



Greetings Dorothy Hamm Middle School Students and Parents,

It's hard to believe that we are already halfway through the summer and will soon be opening the doors to Dorothy Hamm Middle School for a year of firsts—starting with Orientation on Thursday, August 29 and the first day of school on Tuesday, September 3. While we've enjoyed our summer home at Jamestown Elementary School, we're looking forward to moving into our new building and welcoming teachers the week of August 19. Leading up to these dates, we remain busy behind the scenes and in the community, working on all fronts to ensure a smooth transition.

In the weeks ahead, I'll be sending a series of "Phoenix Flyer" updates with the latest need-to-know information on specific topics. Below is the first, which covers Transportation. Please also watch for my next Principal's Message, coming August 1.

I thank our Parent-Teacher-Student-Association (PTSA) and the entire DHMS community for getting us this far. We look forward to working together with students, families and staff in the remaining weeks of the summer to ensure a successful start to our inaugural school year.

Principal Ellen Smith
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PHOENIX FLYER

UPDATE #1: TRANSPORTATION

The first day of school begins the minute students leave home, so whether students are taking the bus, walking or biking, it's important for families to plan and test commutes ahead of time. For this DHMS Update, we've compiled the latest general information on transportation to and from DHMS, specific resources by transportation mode, and transportation safety tools and tips for all:

School Bus

All students residing in the DHMS bus eligibility zone (see tan portion of the [bus eligibility zone map](#)) will be assigned school bus transportation and are encouraged to take the school bus.

- School bus assignments for 2019-20 will be mailed to families by Wednesday, August 21.
- General information on APS School Bus Transportation for 2019-20 is posted [online](#).
- DHMS [school bus drop-off, staging and pick-up](#) will take place along the bus loop off Vacation Lane, on the northern side of the building. [Link to Bus Queuing pdf-see attached/will send to Sara D to post on DHMS site](#)

Walking/Biking

Students residing in the areas surrounding DHMS that are not zoned for bus service (see pink portion of the [bus eligibility zone map](#)) are encouraged to walk or bike. Here are a few resources to help you plan:

- Neighborhood route-planning maps will be posted on the DHMS website by August 1 to assist families in planning students' walking/biking commutes.
- **Community Walks** will be held in August to provide a fun way for DHMS families to come together, walk the school neighborhood and explore possible routes with the assistance of DHMS and APS Transportation staff. Dates for these Community Walks are as follows:
 - **Friday, August 2, 4:30-6:00 pm**
 - **Tuesday, August 6, 6:00-9:00 pm**
 - Part of [National Night Out](#) celebration
 - [Arlington County Police Department](#) officers will take part
 - **Sunday, August 11, 3:00-4:30 pm**
 - **Tuesday, August 13, 4:30-6:00 pm**

Please see attached Community Walk flier for details -- and share with other DHMS families.

- Bike racks are being installed in multiple locations on campus and will accommodate up to 100 bicycles when installation of all racks is complete.

Family Vehicles

APS encourages families to explore all possible options for travelling to and from school and to utilize healthy, green transportation options as often as possible. If you must drive, please be aware that:

- Family vehicle queuing and circulation will take place off Vacation Lane, on the southern side of the building (the opposite side of the building from the bus loop). [Link to Family Vehicle Queuing pdf-see attached/will send to Sara D to post on DHMS site](#)
- Remote drop-off and pick-up locations will be designated a few blocks from school to minimize traffic congestion during arrival and dismissal. More details on these locations will be shared in August, before the Community Walks.
- Visitor Parking
Whether coming into the building to pick up your student or drop something off or to attend a meeting or school event, please plan to park in Visitor Parking spaces in the North Lot (northeast side of Vacation Lane), Vacation Lane Lot (west side of Vacation Lane) or Stratford Park Lot. Each of these three lots includes ADA-Compliant parking spaces as well.

