harass or retaliate against others and report known instances of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

### B. School Attendance

All students have the right to attend free public schools, are responsible for attending school regularly, and are expected to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.

### C. Due Process

All students have the right to due process of law with respect to suspension and expulsion from school.

### D. Freedom of Expression

All students have the right to free inquiry and expression and the responsibility to observe reasonable time, place and manner limitations regarding these rights. This right includes the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

### E. Freedom of Assembly

Associations may be organized within the school for political, social, athletic or other proper and lawful purposes, subject to reasonable limitations as to time, manner and place of assembly.

### F. Privacy

All students have the right to privacy, subject to permissible searches of students, lockers, automobiles and NPS technology and online resources by the District. This right includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

### G. Freedom of Religion

All students have the right to freedom of religion without interference or infringement from the School Committee.

### H. Dress Code

Students and parents have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet these stated requirements. Student, faculty, or parent groups may recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions, however, students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above. School district policies,

including dress code or requirements for participation in any educational or related activity, may not impair or prohibit student's natural and protected hairstyles, as defined by the CROWN Act.

## **I. Rights of Eighteen-Year-Old Students**

When a student reaches the age of 18, they shall have the following rights:

1. They may sign their own absence notes, though school officials may require satisfactory verification as to the cause of the absence.
2. They may sign their own permission slips for field trips.
3. They may authorize or limit access to their own school records.
4. They may withdraw from school without permission of a parent or guardian.
5. They have all the rights, which would belong to a parent or guardian in connection with the special education process, including the right to consent to or object to their individual education plan (IEP).

Please note: NPS reserves the right to notify parents/guardians of student disciplinary incidents or other significant school events regardless of age.

## **J. Rights of Students with Disabilities**

Unless under G.L. c. 71B and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. (IDEA), every student must be given a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. A student is entitled to these services if the student meets all three of the following requirements:

1. The student is between the ages of 3 and 22.
2. The student has not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent.
3. The student has an education disability which keeps the student from making effective progress.

Under Special Education regulations, the Newton School Department provides a preschool program and related support services for children with disabilities starting at age three. For more information, call the director of NPS Early Childhood Program at (617) 559-6050 or check the [NECP website](#).

One year prior to the student's reaching age 18, the IEP Team must inform the student of the right at age 18 to make all decisions in relation to special education programs and services. Upon reaching the age of eighteen, the student has decision-making authority and can sign the IEP. There are three exceptions, however, that can be made:

1. If the parent has sought and received guardianship from a court of competent jurisdiction, then the parent retains full decision-making authority.
2. The student, upon reaching the age of majority (18) and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to share decision-making with their parent (or other willing adult), including allowing the parent to co-sign the IEP. Such choice is made in the presence of the Team and is documented in written form. The student's choice prevails at any time that a disagreement occurs between the adult student and the parent or other adult with whom the student has shared decision-making.
3. The student, upon reaching the age of majority and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to delegate continued decision-making to their parent or other willing adult. Such choice is made in the presence of at least one representative of the school district and one other witness, and is documented in written form and maintained in the student record.

### Section 504 Accommodation Plan

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) is a federal law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability. Section 504 prohibits organizations and employers from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in, and have access to, program benefits and services. Section 504 protects qualified individuals with disabilities.

Under this law, individuals with disabilities are defined as persons with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. People who have a history of, or who are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, are also covered.

For a student to qualify for Section 504 protection, the student must: (1) have a mental or physical impairment (2) which substantially limits (3) one or more major life activities. All three criteria must be met before a student is eligible for Section 504.

## III. Student Responsibilities

As mentioned above, students, as well as all members of the Newton Public Schools' community, are expected to assume certain responsibilities in addition to the rights afforded them.

### A. Responsible, Positive and Safe Behavior

All members of the school community, including all school personnel, have the responsibility to demonstrate respect for other individuals and their property. This expectation applies to peers as well as to all school personnel while in school or on school property and during all school-sponsored activities, both on and off campus, including those times when they are riding school buses or other school-provided vehicles. It is specifically noted that, for the purposes of these rules and regulations, buses and other school transportation vehicles are considered school property and bus drivers are considered school personnel.

Students are responsible for behaving in accordance with these rules and regulations and to remove themselves from situations, which involve illegal activity, the possession or use of illicit drugs, alcohol, or weapons, or the violation of the discipline codes. Students who do not remove themselves from such situations may be subject to discipline pursuant to D20 of the discipline code.

The Newton Public Schools are committed to fostering a safe and positive learning environment where all students can thrive. We recognize our responsibility to help students develop prosocial behaviors and become productive members of our school community. To this end, schools provide a range of supports and behavioral interventions tailored to individual student needs.

The Newton Public Schools prioritize proactive approaches and work collaboratively with students to address behavioral concerns without disrupting the educational process. We strive to be responsive to students' diverse needs, understanding that behavior is often a form of communication.

While our focus is on prevention and positive intervention, we also recognize the necessity of maintaining a safe and orderly environment for all. In cases where student behavior significantly disrupts learning or poses a threat to safety, disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion, may be required. These measures are implemented judiciously and with consideration for the wellbeing of all students and in accordance with applicable student discipline laws and regulations.

Our ultimate goal is to create a supportive community where students learn to make positive choices, respect others, and contribute meaningfully to their school and broader society. In addition to this disciplinary action, violation of the Discipline Codes may result in police notification pursuant to state statute and/or the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the Newton Public Schools and the Newton Police Department

## **B. Attendance Expectations and Massachusetts Law**

Regular attendance is essential for student learning and development. Under Massachusetts General Law ([M.G.L. c. 76, §1](#)), school attendance is required for all children between the ages of 6 and 16. Ensuring consistent attendance is a shared responsibility among students, families, and schools. Except under certain circumstances, failure to attend school may result in school staff seeking additional support for the student and family, including possible referral to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) or involvement with the state court system.

### **Excused Absences**

Given the importance of daily attendance, absences are only excused for specific reasons, as outlined in Newton School Committee policy. Acceptable reasons include:

- Illness or quarantine
- Bereavement or serious illness in the family
- Inclement weather that endangers a student's health
- Observance of major religious or cultural holidays

Other exceptional circumstances may be excused with the approval of the school principal (or designee.)

All absences must be reported to the school by a parent or guardian, ***regardless of the reason.***

### **Tardiness**

Punctuality matters every day. Even short delays in arriving to school can cause students to miss:

- Important instruction, class, and school updates
- Class routines
- Social and community-building opportunities

Chronic tardiness can lead to cumulative academic gaps and can also disrupt learning for classmates and teachers. Families are encouraged to ensure that students arrive to school on time every day.

### **Chronic Absence**

Chronic absence includes all absences—excused or unexcused—and is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year, or approximately two days per month or 18 days (or more.) Attendance has a strong impact on academic performance for students. When patterns of chronic absence are identified, schools will collaborate with families to explore the root causes and create a plan to improve attendance.

### **Truancy**

In Massachusetts, a child is considered habitually truant if they willfully fail to attend school for more than 8 days in a quarter without a lawful excuse. Truancy refers specifically to unexcused absences and may result in:

- School-based interventions
- Parent/guardian conferences
- Referral to community support services

- Legal action, if attendance patterns continue

### Extended Absences

Students who leave Newton for extended periods will be withdrawn and should re-enroll upon return. Teachers are not expected to provide advance assignments, study aides, or virtual instruction for extended absences, as such time away can significantly impact a student's ability to keep pace with the class.

The Newton Public Schools **strongly discourages** avoidable extended absences due to their effect on student academic progress, potential loss of course credit, and impact on grade-level promotion.

### Student Withdrawal (over age 16)

Once a student reaches the age of 16, they may legally withdraw from school with parental or guardian permission. Before withdrawal, the family may meet with the school principal (or designee) to discuss:

- The reason for the student's decision
- Alternative educational options
- The opportunity for the student to return to school in the future

If a student does decide to permanently leave school, the administrator must send formal notice and conduct an exit interview in accordance with [M.G.L. c. 76, §18](#).

## **C. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students**

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, have in their system, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property or at any school function. Violations of the [Prohibition of Student Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use Policy](#) may result in disciplinary action. Controlled substances include: those as defined in G.L., c.94C (e.g., cocaine, marijuana, LSD, steroids); the misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs; and/or products misused for the purpose of mind-altering effects (e.g., aerosols, solvents).

Students are strictly prohibited from having alcohol and/or illicit drugs in their system during school hours, on school property, or at any school-sponsored event. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to: using or being under the influence, possession, attempting to purchase, intending or attempting to sell/distribute, selling or distributing, and/or possession of drug or tobacco paraphernalia, including Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), which may take the form of e-cigarette or vaporizing products, regardless of whether they contain nicotine. Additionally, students who know they are in the company of any individual using or selling illicit drugs or alcohol and who do not remove themselves from that situation may be subject to discipline pursuant to D20 of the discipline code.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion as delineated in the discipline codes and suspensions/expulsion section of this handbook. The school will consult with a school resource officer if a student is found under the influence, in possession of or selling a controlled substance. Also, the schools will partner with the police department to deal with violations of the law, as outlined in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between NPS and the Newton Police Department.



In addition to, or as part of, the disciplinary response to such abuses, referrals to prevention and intervention services will be made to students and families to support the systemwide goal of a safe and drug free environment.

