

Dallin Elementary School - FAQ

This FAQ sheet was designed to address the questions we're asked most often by parents. It is a living document, and we are happy to make changes and updates as needed. If you have suggestions, please contact Dallin front office secretary, Susan Burns.

NOTE: This is not an official document of the Arlington Public Schools. The information herein is accurate to the best of our knowledge. Please let us know if you find any errors or inaccuracies.

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DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Where and how do I drop off my child?

This year Dallin has only one crossing guard, so it is crucial that families dropping off students in the morning follow the [Walking safety for Schools](#). %

To use curbside drop-off: %

- Pull up in front of the school.
- After the parent or student volunteer has waved you forward to the first spot, he or she will help your child exit the car (ideally, on the school side, not the street side).
- Once your child is safely on the curb, please drive away, checking carefully for pedestrians in front of the school.

NOTES:

- There is no drop-off in front of the kindergarten. For the safest traffic flow during drop-off hours, please drive northbound on George Street and do not turn around.
- Please do not linger in the drop-off area for more time than it takes for your child to get out safely. If you need to speak with someone at the school, please find a safe parking space and park your car.
- Please do not drop off students across from the school, forcing children to cross traffic.

IMPORTANT: Idling in front of a school zone is illegal. Please make sure that you turn off your engine when parked at Dallin Elementary.

What time do kids need to be at school?

All students start lining up with their grades at 8 a.m. Teachers open the doors and walk their students inside the building at 8:10. Students arriving after the 8:15 bell are tardy and must sign in at the front office.

Where do kids line up before entering the building?

At 8 a.m., students should line up at the following locations:

- K: Kindergarten doors
- Grade 1: front door
- Grade 2: second door at the playground side, off the cafeteria
- Grade 3: first door at the playground side, closest to the office
- Grade 4: first door at the playground side, closest to the office
- Grade 5: playground side, behind the yellow poles (near the parking lot)

What if the weather is really bad - can students get into school early?

On rainy, extremely cold, and snowy days, children (no parents, please) will be let in at 8 a.m. Grades K and 1 come in the front door and line up in the corridor by the gym. They are not allowed to go to their classrooms or lockers. Grades 2-5 come in the cafeteria door and stay there until the bell rings. A sign will be posted in the doors on days that the students are allowed in early.

What time is pick-up? Where do I pick up my child?

Pick-up is at 2:30pm M, W, Th, F, 1:00pm on Tue. Children are released from the same doors they entered in the morning.

Where can I park?

There are many places to park near the school. Parents are asked to respect the flow of traffic and park on the side facing Dallin on the following streets:

- Rhinecliff Street
- George Street (south of Florence)
- Renfrew Street
- Waverley Street

These streets are not wide enough for emergency vehicles to get through when cars are parked on both sides.

Where NOT to park, even if it's "just for a second," even if it's pouring rain, even if you've got your baby in the car:

- Adjacent to a yellow or red curb (such as at the main entrance and along George Street next to the Kindergarten entrance)
- Within five feet of a crosswalk
- In a fire lane
- NOTE: The area in front of the kindergarten entrance is a fire lane!
- In a designated "no parking" zone
- In the teachers parking lot

What do I do if I'm running late?

Students arriving after the 8:15 bell are tardy and must sign in at the front office.

If you are running late for afternoon pick-up, you can either call the person you've designated on the school information form as someone who's allowed to pick up your child, or you can call the office (781/316-3730) before 2:15, and your child can be brought to the office to wait for you.

NOTE: Your child will not be released to another parent unless you have listed that parent on your child's school information form.

Are there safety guidelines for students walking to school?

Yes-and students are strongly encouraged to walk to school. Information about safe routes to school is posted on the [Dallin website](#).

Particularly now that Dallin is down to one crossing guard, please encourage your children to be mindful and to use crosswalks at all times when crossing the street.

Please do not walk along the end of George Street that faces Dow Avenue (at the back of the school). The road is narrow, there are no sidewalks, many cars exit via this road, and it isn't safe for pedestrians.

LUNCH, SNACKS, AND RECESS

If my child is going to purchase lunch, how do I pay for it and how much is it?

Lunch is \$3 per day. Milk comes with the lunch or can be purchased separately for 60¢. Students can bring money with them each day (it is recommended that you put it in a Ziploc bag or envelope, labeled with your child's name), or you can pre-pay for lunches if you like. Make a check out to "Town of Arlington," write your child's name and teacher's name on the subject line, and send it in with your child in his or her folder. (While you can purchase any number of lunches, the suggested amount is 20 lunches for \$60.)

The Arlington Public Schools [lunch menu](#) is updated monthly.

What is the school's policy about nuts for individual student's snacks and lunches?

Dallin is not a nut-free school. However, for the safety of all children, it is recommended that students bring nut-free snacks and lunches.

All school lunches available for purchase are nut-free.

There is a nut-free table in the cafeteria for children with allergies. Only children with nut allergies and their friends who are purchasing lunch from the school may sit at this table.

What food items may I bring to my child's class for a birthday or other celebration?

A link to acceptable foods can be found on the [Health & Wellness](#) page. Foods that are not on this list (e.g., cupcakes, pizza) are not allowed. If you want to provide a snack that seems comparable to the foods on the list, please check with your child's teacher.

Different classrooms celebrate birthdays and special occasions in different ways, so please check with your child's teacher before bringing any food to be served in the classroom.

Again, these guidelines are for snacks that will be served to all children in your child's class. You may send your own child to school with any kind of snack or lunch you want your child to have.

How long is recess? How many recesses do the kids get?

All grades have recess, generally right before or right after lunch. The time allotted for recess is typically 20 minutes. Additional recesses are scheduled at the discretion of the teacher for usually an additional 10-15 minutes. Children should be dressed appropriately for recess. If the weather is particularly cold or wet, recess is held indoors.