Safety and Infrastructure Improvements

To support our walkers and bicyclists, APS has been working with Arlington County Transportation Engineering and Operations on a number of improvements surrounding school, including: [Link to site improvements pdf-see attached/will send to Sara D to post on DHMS site](#)

- High visibility crosswalk at Lorcom Lane and Vacation Lane
- New ramp and crosswalk at N. Quebec Street and Lorcom Lane
- Curb bump-outs and high visibility crosswalks at Military Road and Vacation Lane
- Repaving/re-striping projects on Lorcom Lane and Military Road to improve bicycle and vehicle interactions (to be undertaken in Spring 2020)

Law Enforcement Support

APS has been working with Arlington County Police to anticipate and support transportation safety needs by:

- Placing variable messaging signs in multiple locations with messages to alert drivers of school opening (starting in August)
- Conducting enforcement efforts in advance of school opening (starting in August)
- Stationing officers at key intersections during the first week of school
- Requesting crossing guards for high-volume intersections

Transportation Safety Tips

When travelling to, from and near school, please remember to:

- Remain alert and pay attention to your surroundings whether driving, walking or bicycling
- Disconnect from your mobile devices and remove earbuds
- Cross at marked crosswalks
- Obey all regulatory signs and traffic lights

Visit the [APS Safe Routes to School](#) webpage for a complete list of safety suggestions for all modes.

Transportation Safety Resources and Tools

Safety is our number one priority. The following resources are available, and we encourage you to use them:

Online Resources (posted on [DHMS website](#) as available)

- DHMS Bus Eligibility Zone Map
- School Bus Queuing Drop-Off / Pick-Up Map
- Family Vehicle Drop-Off / Pick-Up Map
- Bike Parking Locations on Campus (installation in progress)
- Neighborhood Route Planning Maps for Community Walks (coming by August 1)
 - South
 - North
 - East
- [Safe Routes to School Resources](#)
 - Pedestrian Safety
 - Bike Safety
 - Walking School Bus Information (may be adapted to middle school)
 - Bike Train Information (may be adapted to middle school)
 - Funding Opportunities (SRTS Mini-Grants)

Tools and Supplies

- Pedestrian [“See Me” Flags](#) at select crosswalks
- Reflective vests for staff / parent volunteers
- Flashing lights for student backpacks
- [ShareVaRoads](#) pocket guides for families/staff

Advance Preparation

APS is committed to working with families, staff and the community to make our transition as seamless as possible, and to ensure our students arrive at school safely and on time. To support these goals, we are:

Seeking Parent Volunteers who are available during school arrival and/or dismissal time to be stationed at select intersections en route to school. Volunteers would help remind students to wait for signal, make eye contact with drivers, remove earbuds, etc. but would not cross the street with the students. Any parents who are interested in covering an intersection should contact the DHMS Main Office with name, e-mail address and location. We will organize a training before school starts.

Seeking Input for a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#), as well as suggestions and insights that might help other families. More information on how to provide your input is forthcoming.

When it comes to safety, we all have a role to play, and we can't emphasize enough the importance of advance preparation. You know what's best for you and your student, so we encourage you to take advantage of these transportation resources and opportunities in the weeks ahead to map out your student's school commute, whether on foot, by bike or by school bus.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND LACE UP YOUR WALKING SHOES

*We're circling closer to the start of the 2019-20 school year and the opening of **Dorothy Hamm Middle School**. To make sure everyone is ready to go on the first day, APS is organizing a series of Community Walks to help you plan your student's commute.*

WHAT: DHMS Community Walks
to explore the many ways to walk and bike to school safely and on time

WHO: DHMS Students and Family Members
DHMS and APS Transportation Planning Staff

WHERE: Dorothy Hamm Middle School, 4100 Vacation Lane
*Meet at Bus Loop in front of school.
Neighborhood route-planning maps will be provided.*

WHEN: FRIDAY, August 2 / **4:30-6:00 PM**

TUESDAY, August 6 / 6:00-9:00 PM
*National Night Out Community Event
in coordination with Arlington County Police*

SUNDAY, August 11 / 3:00-4:30 PM

TUESDAY, August 13 / 4:30-6:00 PM

*If you can't make these dates, we encourage you to download
the appropriate map for your neighborhood and set out on your own.*

*** ROUTE-PLANNING MAPS WILL BE POSTED on the DHMS WEBSITE by AUGUST 1 ***

FOR MORE INFORMATION, contact Lauren Hassel at lauren.hassel@apsva.us

PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD – **SHARE THIS FLIER**