In addition to the rules and regulations outlined above, student athletes will also be responsible for complying with the rules and regulations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

### **Breathalyzers and Protective Custody**

In keeping with the Newton Public Schools' expressed goal of having all school activities remain free and safe from alcohol use, principals or their designees will have the discretion to use either a passive or an active individual breathalyzer on any student attending school or any school activity if they have a reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of alcohol. Students found to be under the influence of alcohol will be subject to the Discipline Code M12. If a student is found to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs at school or school events, attempts will be made to contact parents or guardians. If no parent or guardian is available, the student may be taken into protective custody by the police.

### **Responsibility Regarding Tobacco**

In accordance with G.L. c.71, §2A, and consistent with the City Ordinances, and NPS Policies, the use of all tobacco products of any type within all school facilities, on all school grounds, and on all school buses by any individual, including school personnel is strictly prohibited. The types of tobacco products include but are not limited to:

1. **Smoking** - All types of smoking tobacco, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, little cigars or cigarillos, pipes, clove cigarettes, blunt wraps and any other burning of a tobacco product resulting in smoking.
2. **Smokeless** - Smokeless tobacco products, such as dip, snuff, tobacco chew, snus, spit packs, flavored tobacco and dissolvable as well as any other type of tobacco product that is ingested but not burned.
3. **Non-FDA Approved Nicotine Delivery Products** - Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), personal vaporizer (PV), or Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), which include, among other things, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and personal vaporizers (PV) regardless of whether they contain nicotine.

In addition, per the City of Newton, Smoke Free Zone Ordinance Art. I, Secs. 20-7 and 20-8 (Rev. Ords. 2012, Ord. A-42, 06-16-14), smoking, possessing, or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigarette, cigar, pipe, or the use of e-cigarettes are prohibited upon the sidewalk or other public property within a nine hundred (900) foot perimeter of the property of Newton North High School grounds. The Health and Human Services Commissioner has deputized Newton North personnel to enforce the provisions of this ordinance.

## **D. Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

The Newton Public Schools is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying, and harassment. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. Bullying, harassment, intimidation or retaliation for any reason are prohibited in the Newton Public Schools. Newton Public Schools takes a proactive approach to the prevention of bullying and all forms of harassment and strong interventions when violations of district norms and rules occur. This starts with building a school environment that promotes positive, respectful, and prosocial interactions and prevents bullying behavior. This requires anti-bullying education and learning, clear



expectations for students, sound policies and procedures, professional development for staff, and community education and outreach.

Creating a school culture free of harassment and bullying requires collective effort and awareness. All members of our school community—students, staff, parents, and community partners—share the responsibility to recognize and report bullying. Students, staff, parents and community partners all have a responsibility to recognize and report bullying when they see it.

Every student and staff member has the potential and the responsibility to positively influence our school culture by treating others with courtesy, consideration and respect. Any individual who experiences or witnesses hurtful or unkind behavior should take action to tell individuals behaving in a disrespectful manner to stop and report behavior to a trusted adult.

The Newton Public School System prohibits bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment and retaliation:

- at school and at all school facilities;
- at school-sponsored or school-related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- on school buses and school bus stops;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by a school; and
- at non-school-related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices, if the bullying affects the school environment.

Bullying (including cyberbullying) is the repeated use by one or more students or staff members, of a written, verbal, or electronic communication or expression, or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target. Bullying results in the outcomes that:

- cause physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to their property;
- place the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying, retaliation or harassment may occur in many forms, including through degrading words or actions, physical means, or social isolation. You can find Newton's entire [Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy](#), including definitions, in our [online policy manual](#). Additionally, the NPS [Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan](#) includes the procedures relating to the implementation of the district's policy, and information to report an incident of suspected bullying.

It is important to note that not all instances of unkind or hurtful behavior meet the definition of bullying as defined by the law and school committee policy. The Newton Public Schools are committed to addressing all forms of unkind or mean behavior, regardless of whether they meet the definition of bullying, to foster a safe, respectful learning environment.

## **E. Prevention of Hazing**

No student, employee or school organization in the NPS community shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person.

*"Hazing" is defined as "any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any*

*student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.” See G.L. c 269, §§17-19.*

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the superintendent of schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

#### **M.G.L., Chapter 269, Section 17 – Criminal Penalty**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### **M.G.L., Chapter 269, Section 18 – Duty to Report Hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is a victim of hazing as defined in Section 17 and is at the scene of such crime, shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to themselves or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### **M.G.L., Chapter 269, Section 19 – Hazing Statutes to be Provided; Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required**

Newton Public Schools shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of sections 17, 18 and 19 of M.G.L. 269; however, compliance with this section's requirements to issue copies of sections 17, 18 and 19 of M.G.L. c. 269 to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams and organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, teammates, pledges, applicants or other prospective members for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that

such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, teammates, pledges, applicants or other prospective members has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Newton Public Schools shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of M.G.L.c. 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19.

Additional information can be found in the district's [Prohibition of Hazing Policy](#).

## **F. Academic Honesty**

Students in the Newton Public Schools have a great deal of freedom to pursue individual research and writing. However, they are expected to do this work honestly and never to represent any other person's work as their own, to allow any other student to copy their work, or to obtain test information ahead of time or pass such information to others.

As early as second grade, teachers begin to explain to students the importance of using their own words when taking notes for a project, and the value of honesty in relaying information is reinforced at every level. Teachers at both Newton high schools discuss plagiarism, cheating, and forgery at the beginning of each academic course and talk with students about the academic and ethical reasons for avoiding these behaviors. Students should also be aware that the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in completing academic work should only be done with teacher approval and consultation. The use of AI technologies without teacher consent may be considered a violation of Academic Honesty. Teachers also make clear that they will be vigilant about plagiarism, cheating, and forgery in all forms

Consequences/penalties for plagiarism, cheating, and forgery: If a teacher or administrator believes that an offense has occurred, they will meet with the student. If they determine that the student has committed a first violation of Academic Honesty:

- The student will initially receive no credit for the assignment. The teacher and department head/assistant principal consult on what will be expected of the student with regard to recovering learning and credit for the assignment and how the revised work will affect the term grade.
  - If the student does not engage in any opportunities for making up the assignment, the typical course consequences for missing work will apply.
- After conferring with the department head/assistant principal, the teacher:
  - informs the student; and
  - contacts the student's parent or guardian to explain the plagiarism, cheating, and/or forgery, and to explain the plan for redoing the work.
- The teacher or department head informs the dean or assistant principal for that student. That administrator then keeps records, by student, of each offense without putting an official letter in the student's file. The dean also meets with the student, and contacts the parent or guardian about potential future consequences for plagiarism, cheating, and/or forgery.

Further violations of Academic Honesty will include the process above, along with disciplinary consequences up to (and including) suspension.

## **G. Acceptable Use of Technology**

Newton Public Schools has developed a [Technology and Acceptable Use Policy](#) and

[Student Technology and Online Acceptable Use Guidelines](#) to ensure that students utilize access in a responsible and safe manner consistent with the educational purpose of providing these services. Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines, and violations may result in disciplinary consequences.

Individual electronic equipment (iPhones, Android Phones, Smartphones, iPods, MP3 players, cell phones, cameras, etc.) may not be used in school buildings, except for specific designated areas depending on individual school policy. Use of such equipment in designated areas on school property should be done in a manner that does not violate a student, faculty or staff member's privacy.

In classrooms, individual electronic equipment must be concealed and turned off, unless used with specific teacher permission. Violators risk having the equipment confiscated and taken to a dean, principal or designee. Failure to turn over any electronic equipment to a faculty member or administrator, as requested, may result in disciplinary consequences. Confiscated equipment will not be returned until after school and then only at the discretion of the dean, principal or designee.

All technology devices, including personal devices while using NPS online resources, Internet, learning and data systems, and social media sites shall be utilized in a manner consistent with NPS' educational mission, thereby demonstrating respect for the use of shared resources, software and intellectual property rights, ownership of information and system security. Any use of NPS' technology devices, including personal devices while using NPS online resources, Internet, learning and data systems, and social media sites that is contrary to our Acceptable Use Policy or Guidelines is unacceptable and prohibited.

If a student uses any device on the Newton Public Schools technology infrastructure inappropriately, strict restrictions will result that may include direct staff supervision at all times, and/or disciplinary consequences.

#### **H. Athletics and Extracurricular Activities**

Students who participate in athletics, extracurricular and/or club activities are representing the Newton Public Schools and should act accordingly. In addition to the Code of Conduct, MIAA Handbook, team or club rules, and applicable school handbook, students must also comply with their applicable school's Chemical Health Policy, which can be found on the school's website.

## **IV. Rules Of Behavior and Discipline of Students**

NPS is invested in supporting each student's right to access education by preventing and responding effectively to inappropriate behavior, and by limiting the use of suspensions and other punitive measures that remove students from instruction, as consistent with state laws and guidance. We are committed to taking a holistic approach to discipline that is supportive and reparative. While prioritizing the physical and emotional safety of all members of our community, we are committed to considering the cognitive, social, emotional and physical capacity and task expectations for each stage of development and encouraging developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning, growth, and repair. 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.

