

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION/SCREENING

Registration for kindergarten will be held in the late winter/early spring. Please bring your child's birth certificate, proof of residency, record of immunization, list of illnesses, and information pertaining to the specific needs of your child. To enter kindergarten in September, your child must reach his/her fifth birthday on or before August 31. This is an absolute cut off date set by the Newton School Committee.

GRADE ONE ENTRANCE POLICY

All students entering grade one in the Newton Public Schools must be six years old on or before August 31 of the calendar year of school entrance. This is in keeping with the policy that students entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before August 31. Advantages to the child are the opportunities to meet peers, understand a new school system, and continue to advance his/her learning at his/her own pace, which are facilitated in the current kindergarten program. The parents of students who have completed kindergarten elsewhere but have not turned six on or before August 31 of the year of the proposed grade one entry may discuss an exception to this policy with the school principal. The principal, after consulting with the assistant superintendent of schools, will be authorized to make a determination in these cases with the general expectation that the recommendation will be for the child to enter kindergarten. (Approved by School Committee on February 24, 2003)

OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT

The Newton Public Schools considers applications for students to transfer to schools outside of their home district. It is the goal of the school system to grant to the degree possible requests for out-of-assigned district placements. Impact on enrollment, staffing and space availability now and in the future are key considerations. Out-of-assigned district placements for students who wish to attend a school in Newton other than his/her district school are limited. Such placements will be made on a space available basis only. In addition to Newton residents, members of NTA Units A, B, C, D, E, NESAs, or the Custodial Union may also apply for placement of their children in a Newton Public School. Approval for out-of-assigned district placements is subject to space availability in the requested school and grade, and for all subsequent grades as well. Expected class, team and school sizes will be based on the most recent projections by the School Department. Size will be considered for both the requested year and for any future year for which the School Department provides projections. Applications for the following school year must be submitted on forms that are available in Room 218 at the Education Center **beginning November 17, 2014**. Parents/guardians requesting out-of-assigned district placements should call 617-559-6105 for information. Applications will also be available on-line

at www3.newton.k12.ma.us in our *For Families* section. Completed applications, signed by the in-district principal, can be submitted no earlier than March 2 and no later than May 1. Those received after May 1 and before Labor Day may, under special circumstances, be considered for placement after all other placement decisions have been made. Applications may be mailed in or brought to the Education Center. The goal is to announce out-of-assigned district decisions as close to June 1 as possible. Students approved for out-of-assigned district placement should understand that the course assignment process has begun prior to June and that they may not receive their first choices in course selection. Parents are responsible for their child's transportation to and from the out-of-assigned district school.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

In the event you plan to move out of the Peirce district, you should notify your child's teacher and the office as soon as possible. Your new address, the address of the new school and the date of the withdrawal are needed so that your child's records may be forwarded as quickly as possible. A release form must be signed by the child's parent or guardian for records to be sent to the new school.

TRANSITION TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Peirce school district is assigned to the F.A. Day Middle School, located at Minot Place, for grades 6-8. A full description of the middle school philosophy and curriculum is available in the Peirce Library. In the spring, the fifth graders will be invited to visit their future school for a day. Also, the Day PTO invites incoming parents to an informational evening in the spring.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBRARY BOOKS

Parent volunteers are the Library support staff. The library is operated in a traditional way with checkout procedures and a due date. If your child loses or damages a school book, you will be asked to reimburse the school. We urge you to help your child develop a sense of responsibility about all school materials and equipment.

GIFT POLICY

It is the Newton School Department's Policy that no teacher in the performance of regular duties shall receive presents from the pupils under his or her discretion. **The library** offers parents an opportunity to recognize their appreciation for the faculty through a donation program. Contact the school librarian for further information. In addition, **the PTO** spearheads a variety of fundraising events to support the school. The Peirce Link will inform parents about these events and opportunities. In addition, **the Newton Schools Foundation (NSF)** sponsors an "Honor Thy Teacher" campaign. Parents and community members may make a contribution in honor of individual teachers or a school who will in return receive a gift card acknowledging

that the teacher/group has been so honored. The Newton TAB lists all those honored in a September edition.

BIRTHDAYS

Teachers must be consulted in advance if a child wishes to bring a non-edible birthday treat to share with his or her class at school. Please consult with your child's teacher regarding appropriate non-edible treats. As a school system, we have eliminated the use of food in birthday and holiday celebrations unless specified by the curriculum. Teachers do honor children's birthdates as these are very important occasions and cause for celebration. Teachers have developed creative and festive celebration practices, which they will share with families early in the school year on Curriculum Night. *Note that **birthday party invitations should never be handed out at school, please, even if the whole class is invited.***

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken yearly. Parents may purchase individual portraits and class pictures. There is a retake date scheduled for those who were absent on the original date. Although each child's picture is taken, parents are not required to buy any pictures or to pay a sitting fee. The PTO has also arranged for optional family portrait days on weekends throughout September. See the Peirce Link for dates and information.

STATE PUPIL RECORDS

State law and regulations govern our policies on student records. The policy is explained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, which is sent home in the fall of the school year. The regulations call for the securing of records and the protection of student privacy. Only authorized school personnel, such as the principal, counselor, or teacher, have access to these records. Information cannot be seen by or sent to a third party without the written permission of the parent. In addition, there is a provision for a process for review and removal of information which the student or parent feels should not be on the record. The student's permanent school record (name, address, phone number, parent information, course titles, grades, transcript, grade level completed and year completed) is to be kept for 60 years. The temporary record (all other information) is to be destroyed five years after the student leaves or graduates. Parents, and students in grades 9-12, have the right to see appropriate records. Parents or eligible students who wish to see a record should contact the school principal and ask for an appointment. Parents and eligible students may obtain a copy of all or any portion of the student's record upon request.

COMMUNITY USE OF BUILDINGS

The School Committee controls the use of all school building during and after school hours. A fee structure covering custodial and overhead costs has been established by the School Committee for non-school-related and for school-related use. Information and permit applications for use of the school building are available in the school office.

ACCESS TO STUDENTS BY NEWS MEDIA

News media and media-related companies do not have immediate access to children while under supervision of school personnel. In cases where the system approves media coverage, children will be required to submit a permission form signed by a parent or legal guardian before the child can participate in the covered activity.

CONTESTS/ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertising materials seeking direct contributions from teachers and pupils shall not be displayed or distributed unless endorsed by a vote of the School Committee. No free advertising shall be accepted for use in schools unless deemed by the Superintendent's office to be a direct aid to learning. There can be no staff or student involvement in civic, charitable or business-endorsed contests that take time from instructional goals unless approved by the Superintendent's office as a useful educational experience.