**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: Blue Zone Safety**

There is more traffic congestion than ever at Bowen. The Blue Zone and surrounding streets are often at capacity, putting enormous stress on the neighborhood as well as families arriving by car, by bus or on foot. **We are receiving increased complaints about parents disregarding Blue Zone rules, impacting the efficiency of the Blue Zone, our neighbors on Cypress, Bow and Jackson streets and, most importantly, the safety of our children.** As we seek to improve the safety and flow of students in and out of school, we need YOUR cooperation. **Please review this information carefully**. If another member of your household uses the Blue Zone, please share this safety information with them.

The Blue Zone is not for everybody. If you choose to use the Blue Zone, it is your responsibility to follow the below rules. The Blue Zone can only function with complete cooperation from the community. This drop off and pick up zone was created and is authorized by city ordinance #19-179. **As a parent at Bowen, it is your responsibility to uphold this important safety ordinance. Violators are subject to fines of up to $250. Attached is a special bulletin from the Newton Police Department with more details.**

Please allow for extra time at morning drop off. With 500+ children and 75+ staff members, drop off is hectic. Please do not rush at pick up, either. No child is ever left alone after school; teachers stay with children until they are picked up or send children to the office.

**Parking is prohibited in the Blue Zone during the following times: 8:05am-8:35am (M-F), 11:30pm to 1:00pm (M-F) and 2:00pm to 3:30pm (M, W, TH, F)**

During these times, vehicles may stop **only** to engage in drop off or pick up of passengers. It is a violation if you are stopped in the Blue Zone for more than ONE MINUTE. You are not allowed to use the driveway in front of the school during these posted hours. If you have a concern with this important safety restriction, please see Principal Guzzi.

**AT DROP OFF**

Before entering the Blue Zone, make sure your children are completely ready to exit the vehicle. Patiently wait your turn, then move up as far as possible before letting your child out of the car. Exit immediately to make room for others.

NOTE: **Your child must be able to exit the car UNASSISTED to use the Blue Zone**. If your child needs assistance you must park in a designated parking spot and provide that assistance to your child.

* DO NOT get out of the car.
* DO NOT stop your car at the start of the Blue Zone. YOU MUST PULL UP AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO LET OUT YOUR CHILD. When you do not, you create unnecessary delays for the dozens of cars waiting behind you.
* DO NOT leapfrog in front of another car. Wait for the car in front of you to pull up.
* DO NOT let children enter or exit unless parked at a curb.
* DO NOT let children enter or exit on the driver’s side.
* DO NOT wait in Blue Zone until your child has entered the school. This causes dangerous backups onto Jackson Street. If your child needs supervision, you cannot use the Blue Zone.
* DO NOT block the new crosswalk for any reason.
* DO NOT back up into a crosswalk.
* DO NOT block the school driveway for any reason.
* DO NOT park or stand in neighbor driveways. Be respectful of neighbors.
* DO NOT enter the staff parking lot for any reason.
* DO NOT double or triple park.
* DO NOT let children off on Cypress Street opposite the Blue Zone.
* DO NOT make a U-turn on Cypress Street. Obey posted regulations.
* DO NOT pull into the driveway in front of the school.
* DO NOT park FOR ANY REASON in the BLUE ZONE during posted hours.
* DO NOT arrive or line up for drop off or pick up before the official time and idle or park in the Blue Zone. THIS VIOLATES SEVERAL ORDINANCES and blocks the street for emergency vehicles. Please see below for more information on this dangerous practice.

**AT DISMISSAL**

If you choose to pick up your child via car and you arrive early, please avoid obstructing traffic and look for alternatives to the Blue Zone, including parking on a nearby street, using the Langley Path entrance, or arranging a safe meeting point with your child away from the school using supervised crossings, such as points along Jackson Street or Langley Road.

The problem of traffic queues at dismissal is a serious one.  **The cars which block Cypress and Jackson Streets, sometimes for a period of 10 to 15 minutes prior to dismissal, create gridlock, road rage, and obstacles for emergency vehicles.**  Standing in the Blue Zone and area streets has become the norm. While the current behaviors are not surprising, please be aware of the following city ordinances: a) the Blue Zone ordinance prohibits arriving early for pick up and standing, punishable by a $25 fine (TPR sec 19-179), and b) standing in and obstructing a lane of traffic (such as on Cypress or Jackson) is illegal and punishable by a $15 fine (sec. 19-9, 19-74, 19-166(e)), as is stopping in a crosswalk.

**BLUE ZONE ALTERNATIVES**

We realize that walking is not an option for everyone. If you need to drive, consider these convenient alternatives to using the Blue Zone to reduce traffic congestion and save you time.

* Drop off or park on Maplewood Ave, White Ave, Duxbury Rd or Oakmont Rd (all just off of Jackson). You can walk your children to or from school in under 5 minutes. Older children can safely walk to/from here from/to school on their own.
* Drop off or park on Langley Path. Older grades can safely walk to/from here from/to school on their own. Langley Path is often underutilized for parking too.
* Send your child to school with a friend or neighbor, by car or on foot.

Full information on The Blue Zone can be found at [www.bowenpto.org](http://www.bowenpto.org) or on the Newton Public School Website. **The Bowen PTO has requested additional police surveillance at drop off and dismissal to ensure parents are adhering to the ordinances.** The school council, staff, and PTO continue to work hard with city officials to improve safety in the Blue Zone. **Please do your part and obey the rules!**

**Thank you.**