#### **A. Student Discipline**

The principal/designee has the authority to exercise discretion in deciding the disciplinary consequences for a student who has violated school or district rules. Before suspending or expelling students, the principal/designee must consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning

process and, in certain circumstances, implement alternative remedies such as (1) mediation; (2) conflict resolution; (3) restorative justice; and (4) collaborative problem-solving.

An exception to the prerequisite implementation of alternative remedies for suspension and expulsion are limited to circumstances where (1) such remedies are unsuitable to the specific incident or are counter-productive; or (2) the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. The requirement to consider and implement alternative remedies does not apply to discipline imposed under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H or under G.L. c. 71, §37H ½, which includes felony charges, weapons offenses, drug offenses, or assault on a staff person.

The principal/designee shall consider the student's unique circumstances and employ these practices or capture and preserve learning opportunities to the greatest extent whenever possible.

### *Restorative Practices*

Restorative practices are formal and informal processes on a continuum, from prevention to intervention, and from proactive to responsive action with the goal of building a positive community and addressing harm constructively when it occurs. Restorative practices are centered on the 5R's (Relationship, Respect, Responsibility, Repair & Reintegration) and seek to create strong, caring and healthy communities within our schools. Specific restorative activities to repair harm might include restorative chats and conferences, circles with impacted community members, other forms of conflict resolution and mediation, and other positive and supportive interventions.

### *Corrective Action*

Corrective actions are steps taken to address factors that contributed to the issue at hand to prevent recurrence. Corrective action will be used when possible and practicable in light of the duty to maintain safe and orderly school environments conducive to student learning.

### *Loss of School-based Privileges*

School-based consequences may include the denial of participation in extracurricular activities, including field trips, after-school activities, graduation exercises, other school-sponsored activities, and/or after-school detention. If a school-based activity results in a graded assignment or is otherwise a classroom requirement, students may not be denied participation.

### *In-School Suspension*

At the discretion of the principal/designee, in-school suspension may also be imposed for violation of the student code of conduct. In-school suspension means the student is removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than 10 consecutive school days. In-school suspension for less than 10 days shall not be considered a short-term out-of-school suspension and is also not considered an absence. An in-school suspension of more than 10 days shall be deemed a long-term out-of-school suspension, and the student will be provided with the due process provided in a long-term out-of-school suspension hearing.

For an in-school suspension, the principal/designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge. The principal/designee shall also provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal/designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal/designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year. If an in-school suspension does exceed 10 days, a long-term out-of-school suspension hearing must occur prior to the in-school suspension exceeding 10 days.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal/designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent verbally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal/designee shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of verbally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal/designee shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and invite the parent to a meeting with the principal, if such a meeting has not already occurred. The principal/designee shall provide such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal/designee and the parent.

### *Out-of-School Suspension*

An out-of-school suspension is a short-term or long-term removal from the school premises and regular classroom activities. Short-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive school days or less.

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive school days, or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

A student who receives an out-of-school suspension (short- or long-term) is restricted from entering the school buildings or coming onto school grounds; and a suspended student may not participate in any school sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period. A suspended student is entitled to access classwork, homework, and other educational materials including tests and quizzes, in order to make academic progress. An out-of-school suspension is considered an unexcused absence from school.

The principal/designee has the sole responsibility for determining who is suspended. The suspended student may not be permitted to return to school until a readmittance conference has been held.

### *Opportunity for Academic Progress During Suspension/Expulsion*

Any student receiving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension shall have the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days shall have an opportunity to receive educational services that will enable the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school-wide educational services plan.

## **B. Discipline Guidelines and Codes**

In accordance with the student's right to due process (see Section IV Rules and Behavior and Discipline of Students), the Newton Public Schools may discipline a student according to the following guidelines and discipline codes.

<b>M1.</b>	Possession of firearms (mandatory police notification).
<b>M2.</b>	Striking a teacher or other school personnel (grades 6-12) (possible police notification).
<b>M3.</b>	Possession, sale, distribution, intent to distribute, use or manufacture of controlled substances or alcohol (mandatory police notification).
<b>M4.</b>	Use of, or threatened use of a knife, including a pocket knife, as a weapon (mandatory police notification).
<b>M5.</b>	Possession of a dangerous weapon, or use of, or threatened use of any object as a weapon (grades 6-12) (mandatory police notification).
<b>M6.</b>	Setting fires (mandatory police and fire department notification).
<b>M7.</b>	Fighting or any physical and/or sexual assault or act of violence committed against another student or any school personnel (grades 9-12) (possible police notification).
<b>M8.</b>	Failure to identify one's self truthfully upon request of any school personnel (grades 6-12).
<b>M9.</b>	Unauthorized sounding of a fire alarm or tampering with defibrillators (grades 6-12) (mandatory police and fire department notification).
<b>M10.</b>	Intimidation (causing fear or harm) or extortion, or threat of intimidation or extortion, or hazing directed toward another student or school personnel (in-person or through the use of technology or electronic communication) in violation of a school rule or policy (grade 6-12) (possible police notification).
<b>M11.</b>	Being under the influence of controlled substances or alcoholic beverages, or suspicion of use of controlled substances, or in possession of any drug paraphernalia (mandatory police notification for possession of drug paraphernalia).
<b>M12.</b>	Bullying or retaliation related to a bullying incident, reporting, or investigation (grades 6-12) (possible police notification).

The following offenses may require disciplinary consequences and the denial of participation in graduation exercises:

<b>D1.</b>	Violation of any Newton Public Schools policy, including, but not limited to, the Student Technology and Online Acceptable Use Policy and Guidelines, and the Policy Prohibiting Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students.
<b>D2.</b>	Discrimination against or harassment of another student or school personnel on the basis of, but not limited to race, color, sex, gender identity, homelessness, national origin, religion, handicap or sexual orientation (possible police notification).
<b>D3.</b>	Stealing and/or willful destruction of school or personal property (possible police notification).
<b>D4.</b>	Persistent or excessive truancy and/or tardiness to class and class cutting.
<b>D5.</b>	Cheating, plagiarism or forgery, including the use of artificial intelligence without proper permission or citation, and/or impersonating another person either verbally or in written form.

<b>D6.</b>	Fighting or any physical or sexual assault or act of violence committed against another student or school personnel (grades K-8) (possible police notification).
<b>D7.</b>	Use of obscene, abusive or profane language or gestures, or rude or defiant behavior, either of which substantially or materially disrupts the educational process or school activity.
<b>D8.</b>	A pattern of defiant behavior towards any school personnel or policy.
<b>D9.</b>	Behavior which endangers persons or property or substantially disrupts the educational process or school activity, including refusal of a search which is based on reasonable suspicion that the search will lead to evidence of a violation of a school rule or any law (possible police notification).
<b>D10.</b>	Giving off a strong odor of alcohol or marijuana (possible police notification).
<b>D11.</b>	Presence in unauthorized areas.
<b>D12.</b>	Using tobacco products or related paraphernalia of any type including Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) regardless of whether they contain nicotine in any school facility, school bus, on school grounds, or at a school sponsored event.
<b>D13.</b>	Violation of any criminal law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including, but not limited to, gambling or stalking, not already covered by these rules.
<b>D14.</b>	Unauthorized use of school materials, equipment or property.
<b>D15.</b>	Being present in the company of a person the student knows is using or selling illicit drugs or alcohol or is otherwise violating an item on the discipline code and who fails to remove themselves from the situation (possible police notification).
<b>D16.</b>	Aiding, abetting or encouraging bullying, fighting, or any act of violence, or making a false allegation of bullying or retaliation or any act of violence.
<b>D17.</b>	Creating a video or audio recording of another person in school or at a school-sponsored event, without the consent or knowledge of the person whose image or voice was recorded (possible police notification).
<b>D18.</b>	Failure to identify one's self truthfully upon request of any school personnel (grades K-5).
<b>D19.</b>	Unauthorized sounding of a fire alarm or tampering with defibrillators (grades K-5).
<b>D20.</b>	Possession of a dangerous weapon, or use of, or threatened use of any object as a weapon (grades K-5) (mandatory police notification).
<b>D21.</b>	Intimidation (causing fear or harm) or extortion, or threat of intimidation or extortion, or hazing directed toward another student or school personnel (grades K-5) (possible police notification).
<b>D22.</b>	Bullying, or retaliation related to a bullying incident, reporting, or investigation (grades K -5) (possible police notification).

*Please note that the designation of "M" and "D" serves to distinguish between rules for which action is mandatory and rules for which the action and consequence is at the discretion of the student's principal or designee.*



The term "dangerous weapon" shall include, but not be limited to, any type of firearm, knife or martial arts equipment, explosive devices including fireworks, or a facsimile of a dangerous weapon. Any dangerous weapon in the possession of a student shall be removed from the student's custody, and any illegal weapon shall be turned over to the Newton Police Department. All other weapons shall be returned to the student or parent/guardian at the discretion of the principal or their designee. There shall be notification of the possession of a weapon to parents or guardians before the weapon is returned.

The term "controlled substances" shall include all controlled substances as defined in G.L. c.94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana and cocaine or prescription drugs for which the student does not have a valid prescription. (See Section III, C for more information.)

All of the above offenses may involve the exclusion of a student from school and/or school-sponsored activities. The principal or their designee will conduct disciplinary investigations and hearings.