COMMUNICATION

What is the best way to communicate with my child's teacher?

All teachers at Dallin have websites that they update regularly. Please check the classroom website for assignments and important notices. Teachers can be contacted via e-mail, phone, your child's folder, or messages left at the office. Some teachers provide a notebook dedicated to teacher-parent communication. Please contact the front office if you are having difficulty locating teacher contact information.

When are parent-teacher conferences?

All important dates regarding conferences can be found by checking the Arlington Public Schools [School Year Calendar](#). Important dates are also found on the Dallin school calendar located on our [main page](#).

When is "back to school night"?

At Dallin, this event is called Curriculum Night, and it generally occurs around the third week of school. Curriculum Night consists of two curriculum presentations, typically K-2nd grade and then 3rd-5th grade. This evening is an opportunity for parents to hear what their children will learn throughout the school year and to ask questions about the curriculum. It is not a time for individual parent conferences. Curriculum Night is for adults only; the school is not able to provide child care for this event.

When do students get report cards?

For students in grades 1-5, report cards are sent home three times during the year, typically in November/December, March, and on the last day of school in June.

For kindergarten students, report cards are sent home twice during the year: in the fall, right before parent-teacher conferences, and in the spring, either the last week of May or first week of June.

How do I get added to the school and class e-mail lists?

Dallin is working to reduce the amount of paper sent home. The best way to receive timely and important school notices is to sign up for the school e-lists [here](#).

The Dallin PTO e-mail list is a moderated list to discuss issues of interest to the Dallin community. Subscription is restricted to Dallin families and staff. To sign up, please send an e-mail [here](#) with your full name and your child's name and grade.

If you have questions about or problems with either list, please e-mail the list moderator. To be part of a class e-mail distribution list, contact your child's teacher or Room Parents.

How do I know what's happening at school? Is there a Dallin newsletter?

Yes, the Dallin Digest, which contains both school and community information, is published every Friday. It is distributed via the Dallin PTO e-mail list as a PDF attachment. Both the current issue and back issues are available on the [Dallin website](#). %

Items for the newsletter can be sent to the newsletter editor. %

GETTING INVOLVED

How can I get involved at Dallin?

There's a wonderful variety of Dallin activities that parents can take part in, some of which are ongoing throughout the year and some of which are month- or season-specific. Contact people can be found by following the PTO link on the [Dallin home page](#).

Does Dallin have a PTO?

Absolutely! The PTO meets monthly and runs various events throughout the year, focused on community-building, cultural enrichment, curriculum, and/or fundraising. The PTO also supplements the resources available to the school and our teachers. Information about the PTO can be found on their website found on our home page.

If I'm going to be helping in the school, do I need to sign anything?

Parents who volunteer in the school are required to complete the paperwork for [CORI background checks](#).

I'd like to budget my financial support-how often are fundraisers held?

Rather than spread our efforts over several big fundraisers, the Dallin PTO asks each Dallin family for a one-time contribution to the Annual Fund. Suggested amount: \$50 per child, or \$100 per family (but you can certainly give more!). You should receive information from the PTO on this topic at the beginning of the year.

The PTO will sponsor other events throughout the year, and each is likely to raise some money, but the focus will be on community-building rather than fundraising. See the [Dallin Calendar](#) for the latest information on upcoming events.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Whom do I call if my child is home sick?

If your child will be out of school for the day, please call the "Safe Phone": 781-316-3725. The Dallin school nurse is the only person who checks these messages.

If your child is sick, it's helpful if you can mention your child's symptoms, such as fever, cough, cold, or vomiting.

If you forget to call in, the nurse will call ALL home and work numbers until you are reached. If you cannot be reached, the nurse will call emergency numbers. If she cannot reach anyone to find out why your child is not in school, she will call the police and ask them to do a "safe check" to make sure that your child is safe at home.

How sick is "too sick to go to school"?

If your child has a fever, please keep him or her home. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has vomited in the last 24 hours, please keep him or her home.

What happens if my child loses his or her jacket, gloves, lunchbox, etc. at school?

The Lost and Found box is located in the main lobby. Please clearly label your child's winter apparel and lunch box.

How do I find out about school delays/closings?

School closings and delays are reported on the Arlington Public Schools website, and on all local TV and radio stations. The district will also issue a phone call to numbers provided by families in the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#).

KINDERGARTEN SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Before school starts, is there a way to connect with other incoming kindergarten families?

Arlington Family Connection hosts play dates for incoming kindergartners throughout the spring and summer. Contact the [AFC](#) for more information.

Are there activities specifically for new kindergarten parents to meet each other?

On the first full day/class of school for kindergartners, right after drop-off, there is a Parent Coffee in the cafeteria for kindergarten parents-a nice chance to mingle, have some coffee and a muffin, dry your tears (!!), and meet the principal and the PTO presidents.

Can I accompany my child to the classroom on the first day of school?

Parents often like to help their kindergartners get settled in the cubby room for the first few days of school. Teachers generally prefer that parents not walk into the classroom. The sooner the children get used to walking in line with their friends and taking care of their own cubbies, the better.

Can I drop off my kindergartner, or do I need to accompany him or her into the classroom?

You may use the curbside drop-off at the front of the school, if you know that your kindergartner can get to his or her classroom without your supervision, or if you have an older child who will accompany your kindergartner.

There is no drop-off area in front of the kindergarten, and parking in this area is illegal, as it's a fire lane. (Police have given tickets!)

Should I pack an extra set of clothes for my child?

Yes, and the teacher will send home information regarding what else you should provide.

Do kindergartners get help in the bathroom?

Kindergartners are required to be self-sufficient in the bathroom. Please discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher or with the school nurse.