



Newton Public Schools
 100 Walnut Street
 Newton, MA 02460

June 30, 2003

Dear Parents of Students in the Newton Public Schools,

As many of you are aware, the Newton School Committee has adopted several new fee policies during the past few months. These policies go into effect on July 1, 2003 as we open the new fiscal year. Fiscal constraints, both local and statewide, have forced Newton as well as many other neighboring communities to implement fees as one strategy to avoid reducing the budgets for classroom instruction. While no one likes to add fees for services, the new fee structure is put in place with the intent of allowing the schools in Newton to continue to offer the best education possible to all students.

The fees include the introduction of a transportation fee for school busing, an increase in the family cap for high school athletics, an increase in the middle school athletics fees, a high school student parking fee, and a rise in the school lunch cost. Below is a list of the fees many of which have family caps, and an explanation of the "Super Cap" or overall family cap which is set to create a maximum amount a family will pay for busing service and athletic programs.

SUPER CAP

The School Committee has set an overall cap on fees for busing and athletics, so that no family will pay more than \$700 per year. Because the bus fee applications will be required before the opening of school, no family will pay more than \$360 for busing. The remainder of the cap will apply to the sports fees. The school administration will have the records of payment for each student so that the cap will be readily known as the sports fees are applied. *The high school student parking fee is not subject to the family super cap. All students who apply for a parking permit will be required to pay the full fee on a semester basis.*

THE FEES ARE SET AS FOLLOWS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2003-2004:	
Bus Fees-Annual Round Trip	\$180 per student, maximum family cost \$360
Athletic Fees-High School	\$125 per sport, maximum family cost \$375
Athletic Fees-Middle School	\$70 per year, maximum family cost \$140
Parking Fees-High School	\$360 per year, payable on a semester basis at \$180
School Lunch for Type A Meal	\$3.00 per student
School Lunch for Adult Meal	\$3.50 per meal
<i>All fees will be reconsidered for the 2004-2005 School Year.</i>	

TRANSPORTATION FEE

The transportation fee is set at \$180 per year for round trip school bus transportation. This fee applies to all students who have been eligible for busing in the past with the exception of those who are in Grades K-6 and who live 2 or more miles from school, as those students are entitled to free transportation by Massachusetts law. The family cap for busing is set at \$360, so that families with three or more students will not be charged for more than two students. Fee waivers will be available to those families who need transportation and meet eligibility requirements. In addition, busing will be made available to students who have previously lived too close to school to be eligible; we have added a number of new bus stops and will take as many fee-based riders as space will allow. This information is spelled out in your Bus Fee Application Packet which will be mailed to you in early July. The packet will include distance information, payment instructions, a fee waiver application, and a set of questions and answers about the bus fees. Please watch for this packet which will have a picture of a school bus on the front. Once the bus fees are paid, you will receive an annual pass for each rider with instructions as to use and placement as well as replacement of lost passes.

Because this is a new procedure in Newton, we are working to make it as clear and as efficient as possible. Please watch for your busing packet and please call 617-559-9052 if you have not received information or if you have questions.

Sandra Guryan, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Finance and Planning