#### 1. Due Process

Due Process applies to all short-term and long-term out-of-school suspensions. The legal term "due process" comes from the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. The Fifth Amendment provides in part: "...nor shall any person be . . . deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." The Fourteenth Amendment reads as follows:

*All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law, which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*

In January 1975, the United States Supreme Court ruled that public school students facing suspension are protected by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Because state statutes require school districts to maintain schools and require students to attend them, the Court stated that public education is a property interest. Deprivation of education (through suspension) without minimum procedural protections is thus a violation of the property interest protection of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Students facing suspension also have liberty interest. Because suspension may damage the reputation of the student and hamper their future opportunities (employment, college, etc.), lack of minimum procedural protections is contrary to the Fourteenth Amendment's prohibition against arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

In the Newton Public Schools, due process is assured in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½ and §37H¾. In administering discipline, school officials will be careful to observe the right to due process under the law for each student. The nature of the violation determines the due process that school officials follow.

#### 2. Due Process Rights for students charged with possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on school staff and/or students who have been charged with or convicted of a felony. (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½)

##### a. M.G.L. c. 71, §37H

State law permits principals to expel any student in grades 9-12 who, on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games:

- i. is found in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or of a controlled substance as defined in G.L. c.94C; or, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine or heroin; or
- ii. assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff.

Any student who is charged with a violation of the above shall be notified by telephone and in writing of an opportunity for a hearing, at which the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) may have legal representation at their own expense, and the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal/designee. After said hearing, a principal/designee may, at their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal/designee to have violated the above.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their appeal. The student shall have the right to counsel, at their own expense, at a hearing before the superintendent/designee. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Pending the outcome of any appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect.

*b. M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½*

State law permits principals/designee to suspend students charged with a felony or a felony delinquency, or to expel students convicted of or admitting guilt to a felony or a felony delinquency if the principal/designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school (§37H1/2). A student subject to suspension or expulsion under this provision of the General Laws shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. Unless the proposed suspension is for 10 days or less, the student shall be afforded the procedural rights set out for suspensions greater than 10 days or for expulsions, whichever is applicable, as such rights are described in this handbook. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent, provided, however, that such suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

A student may appeal the suspension or expulsion by giving a written notice requesting an appeal to the superintendent no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. The student may be represented and may present verbal and written testimony at the appeal hearing before the superintendent. The superintendent may overturn or alter the decision of the principal/designee and may recommend an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall issue a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing, which decision shall be the final decision of the school.

district with regard to the student's suspension or expulsion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect.

3. Due Process Rights for students charged with other violations (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾)

a. *Notice and Principal's Hearing*

For any suspension listed under this section, the principal/designee shall provide notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. The student shall receive written notice of the charges and the opportunity to participate in a hearing with the principal or designee to discuss charges and reasons for the suspension and/or exclusion prior to suspension/exclusion taking effect.

The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The hearing may take place without the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) so long as the principal/designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

The purpose of the principal/designee's hearing is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

The principal/designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense.

b. *Short-term Out-of-School Suspension*

The principal/designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, which the principal/designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal/designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal/designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, and after determining that an exception to requisite alternative remedies applies, the principal/designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal/designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal/designee shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

c. *Long-term Out-of-School Suspension*

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall also have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal/designee may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense; the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal/designee, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the principal/designee shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.

If present, the parent/guardian shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, which the principal/designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal/designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal/designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal/designee and the parent/guardian.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal/designee shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

If the student is suspended for more than ten (10) days for a single infraction or for more than ten (10) days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the superintendent and the process for appealing in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. No student will be suspended for greater than 90 days, beginning on the first day the student is removed from the building.

4. Appeals of Short-term Out-of-School Suspensions

For elementary school students, an appeal is filed with the superintendent of schools or their designee. For middle school or high school students, the appeal is filed with the principal of the school. An appeal must be in writing and must be filed by the student's parent/guardian (or student if 18 or older) within five (5) days of the student having served the suspension.

The principal's decision on the above appeal will be made expeditiously and will be in writing. Middle school and high school students may then further appeal the principal/designee's decision in writing by the student's parent/guardian (or student if 18 years or older), but must file within five (5) days from the date the principal/designee's

decision is issued. Those appeals shall be filed in writing with the superintendent of schools or their designee. Decisions on the appeal of the principal/designee's decision will be issued expeditiously in writing and will be final.

Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall be completed and remain in effect.

5. *Appeals of Long-term Out-of-School Suspensions—Superintendent's Hearing*

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion to submit a written request for an appeal to the superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent or their designee may deny the appeal or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.

The superintendent or their designee will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) school days of the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to seven (7) additional calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent's hearing may proceed without the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent or their designee shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent or their designee shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

At the hearing, the superintendent or their designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal/designee's hearing for long-term suspensions. The superintendent or their designee will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent/designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent/designee may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal/designee but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal/designee decision. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. The superintendent's decision is the final decision of the district.

6. *Involuntary Transfer*

The superintendent of schools, at their discretion, as a disciplinary consequence, may transfer a student from one school to another within the Newton Public Schools.

7. *Emergency Removal pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾*

The principal/designee may remove a student from school temporarily on an emergency basis when all of the following criteria are met:

1. a student is charged with a disciplinary offense; and
2. the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school; and
3. in the principal's/designee's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

In the event of an emergency removal, the principal/designee shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to verbally notify the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the emergency removal and the reason for the need for

emergency removal. The principal/designee shall provide written notice to the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) as provided above and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal/designee as provided above, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal/designee, student, and parent(s)/guardian(s).

The principal/designee shall render a decision verbally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements as described above.

In the event of an emergency removal from school, the principal/designee will not release the student until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

### **C. Bus Privileges**

A student's bus privileges may be revoked by the principal, director or their designee if the Discipline Code violation occurs on a school bus or while waiting to board, boarding or exiting said school bus. Any student who wishes to ride the bus must obtain a bus pass or may be subject to discipline.

### **D. Searches, Interrogations and Seizures**

#### **Searches by Staff**

Under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, students are protected from unreasonable searches and seizures conducted by public school officials and teachers. However, equipment assigned to students, such as lockers, desks and technology devices, belong to the Newton Public Schools, and school officials reserve the right to inspect such equipment at any time without notice. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property.

Students, and their person or personal property, including personal electronics and vehicles on school property, may be searched by a public school official pursuant to the following procedure:

1. There is reasonable suspicion to believe that a search will disclose evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school;
2. When such reasonable suspicion exists, a search may be conducted under the explicit authorization of the principal or their designee;
3. The measures adopted are reasonably related to the objective of the search and are not excessively intrusive to the age and gender of the student and the nature of the infraction. The manner and method of the search must be tailored to the circumstances. The search should be limited to areas and objects that reasonably could be expected to obtain the contraband material or evidence being sought;
4. Items, which might be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, such as weapons, will be removed from the student's possession and may be turned over to law enforcement officials.

"Reasonable Suspicion" for a student search may include, but is not limited to, for example, a school staff member's personal observation that the student possesses contraband material on school premises, or the staff member's receipt of a report to that effect by another school employee, a student, or some other reliable source. Even a report from an anonymous source may constitute reasonable grounds for a search, if all the circumstances persuade the school official that the report is reliable. A student's refusal to consent to a search in such a situation may result in disciplinary action.

### Interrogations, Arrests, and Searches by Police

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school principal or their designee will be present when possible. Except in exigent circumstances, the school principal or their designee will attempt to contact the student's parent or guardian prior to the student's questioning by law enforcement.
2. School staff will assist or permit the police to search a student, their personal property, or school equipment assigned to such student, where the police have obtained a search warrant authorizing the search.
3. If law enforcement officials must arrest or take into custody a student on school grounds during school hours or during a school event, the principal and their designee will be notified before the student is arrested or taken into custody. Law enforcement officials will consult with school officials to determine the least disruptive way to take the student into custody.

### **E. Use of Force**

Corporal punishment is prohibited by state law. However, a teacher or other school personnel may use physical force against a student if that force is reasonable and necessary:

1. to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object; or
2. to protect any person or property, provided there is a clear and present danger to that person or property; or in self-defense.

### **F. Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

*(including students referred for special education or who are currently on 504 Accommodation Plans or Individual Educational Programs)*

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short-term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from their program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or Section 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (manifestation determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide them with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.
2. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or Section 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public

education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP Team or Section 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.

3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or Section 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or Section 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardians consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.
5. Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education.
  - a. If prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
    - i. The parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing; or
    - ii. The parent/guardian had requested an evaluation; or
    - iii. School district staff had expressed concern that the student had a disability.
  - b. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures to conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.
  - c. The school district has developed procedures consistent with the federal requirements to expedite evaluations.

## V. Health Information

The Newton School Health Program is administered by the Newton Health and Human Services Department. The school health team includes: Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Director of School Health Services, Assistant Director of School Health Services, School Nurses, and School Physician. All medical information is confidential. For the health and safety of students, pertinent health information will be shared with school staff that have a "need to know." In NPS, school nurses are responsible for the following:

### A. Immunization Compliance

All students must meet minimum immunization requirements for enrollment in school unless there is a medical or religious exemption or students are considered homeless or in foster care. Here is a



list of [School Immunization requirements](#).

