

Zervas Lunch Parent Program Training Information

Thank you Zervas parents for volunteering!

The goal of the Zervas Lunch Parent program is two-fold:

- a. help maintain **calm** during lunch time, and
- b. **reduce the peer pressure** to eat more quickly and get outside for recess.

Background: Steve Griffin, the Zervas Principal, receives the most complaints about lunch time, and those complaints are equally split between parents who want their children to have more time to run around at recess and those who want their kids to have more time to eat. One of the main responsibilities of the Lunch Parent will be to stay in the classroom while the Lunch Aide takes the kids who have already finished their lunches outside. This allows all kids to get what they need most.

Note: **confidentiality** is of the utmost importance for Lunch Parents. Please keep in mind that teachers are not allowed to share information about specific children's issues. Lunch parents should respect the privacy and humanity of the kids in each classroom, and not comment about Zervas children to anyone other than Steve. Assumptions you make about individual children may be incorrect and it is important not to circulate those opinions.

Also note: the Lunch Aide is the paid professional in the room. That person has liability requirements, so **the Lunch Parent should always defer to the Lunch Aide.**

Daily routine:

1. Come to school 5 minutes before your time if you can and sign in at the office and get a name badge.
2. Go to your assigned class. Allow the Lunch Aide to do their job distributing bought lunches. Keep in mind that every child gets a different combination of food and drink, so this takes a few minutes. Meanwhile, the Lunch Parent should encourage all the children to wash their hands before eating, then circulate and help with opening milks and juice boxes

and whatever else the kids need help with. (If the classroom is out of soap or paper towels, tell Anne Hadley, Zervas Secretary, at the end of your shift.)

3. If there is a mistake in the lunch order (e.g., not enough pizza, not enough whole milk) offer to go to the kitchen off the teacher's lounge to exchange milks, food, or whatever needs to be done. Be sure to check with Ellie Mirabito, the Lunch Coordinator, before taking anything.
4. Rule of thumb: to reduce waste, give kids less of something (for example, one packet of ketchup) and wait to see if they use that all up, before giving them another one.
5. Help maintain calm while the kids eat. The kids will be required to eat for at least 15 minutes before anyone can go outside. The best way to maintain calm is to circulate among the groups of children, and using a quiet voice, remind them to keep their voices down. Standing in front of the class and yelling at kids to be quiet has the opposite effect.
6. After about 15 minutes, the Lunch Aide will take children who have finished eating outside. Kids are expected to throw away their own trash. Usually two kids in each classroom are assigned each week to return the trays to the kitchen. The kids will know whose job that is.
7. Lunch parents should sit with the remaining students while they finish their lunches. As they finish, stand at the door and watch that they get dressed appropriately for the weather, including coats and gloves. When they are ready, it's okay to send them down the hallway, past Steve's office and out onto the playground alone. The kids are comfortable with this.
8. When all of the kids are done, go outside and find a place on the playground where you can keep an eye on things, yet avoid being in the middle of the play. Adults (Lunch Parents, Lunch Aides, and teachers) should avoid congregating all together in one place to chat.
9. Please be aware that some kids purposely eat very slowly so as to avoid going outside at all. After about 5 more minutes, tell the kids they have two minutes to finish, and then in two minutes, take the remaining children outside.
10. Kindergarten lunches are 10 minutes longer than other grades, because the teacher spends 10 minutes dismissing half the class, and then goes off to their lunch.
11. Either the teacher will come out and relieve the Lunch Aide, and extend lunch recess a few minutes, or the Lunch Aide will

bring the kids in. If you are covering another lunch period, now you can go to the next one.

12. We try to go outside whenever possible. If extremely cold or wet, we will stay in for indoor recess. Students will know the rules for indoor recess.

Note: if at any time a Lunch Parent has **behavioral problems** with a student, don't engage in a power struggle with the child. Ignore them for the moment and then tell Steve later. In addition, if you are concerned about an individual child or situation, see Steve. If something dangerous is happening, call the office or send a child to the office. (There is a call button in the room.)

Administrative Information:

-Parents are required to complete a CORI form before being allowed to participate in this program. Please bring a **picture I.D.** and see Anne or Steve in the office (preferably between the hours of 8:30 and 2:30) and they will show you how to complete the form. If you filled out a form within the last three years, you are still eligible to participate and do not have to fill it out again.

-Scheduling:

A. A paid Lunch Aide will always be in the classroom, so if you cannot make it there will still be coverage.

B. In addition, check the schedule to see who the other parents are who cover your class(es), and maybe you can swap with each other if you have a conflict.

C. If you absolutely can't make it and can't find a replacement, then **please send Anne Hadley and Steve Griffin an email message the night before at Anne_Hadley@newton.k12.ma.us and Stephen_Griffin@newton.k12.ma.us. If your own child is sick the morning you are scheduled to come, then leave Anne a message on the Absence Line (617-559-6760).**