## **B. Physical Examination Monitoring**

All newly registering students require a physical examination that has been done by a health care provider within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry. Physical examination documentation is collected in kindergarten and grades 3, 6 and 9. Students who require a physical examination for school activities are monitored by the school nurse.

## **C. Population-Based Health Screenings**

The following screenings take place annually in the grades listed. All students in the grade-levels indicated below will participate in these screenings, unless opted-out by family request. Notice of screening dates will be provided in advance.

- Vision Screening - Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9
- Hearing Screening - Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3, 7 and 9
- Growth Screening and BMI - Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 (opt-in screening program)
- Postural Screening- Grades 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (opt-in screening program)
- Substance Use Prevention Screening – SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) - Grades 8 and 10

## **D. Medication Administration**

All medication, including over-the-counter medication, must have a written medication order from a licensed prescriber and a completed [Medical Permission Form](#). All medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

## **E. Communicable Disease ControlCommunicable Disease Control**

Any student who is suspected to have a contagious health condition may be restricted from school at the discretion of the school nurse. To stop the spread of disease, please keep your child home for:

- 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 eruption
- vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- a communicable disease diagnosis

## **F. Health Care Planning**

The school nurse is central to all aspects of care and service delivery for students with special health care needs. An Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) can be developed.

## **G. Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**

School nurses serve as the site leader for school-based AED units available in the case of cardiac emergencies.

## **H. Athletic Concussion and Head Injury Prevention and Management**

Information on the [Athletic Concussion and Head Injury Prevention and Management Protocol](#) can be found in the policies, procedures and protocols section of our website.

## I. Life-Threatening Allergy Management

The [Life-Threatening Allergy Management Policy](#) is located in the policies, procedures and protocols section of our website.

# VI. Other Important School Information

## A. Care of Books and Equipment

A student may be responsible for returning, in a timely manner, all classroom and library books, athletic equipment, cameras, musical instruments, computers, and other school equipment and property entrusted or loaned to them. Failure to return such materials upon request shall subject the student to detention and/or the deprivation of participation in extracurricular activities. A student may be responsible for returning such materials in the same condition in which they were entrusted or loaned to the student and shall bear the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged or lost materials.

## B. Career and Technical Education and Cooperative Opportunities

Newton Public Schools maintains citywide Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs open to students from Newton North and Newton South High Schools that are housed primarily at Newton North High School. Newton South students may participate in the CTE major courses while pursuing their academic program at Newton South. If a Newton South student wishes to transfer to Newton North as a full-time student to pursue a major in CTE, then the district policy concerning a school transfer request must be followed. Students who complete a CTE Exploratory and decide they want to pursue a career major must complete the CTE application. The application can be accessed on the Newton Public Schools website through the CTE section. For additional information, contact the Director of Career and Technical Education at (617) 559-6250.

Cooperative Education work experience is available to CTE students who are in a Major 3 (4<sup>th</sup> year) course of study. The cooperative education workplace experience offers students an additional learning dimension to their educational experience and is designed to expand their knowledge and skills in an authentic workplace-learning environment. This is a paid, supervised, instructional experience directly related to their CTE program that also carries school credit. The student's days are divided between their academic studies and their work-site training. To be eligible for a cooperative experience, students must demonstrate mastery in their competency skills, have a good attendance record, be in good academic standing, develop a resume, complete a Career Plan, and receive the recommendation of their teacher.

## C. Crossing Guard Coverage

Elementary Only (K-5) - Police crossing guards are on duty at major intersections for twenty-five minutes before the start of the school day and forty-five minutes after the close of the school day. Parents or guardians should instruct students to walk to and from school during these times.

Guards are on duty until 1:05 p.m. on Wednesdays.

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
  - Morning: 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
  - Afternoon: 2:50 p.m. - 3:35 p.m.
- Wednesday:
  - Morning: 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
  - Afternoon: 12:20 p.m. - 1:05 p.m.

Day Middle School at Minot Place and Walnut Street

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
  - Morning: 7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.
  - Afternoon: 2:20 p.m. - 3:05 p.m.
- Wednesday:
  - Morning: 7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.
  - Afternoon: 1:35 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.

## **D. English Language Learners (ELL) Program**

The Newton ELL program serves approximately 800 students in grades PK-12 at all schools. All students entering the Newton Public Schools who speak a language other than, or in addition to, English at home are evaluated for English language proficiency. If services are recommended, parents or guardians are advised of their choices and have the right to accept or reject the services available. Speaking, listening, reading and writing skills to increase English proficiency are taught by ESL teachers. Instruction is tailored to the individual linguistic, cultural, and educational needs of the student. English learners have equal rights of access to all courses of study in regular, special, technical and vocational school programs. They also have the right to participate in all school-sponsored activities. English learners have the right to counseling and course information (high school) in a language they understand. Families of English learners have a right to school information in a language and/or way they understand. School staff will arrange to have an interpreter for conferences or meetings related to the education of their child. For further information, call the ELL Department at (617) 559-6043.

## **E. Field Trips**

School-sponsored field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students. The [Field Trip Guidelines and Protocol 2025](#) and appropriate administrative procedures have been developed to screen, approve and evaluate field trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants and are accessible to every student, regardless of ability, financial status, or any other need for accommodation. For field trips to be approved, all students must have parent/guardian permission, all trips must be properly supervised, all safety precautions must be observed, all trips must contribute substantially to the educational program, and all trips must allow equal access and provide reasonable accommodations, financial and other, to all interested students. Children of parents/guardians or teacher chaperones who are not enrolled students in the school should not be allowed to accompany a field trip. All volunteer chaperones must follow the district's volunteer procedures, including the CORI and SORI screening for school volunteers prior to the trip. Here you will find more information, including Guidelines and Protocol and forms for field trips on the District's [protocols, procedures and forms](#) page.

## **F. Importance of Accurate Contact Information**

Parents are responsible for updating their emergency contact information at the beginning of each year within the [Family Portal](#) in Aspen, our student information system. This portal allows parents and guardians to review and update their contact information in a secure, online format. Required emergency contact information includes present home addresses and phone numbers, parents'/guardians' work, cell phone numbers, email addresses, and names and phone numbers of two neighbors or nearby relatives who can be called in the case of an accident or emergency, should the school be unable to locate the parents/guardians. (Permission of these people should be obtained prior to the use of their names.) It is vital that this information be kept up-to-date and accurate. Additional adjustments throughout the year should be done through school offices, (e.g., change of address, phone number, business, marital status) as needed. Accurate information is extremely important, as this information is used to update our emergency communication system

that enables the schools to communicate by telephone about emergency situations, school events, and important issues impacting students.

## **G. No School Announcements / Delayed Openings**

When school sessions are canceled or there is a delay in opening, parents will be notified via the school system's automated phone calling service. The announcement will also be made over the following television stations: Channel 4, Channel 5 and Channel 7 or the [Newton Public Schools' website](#). Parents or students may also call the District's emergency access line at (617) 559-9699 for a pre-recorded message. Please do not call the Fire Department or the Police Department. Watch television, check the website, or call the school emergency access line for a recorded message.

Although schools may be open on days following snow or ice storms, parents or guardians should use their own judgment in determining whether road conditions in their area permit students to proceed safely to school. The judgment of the parent or guardian will be accepted as a legitimate reason for student absence.

## **H. Parent Advisory Council for Special Education (SEPAC)**

The Newton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) provides advocacy, information, and community connection for Newton families whose children receive special education services. Special Education regulations require that every school district establish a PAC "to advise the School Committee on matters that pertain to education, health and safety of children with special needs." The SEPAC is an all-volunteer group that welcomes parents, educators, providers, and interested community members. SEPAC holds monthly meetings that offer opportunities to network with other parents, with school staff, and with outside speakers, as well as information about Newton's current education programs and about topics of particular interest to SEPAC families. You may check the [SEPAC](#) website, the Student Services Office at (617) 559-6025, or your school principal for the name of your school's SEPAC representative.

## **I. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. §1232h, affords parents/guardians and students who are 18 or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding our conducting of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical exams and screenings.

These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:
  - a. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
  - b. mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  - c. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - d. critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - e. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  - f. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent/guardian; or
  - g. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
  - a. any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - b. any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the

- immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and,
  - c. activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
- a. protected information surveys of students;
  - b. instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
  - c. instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

The PPRA also requires that the Newton Public Schools notify and obtain consent or allow parents/guardians to opt their child out of participating in certain school activities such as a protected information survey, marketing surveys, and certain physical exams and screenings as set forth above. Newton has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents/guardians, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Newton will directly notify parents/guardians and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Newton will also directly notify parents/guardians and eligible students, (such as) through either U.S. Mail or email, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education; and any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5920 or at 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327). This information comes from the U.S. Department of Education.

## **J. Research**

The Newton Public Schools regularly conducts studies in the areas of student performance and curriculum development/implementation or focuses on research questions in special areas such as early childhood education, and elementary and/or secondary education. From time-to-time Newton Public Schools receives requests from individuals, institutions, and/or organizations to conduct research in the schools. Any such request must be submitted in writing for the approval of the Chief of Data and Research. Follow this link for more [information and an application](#) for conducting research within the Newton Public Schools.

## **K. Required Notifications**

### **Asbestos Notification**

Newton Public Schools is required to provide annual Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) notice. NPS conducts periodic six (6) month evaluations, and every three years, updates its AHERA asbestos management plan to summarize abatement response actions, findings and ACBM classification and recommend response actions. A copy of the NPS Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Facilities Office at the Educational Center at 100 Walnut Street, Newtonville, MA. Additionally, each school receives a copy of the plan to keep in their main office. The District

continues to update the AHERA Asbestos Management Plan as remediation projects are completed. Any inquiries regarding the management of asbestos-containing materials in our schools should be directed to the district's AHERA Designated Person, Arthur Cabral, who can be reached at the Public Buildings Department, 52 Eliot Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02467.

#### *Parents Right to Know Teacher Qualifications Notification*

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows parents or guardians of students attending a designated Title I school to request information about the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teachers. Parents/Guardians can request this information from the school principal. The parent/guardian will be provided with the following information on request: (1) whether the teacher has met state certification or licensing requirements for the classes being taught by the teacher; (2) the teacher's degree major and other graduate degrees or certifications held by the teacher identified by field or discipline; and (3) whether the child is receiving services from paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

#### *Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education*

At the beginning of each school year, all families of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum offered that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues as defined by the MA state curriculum frameworks for health and wellness education. The superintendent or designee will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Families of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation. Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Newton Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Each such notice to families will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy and will inform families that they may:

1. Exempt their student from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues (courses or discrete units of a course, assemblies, or other instructional activities and programs for which the instruction and materials focus principally on human sexual education, the biological processes of human reproduction and sexual development, or human sexuality issues), without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the superintendent or designee. Further appeal of any decision regarding the materials is available, as delineated in our policy.

## **L. School Committee Public Meetings**

The Newton School Committee usually meets on two Monday evenings during each month from September through June and periodically during the summer, although meetings may be held on other days (instead of Monday) if the School Committee agrees to change. Meetings are generally



held at the Education Center, 100 Walnut Street, Newtonville, in the Frazier Room/Room 210. The meetings are open to the public. For further information, go to the [School Committee](#) page of the NPS website.

## M. School Transfer Request

The Newton Public Schools considers applications for students to transfer to schools outside of their home district using the procedures listed on our [NPS website](#). Impact on enrollment, staffing and space availability now and in the future, are key considerations for students who wish to attend a school in Newton other than their district school. Such placements will be made on a space available basis only. Parents/guardians of METCO program students or staff children are not required to apply for a school transfer request to continue in their assigned feeder pattern; however, their initial assignment in the district is governed by these procedures as well.

## N. Student Fees

Programs and/or services that are subject to a fee include: bus transportation, student parking, school lunch, elementary early morning program, athletics, elementary instrumental music, Newton Public Schools All City Band, Orchestra and Chorus, middle school student activities (with drama option), and high school drama. Below is a list of the fees (many of which have family caps), an explanation of the "Super Cap" or overall family cap which is set to establish a maximum amount a family might pay in fees and information on financial waivers so that no student is denied participation due to financial hardship.

***New in 2025-2026 - A \$20 processing fee will be deducted from a requested refund if an athletic fee was paid in advance of the student being confirmed on a final team roster for teams that hold tryouts and for which there is the potential the student may not participate. This fee is to offset the credit card processing fees charged to NPS.***

The fees are set by the School Committee as follows for the 2025-26 school year.

Type of Fee	Fee/Cap
Bus Transportation—Annual Round Trip <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students in grades K-6 who live more than 2.0 miles from their school are exempt from the fee.</li> <li>All other riders in grades K-12 are subject to the fee, including students who live in a safety zone.</li> <li>Parents/guardians can query the NPS <a href="#">transportation</a> page of our website for the walking distance from their home to school and other frequently asked questions.</li> </ul>	\$415 per student/family cap of \$830 After August 1st this fee changes to \$465 with a family cap of \$930. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passes are checked regularly at all schools.</li> <li>Abuse of the bus pass system or violation of the school system's rules of behavior will result in disciplinary action including suspension of transportation privileges and forfeiture of fees.</li> </ul>
Elementary Instrumental Music Instruction Grade 4	\$225 per participant to
Elementary Instrumental Music Ensemble Grade 5	\$225 per participant
Elementary Early Morning Program	\$18 per day with payment by semester

NPS All City Band, Chorus and Orchestra	\$225 per participant; Students who pay either the Grade 4 or Grade 5 Instrumental Music Fee are exempt from paying the All City Fee.	
Student Activities – Middle School Including school-sponsored extracurricular activities/Triple E	\$110 for annual unlimited participation in all clubs or \$160 per student if the student also participates in drama.	
Athletics – Middle School	\$240 per sport/family cap of \$720 New processing fee with refunds. Information above	
High School Drama Including actors and assistants	\$210 per participant per production, maximum of \$630 per participant per year.	
Athletics – High School	\$415 per sport/Family cap of \$1,245 (Hockey, Alpine Ski & Football = \$500/sport) New processing fee with refunds. Information above	
Parking Fees – South High School only	\$415 per year with option to pay \$207.50 per semester	
School Lunch for Type A Meal	Elementary	\$5.25
	Middle School	\$5.50
	High School	\$5.50
	Adult	\$6.00 plus tax

### Super Cap

The School Committee has set an overall cap on fees so that no family will pay more than \$2,075 per year. Because the bus fee applications will be required before the opening of school, no family will pay more than \$830 for busing. The remainder of the cap will apply to all other fees except for the Elementary Early Morning Program, student parking, preschool tuition, the school lunch program, or applied late/processing fees. Additionally, school sponsored events, such as field trips and exams are not included in the cap.. The school administration maintains records of payment for each student so that individual caps or the family “super cap” can be applied appropriately. If you have reached the “super cap,” please contact the Department of Business, Finance & Planning at 617-559-9025.

### Fee Waivers

It is the intention of the Newton Public Schools that no student be denied participation in school-sponsored activities and bus transportation due to inability to pay. Financial waivers do not apply to high school parking.

Financial assistance and waivers are granted based upon income and family size, as well as special circumstances such as unforeseen medical problems, change in family status, change in employment status, other emergencies, or other temporary hardships. All waiver applications are confidential. The financial assistance form is available in the Aspen parent portal. Additional information is available on the website.

### Online payment of fees

Parents may pay all school-related fees electronically via the [online payment system](#) accessed through the Newton Public Schools website.

Payment is accepted in the form of ACH transfer from a checking account, or by credit card. Newton Public Schools does not charge a fee for this service.



Transportation payments and registration can be made through the [online payment system](#). Additional information is available on the [Transportation](#) page.

## O. Student Records

The Superintendent provides for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements and as defined therein. The definitions of school records under federal and state law can be found at 20 U.S.C.1232, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and 603 CMR 23.00, respectively. The temporary record of each student will be destroyed within seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school district. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information, in whole or in part, is made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following their graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

Students and/or parents/guardians have the right to see school records and should contact the school principal and ask for an appointment. Parents and eligible students (age 14 or in ninth grade) may obtain a copy of all or any portion of the student's record upon request. They have the right to add relevant comments, information or other written material to the student's record or to request that information contained in the record be amended or deleted (except for information inserted in the record by a team evaluation) in accordance with FERPA and state law procedures. Within a week after the meeting, the Principal will render a decision in writing on their objections to the record. If the parent/guardian or eligible student is not satisfied with the Principal's decision, they may appeal such decision to the superintendent and, ultimately, to the School Committee.

For additional information, including definitions, please see the [Policy on School Records](#) and for the process to request specific student records, see our [Procedure to Request School Records](#).

For more information regarding the confidentiality of school records and student information, circumstances where the District can and/or must provide access to third parties, and the family/student permissions regarding information sharing, please see **SECTION VIII Family and Student Signature Pages and Information Sharing** of the Handbook.

## P. Transportation and Bus Safety

All information and forms regarding Newton Public Schools student transportation can be found on our [transportation](#) page. All students must register and have a bus pass to ride the bus. [Bus registration](#) and [bus fee information](#) and financial assistance are located on our website.

Special education transportation is authorized through the Student Services Office, (617) 559-6025, and scheduled through the Transportation Office. MBTA student badges that allow for reduced fares are available through each secondary school's main office. MBTA monthly passes are available. Please call the Transportation Office, (617) 559-9051, for more information.

### Bus Safety

Newton Public Schools must comply with Chapter 246 of the Acts of 1986, relative to certain school bus safety practices, which amends G.L. c.90, §7B.

This legislation requires that during the school year all school districts provide classroom instruction in safe bus riding practices to all students transported in a school bus (including field trips, athletics, etc.). Classroom instruction should occur at least three times during the following periods: (1) the

first week of the school year, (2) the period between the months of September and January, and (3) the period between January and the end of the school year. The Act also requires that all students transported on school buses participate at least twice during each school year in bus emergency evacuation drills.

All yellow school buses are equipped with lap belts to be used at the discretion of students K-12. Students must be seated at all times. Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, all NPS buses will be equipped with onboard cameras.

## **Q. Volunteers and Visitors to the Schools—Expectations and Procedures**

The Newton Public Schools welcomes parents and family members to apply to volunteer in our schools. Roles are often available for volunteers in school libraries, on field trips, or in other areas of need identified by school leaders. In order to protect our students, all volunteers are expected to apply and complete a CORI and SORI records check before beginning to volunteer within our schools.

All visitors to school buildings must obtain a visitor's badge from the Main Office and sign the logbook. Visitors will be directed to sign-out in the log book immediately prior to leaving so that the Main Office has a record of who is in the building at any time. Staff members and students should be aware of and report to the main office any visitor in the building without a badge. In the event of a health emergency or other crisis, visitors to school buildings may be restricted.

### **Elementary and Middle School Visitors and Volunteers**

At elementary and middle schools, all doors will be locked during the school day except for student arrival time in the morning. Once the school day begins, the doors will lock, and all visitors must request admission at the main entrance. The main entrance has a video/audio buzzer device that will ring the Main Office and allow a staff member to activate a door release to unlock it. Staff members in the Main Office may first ask for the visitor's name, reason for visit and to see identification, such as a license, if required to establish identity. Visitors will be directed to the Main Office to obtain a visitor's badge and sign the logbook. In the event that a visitor attempts to follow a staff member into the building, the staff member should request that the visitor wait to be properly signed in by the Main Office. Doors will remain locked at dismissal. Parents/guardians/caregivers meeting students at dismissal are expected to wait outside the assigned dismissal exit doors. Following dismissal, access to elementary school after school programs is available only at the designated after-school program door, which will also have a video/audio/buzzer device controlled by after-school program staff.

### **High Schools Visitors and Volunteers**

High schools will have a limited number of designated entry doors during the school day. All other doors will be either locked or accessible only via a school-issued access badge or a universal student access code. All visitors are required to obtain a visitor's badge from the Main Office. Visitors should sign in and out in the office so that the school has a record of who is in the building at all times. In the event a person without a visitor's badge is present in the school, staff will follow the following procedures:

- Approach visitor(s) and offer assistance.
- Escort visitor(s) to the main office to obtain a visitor's badge and sign in or out.
- If the staff member or student is uncomfortable approaching a visitor without a visitor's badge, they should ask one or two staff members to assist with approaching the visitor.
- If a visitor(s) refuses to cooperate, do not escalate the situation. If it can be done safely, monitor the direction the intruder is going, then call the office and give a detailed description of the visitor(s). Adults should not send a student to the office to get an administrator.

- The Newton Police Department may be contacted to address intruder violations.

## VII. Other Relevant Policies and Procedures

### A. Physical Restraint of Students and Risk Assessment

There may be instances when students may behave in ways that pose a threat to their own safety and to other members of the Newton Public Schools community. In any unsafe situation, Newton Public Schools staff will conduct a careful assessment of the risks and benefits of any intervention. In most cases, unsafe situations can be de-escalated by verbal intervention and the use of positive behavior support strategies. Newton Public Schools is committed to the prevention of physical restraint whenever possible and is used only as a last resort. If physical restraint is necessary, the safe administration of physical restraint is of the utmost importance and will be done in accordance with the regulations for the prevention and safe use of physical restraint (603 CMR 46.00) which were established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and effective on January 1, 2016 and the Newton Public Schools Physical Restraint of Students Policy.

Physical restraint shall only be implemented to protect a student or other members of the Newton Public Schools from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Newton Public Schools, in accordance with these regulations, will use physical restraint only in emergency situations of last resort, and only after other less intrusive alternatives have been tried and been unsuccessful. Only school personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint to students. Please see the [Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy: Procedures and Protocols for Implementation, Documentation, and Review](#).

located on our website, including information about restrictions, exclusionary timeouts, and the timely notification and documentation of any restraint or exclusionary timeout.

Further, in cases where a student threatens the safety to self or others, the school may require a risk assessment by a qualified professional before allowing the student to continue in school.

### B. Assessments

Teaching and learning in the Newton Public Schools is assessed using national, state and local instruments. Currently, elementary, middle school, and high school students are assessed in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science and Engineering using the Next Generation MCAS. The purpose of the MCAS is to assess student's proficiency levels on standards-based curriculum. More information can be found on the [DESE](#) website. Students also take interim assessments in Math and English Language Arts which are used to inform instructional practice and student intervention.

In addition to MCAS, Newton Public Schools assesses students more frequently using a variety of other assessments chosen for particular purposes. Data from individual and school-based assessments are used to determine student needs for additional instruction—either more challenging materials or more time in a particular skill or concept. At the district level, data is used to identify long-term trends and to inform large-scale curricular and instructional initiatives.

### C. Memorandum of Understanding between NPS and the Newton Police Department

The Newton Public Schools and the Newton Police Department have executed a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate their efforts and share information to intervene and prevent violence involving the students of the Newton Public Schools; to prevent the improper and/or illegal use,

abuse and distribution of alcohol and other controlled substances involving the students of Newton Public Schools; and to promote a safe and nurturing environment in the school community.

NPS and NPD collaborate to effectively and cooperatively respond to and address, for everyone's protection, incidents of truancy, school delinquency, criminal behavior, and other activity detrimental to the welfare of the school community. The joint and cooperative response efforts will focus on incidents that take place on school grounds, within school property, at school sponsored events, and other locations in which students of the Newton Public Schools are involved. Here you will find the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between NPS and the NPD.

#### **D. Additional Relevant Policies**

All policies of the Newton Public Schools, including those listed below, can be found in the [online policy manual](#) on the NPS website.

- (ECA) Security Policy Including Protocol for Security Camera Recorded Data
- (GBEBC) Staff Gift and Solicitations for Teachers Policy
- (IHBF) Homebound Instruction
- (IMG) Animals in School Policy
- (JJIF) Athletic Concussion and Head Injury
- (JRD) Student Photographs
- (KDB) Public's Rights to Know
- (KHA) Public Solicitation in the Schools
- (KHB) Advertising in Schools

## VIII. Family and Student Signature Pages and Information Sharing

In order to protect the privacy of our students and families, information sharing is limited by the Newton Public Schools in accordance with the law. In the event that a student transfers from our district to another school district, we release the entire student record to the new school district, and also in the limited circumstances listed below as a part of our family and student permissions.

Please complete these forms on our online [Family Portal website](#), a feature of our Aspen student information system, to customize your privacy selections.

These copies are provided for reference or if you are unable to complete the forms online. A link to the [Family Portal website](#) can also be found on the district home page under the quick links and the Families tab. Contact your child's school if you need help with your login information.

### A. Publishing of Limited Student Information

Pursuant to the federal and state regulations governing student records, Newton Public Schools may release student "directory information" unless you have indicated by checking the box below that you do not want the information released. See 34 C.F.R. 99.37(d); 603 CMR 23.02. "Directory information" could include a student's name, ID number, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, photographs (such as those included in yearbooks and school newsletters), weight and height of members of athletic teams, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. Unless you indicate otherwise, NPS may release "directory information" under limited circumstances as permitted or required by law. You will be asked to review and renew this release annually.

#### Release of Student Information For School Publication

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for my child's name, directory information and/or photograph to be included in newsletters, programs, and other district and school publications (such as a playbill or honor roll).

#### Release of Student Information to External Vendors

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for my child's directory information to be released to external vendors who may seek to market goods and/or services to students.

#### Release of Student Information to Parent Teacher Organizations

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for the following information to be released to the Newton Public Schools Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) for membership or other PTO-related purposes.

- Student Name (Last, First)
- School
- Grade Level
- Homeroom/Advisory Teacher name
- Primary Contact Name (Last, First)
- Primary Contact email address
- Primary Contact phone number

### Release of Student Information to Newton Schools Foundation

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for the following information to be released to the Newton Schools Foundation, a nonprofit fundraising partner of the Newton Public Schools whose financial support benefits schools across the district.

- Student Name (Last, First)
- School
- Grade Level
- Homeroom/Advisory Teacher name
- Primary Contact Name (Last, First)
- Primary Contact email address
- Primary Contact phone number

### Permission to Use Student Picture

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for my child's picture or likeness to be published on Newton Public Schools/School/Class/Activity website or social media page. A picture could take the form of a photograph, video, or multimedia project. No personally identifying information, including name, home address, or telephone number would appear on such picture, photo or video.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Student (age 18 or older)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **B. Release of Student Information – Secondary Students Only**

Release of Information to Military and Higher Education Recruiters: Federal law requires public schools receiving federal funds to provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students upon a request made by military recruiters and institutions of higher education. Federal law also provides that the parent/guardian of the student or the secondary school student may request that the school not release this information without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or student. You will be asked to renew this request annually.

### Release To Military Recruiters

- ☐ By checking the box, I **DO NOT** give permission to release student information on my child/me (if over 18 years of age) to military recruiters.

### Release To Higher Education

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission to release student information on my child/me (if over 18 years of age) to institutions of higher education.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Student (age 18 or older)

## **C. Media and Publishing Releases**

### Permission for Media/Interview/Recognition

- ☐ By checking the box, I authorize Newton Public Schools to allow my child to be interviewed and photographed during the course of the year or have their name appear in a media

publication such as the Newton Tab, Boston Globe, NewTV, when this media visit has been authorized by NPS and/or its designees because of a student experience or accomplishment.

**Permission to Publish Student Work on NPS Website Or Media Pages**

- ☐ By checking the box, I authorize Newton Public Schools to publish my child's work on the NPS/School/Class/Activity website or social media page (such as Facebook or Twitter). I understand that copyright and ownership of the work or writing remain my child's property. No last name, home address, or telephone number will appear in the work.

**Teacher Internal Evaluative Permissions**

- ☐ By checking the box, I DO NOT give permission for a staff member to record my child using an NPS device for lesson assessment purposes. The video belongs to NPS and shall not be disclosed or shared outside the District. The intent is to video/record students solely for the purpose of the staff member's professional growth and assessment.

**Student Teacher Permissions**

- ☐ By checking the box, I authorize a student teacher to use a photograph, video or other media production, containing an image of my child or my child's classwork for internal college/university use for evaluation purposes.

**Permission for Health Purposes**

- ☐ By checking the box, I give permission to the school nurse to share information relevant to my child's health condition with appropriate school and/or emergency medical personnel when needed to meet my child's health and safety needs. I give permission for the nurse to exchange information with my child's primary care physician for the purpose of referral, diagnosis and treatment.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent or Student (age 18 or older)*

**D. Permission to Utilize Federal School Lunch Program Eligibility for Educational Access**

- ☐ By checking the box, I authorize the Newton Public Schools (NPS) to share my child's eligibility for the Federal School Lunch Program with limited NPS business office staff. Your consent will allow NPS to extend this eligibility for financial assistance should your child participate in any applicable NPS programs. Approved waiver status will only be shared with the NPS stakeholders that need such information who are directly connected to your child or your child's program, and direct income or related personal information will not be shared. Your response to this request for permission will not affect eligibility or participation for any of the applicable programs.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent or Student (age 18 or older)*





# NEWTON

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Where every student can thrive

## 2025 - 2026 District Calendar

AUG./SEPT. 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				27	28	29 30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				20 days

OCTOBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
						21 days

NOVEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						16 days

DECEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
						17 days

JANUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						19 days

FEBRUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
						15 days

MARCH 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				22 days

APRIL 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
						16 days

MAY 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						20 days

JUNE 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				14 days

Special Early Release						
9/25, 10/28, 12/4, 2/5, 3/19, *5/7						
NECP: 11:45am	Elem 12:10pm					
Bigelow & Day: 10:55am						
Brown: 11:20am	Oak Hill 10:50am					
NNHS & NSHS: 12:45pm						
*5/7 Prek/Elementary only						
*5/7 is a make up day for MS/HS						

Weekly Early Release						
Elem. (Wed): 12:20 pm						
Bigelow (Wed): 1:40 pm						
Brown (Wed): 2:05 pm						
Day (Wed): 1:40 pm						
Oak Hill (Wed): 1:35 pm						
NN & NS (Tues): 3:25 pm						

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER	
First Day Teachers	8/27
Labor Day	1
First Day Students K-12	2
First Day NECP (visits 9/2 & 3)	4
Rosh Hashanah	23

OCTOBER	
Yom Kippur	2
Indigenous People's Day	13
Diwali (recognized) school in session	20

NOVEMBER	
Election Day	4
Veterans Day	11
Early Dismissal **	26
Thanksgiving Recess	27 28

DECEMBER	
Dec. Recess	24 25 26 29 30 31
School Committee approved: 11/4/24	

JANUARY	
New Year's Day	1 2
Martin Luther King Day	19

FEBRUARY	
Winter Recess	16 17 18 19 20
Lunar New Year (during break)	17

MARCH	
Eid al-Fitr (recognized) school in session	20

APRIL	
Good Friday	3
Spring Recess	20 21 22 23 24

MAY	
Memorial Day	25

JUNE	
Juneteenth	19

JUNE (Last day of school)	
Students (K-12+)	
185th day (w/ 5 snow days)**	26
180th day (w/ no snow days)**	18
Teachers last day 6/29 (w 5 snow days)	
Students (NECP only)	
Includes 5 snow days & is full day.	25
No snow days and is a full day.	17

JUNE EVENTS	
Step up Day	TBA
Newton North Graduation	TBA
Newton South Graduation	TBA

Schools are closed for a legal holiday or recess.

\*\* Dismissal: last day of school and the day before Thanksgiving.

NECP: school is not in session.

Elem: 12:10 pm | HS: 12:45 pm

MS: see Special Early Release times





As an increasingly diverse school district, Newton Public Schools celebrates the many cultures represented among our families. Our school calendar includes a list of holidays that are not days off from school. Students who celebrate these holidays continue, as in the past, to have excused absences from school on these days. However, in recognition of the growing number of students who celebrate Diwali and Eid al-Fitr, NPS has placed these holidays on the face of its calendar to increase awareness among students, teachers and staff that these are significant holidays for our student population. While these two holidays remain official school days, we hope that placing these days on the calendar reminds our families and teachers that students who celebrate them have an excused absence from school, and assists them in avoiding the scheduling of major school events on these days.

Other important holidays and holy days of obligation listed in alphabetical order:

	2025-2026	2026-2027
Ash Wednesday	February 18, 2026	February 10, 2027
Chanukah (Hanukkah)*	Dec. 14 - Dec. 22, 2025	Dec. 4 - Dec. 12, 2026
Yalda Night (Shab-e Yalda)	December 21, 2025	December 21, 2026
Christmas	December 25, 2025	December 25, 2026
Easter	April 5, 2026	March 28, 2027
Eid al-Adha	May 26 - 27, 2026	May 16 - 17, 2027
Holi*	March 4, 2026	March 22, 2027
Iranian New Year	March 20, 2026	March 20, 2027
Islamic New Year	June 16 - 17, 2026	June 5 - 6, 2027
Japanese New Year	January 1, 2026	January 1, 2027
Kwanzaa	Dec. 26, 2025 - Jan. 1, 2026	Dec. 26, 2026 - Jan. 1, 2027
Orthodox Christmas	January 7, 2026	January 7, 2027
Orthodox Easter	April 12, 2026	May 2, 2027
Orthodox Good Friday	April 10, 2026	April 30, 2027
Orthodox New Year	January 14, 2026	January 14, 2027
Passover	April 1 - 9, 2026	April 21 - 29, 2027
Purim*	March 2 - 4, 2026	March 22 - 23, 2027
Ramadan	Feb. 17 - March 19, 2026	Feb. 7 - March 8, 2027
Shavout*	May 21 - 23, 2026	June 10 - 12, 2027
Shemini Atzeret*	October 14, 2025	October 3, 2026
Simchat Torah*	October 15, 2025	October 4, 2026
Spring Equinox	March 20, 2026	March 20, 2027
Sukkot**	October 7-8, 2025	October 26 -27, 2026

*Please Note: This calendar was developed in consultation with local religious leaders.*

Note: \*All Jewish observances begin at sundown, in the evening, prior to the day of the observance. In addition to the dates noted, observant Jews celebrate the second, seventh and eighth days of Passover; the second, eighth and ninth days of Sukkot; and two days of Shavuot (Mass. Lawyers Diary and Manual). \*\*Sukkot is 10/7-10/15; but only the days listed in the chart hold religious limitations.

Baha'i and Islamic holidays begin at sundown the previous day and end at sundown on the date listed. Also, some dates may be approximate due to the lunar calendar.

[Link to Interfaith Calendar from the DESE website.](#)

## School Hours 2025–2026

### Elementary Schools

#### Start Time

#### End Time

	Mon	Tue	Wed*	Thurs	Fri
8:10 a.m.	2:50 p.m.	2:50 p.m.	12:20 p.m.	2:50 p.m.	2:50 p.m.

### Middle Schools

#### Start Time

#### End Time

	Mon	Tue	Wed*	Thurs	Fri
Bigelow	2:25 p.m.	2:25 p.m.	1:40 p.m.	2:25 p.m.	2:25 p.m.
Brown	2:50 p.m.	2:50 p.m.	2:05 p.m.	2:50 p.m.	2:50 p.m.
F.A. Day	2:25 p.m.	2:25 p.m.	1:40 p.m.	2:25 p.m.	2:25 p.m.
Oak Hill	2:20 p.m.	2:20 p.m.	1:35 p.m.	2:20 p.m.	2:20 p.m.

### High Schools

#### Start Time

#### End Time

	Mon	Tues*	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Newton North	3:45 p.m.	3:25 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	3:45 p.m.
Newton South	3:45 p.m.	3:25 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	3:45 p.m.

*\*Early release days are on Wednesdays for the elementary and middle schools, and on Tuesdays for the high schools.*

## Special Early Release Dates And Times

### Special Early Release Dates 2025–26:

September 25, October 28, December 4, February 5, March 19 and May 7\*

\* The early release on May 7, 2026 is for preschool and elementary only. However, if one of the previously scheduled special early release days is canceled, then May 8 will be a make-up day for the middle and high schools.

### Special Early Release Times 2025–26:

- **All Elementary:** 12:10 p.m.
- **Middle Schools:** *Bigelow* and *Day* (10:55 a.m.); *Brown* (11:20 a.m.); and *Oak Hill* (10:50 a.m.)
- **North and South:** (12:45 p.m.)
- **NECP:** (11:45 a.m.)

### Dismissal time for both the day before Thanksgiving and last day of school:

**Elementary:** 12:10 p.m.      **Middle:** 11:20 a.m.      **North and South:** 12:45 p.m.      **NECP:** no school

