

Commonly Asked Questions: Doherty Families

ROUTINES/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. **Academic Schedule:** During the first few days of school, your child will receive their schedule of classes.
2. **AM/PM Routines:** The building is typically open from 7:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. for school-related activities. Students will be informed of the availability of activities and open study areas (*Media Center, etc.*) during the first few weeks of school. Students may only go to the areas that are supervised by an adult. Please note that the building is typically closed every Monday after school for staff meetings.
3. **Dismissals:** To dismiss your child during the school day, please send a note including time of dismissal and who will be picking up your child. Please ask your child to bring the note to the **Main Office before homeroom** and remind them to report to the office at the designated dismissal time. Parent/guardian must come into the school to dismiss.
4. **Extracurricular Activities:** Doherty offers a number of extracurricular activities that are scheduled during after-school hours. These activities will be announced over the P.A. system and included in weekly email to families. There is no set list distributed: it is the responsibility of each student to listen for announcements regarding what is offered and when sessions will take place. There is a **\$100.00 fee for one child or a \$200.00 fee per family**. Participation is voluntary and it is understood if a child cannot attend every scheduled session.
5. **Physical Education:** Students will need to bring a change of clothes (*a shirt, shorts or gym pants*) to participate in class. They do not have to take showers.

COMMUNICATION

1. **Blackboard Connect** is an email/phone - based access system used by the school district and Doherty Middle School to communicate essential notices, highlight upcoming Doherty events and important information on a weekly basis. (*Please report any email, address or phone number changes to the Main Office as soon as possible*). The weekly Blackboard Connect message is sent typically on Sunday afternoons. The Blackboard Connect system is also used to publicize school cancellations/delays.
2. **Calendars:** A monthly calendar is posted on the Doherty website under quick links.
3. **Cell Phone Use:** Parents, please help us in reminding your children that **cell phones are not to be used in the building during the school day**. They may be used *after school in the main foyer only*; not in the library. They need to be turned off and placed in students' lockers at the beginning of school. As you might imagine having dealt with this at home, quietly *texting* under a desk is disruptive to the learning process for children. It will save you a trip to the main office to retrieve it if your child is found with one during the school day.
4. **Family Handbooks:** Family Handbooks are online and must be reviewed with your child. Handbooks outline school/district policies and procedures. Each student and parent/guardian will be required to sign and return a receipt acknowledging review of the handbook.
5. **i Andover 1:1 Laptops:** Students use laptops every day in different classes. For more information, go to the following website. <https://sites.google.com/k12.andoverma.us/apsdigitallearning/iandover>

Commonly Asked Questions: *continued*

COMMUNICATION (*continued*)

6. **Forgotten Items:** In the event a student forgets something at home you may drop off the item on the table in the cafeteria for students to pick up. In our attempt to keep class interruptions to a minimum **please remind your child to check this table on a daily basis for forgotten lunches, homework, etc.** Your child is expected to check for items in between classes as they will not be called out of class.
7. **Letters/Memos:** Throughout the year, especially at the beginning, there will be memos sent home the old fashioned way, by backpacks. Many of these will require parent/guardian signatures as well as a listing of emergency information and contacts. You will be notified via Blackboard Connect to be on the lookout for school memos.
8. **Media Center:** Doherty's Media Center/Library reopened in 2012 as the *Doherty Learning Commons* after being closed for four years. Students have access to all library books including new collections recently added. Please visit the Doherty website's media tab for the new *Digital Learning Commons* page containing resources for students and parents. *Brainpop* is a new online program with academic resources available across the curriculum 24/7. www.brainpop.com username: *Andoverdoherty* password: *doherty* (*case specific*)
9. **Parent Orientations:** There is a 6th grade Parent Forum and a Back-to-School Night (*all grades*) that take place during the fall. Your child's team teachers may also schedule additional parent coffees.
10. **Website:** The Doherty website contains valuable information about upcoming events, monthly calendars, and links to community activities. It can be accessed at www.aps1.net/dms.

CONTACTS

1. **Attendance Line:** (978) 247-9401 - Please report all absences to the automated attendance line by 8:00 a.m. Please leave the students first and last name, grade and reason for absence. If your child will be arriving late to school due to an appointment please report to the attendance line as well. This line is functional 24/7.
2. **Cafeteria/Food Services:** (978) 247-9403 - questions regarding student lunch accounts.
3. **Clinic/School Nurse:** (978) 247-9402 - to speak directly with the nurse.
4. **Main Office:** (978) 247-9400 - in the event that you have an *urgent* message for your child (*such as a change in parent pickup at the end-of-the-day*); you may call the office to leave a message. Students will be called to the Main Office to pick up the message at 2:00 p.m.
5. **Student Services:** (978) 247-9405 – Doherty has three social workers who partner with parents, staff and administrators to help support our students. Ms. Jacobo (978) 247--9421, Ms. LeBeau (978) 247-9420 and Ms. Mangie (978) 247-9419 are available to Doherty parents and students. Middle school is a time of change and development therefore social and emotional demands vary from day-to-day for our youngsters. Making new friends, trying on new identities, dealing with developmental and environmental stressors, as well as transitioning to and from middle school are a few pieces of the ever changing puzzle. We recognize the importance of family and student support during these times and are able to collaborate with you in creating safe and supportive opportunities for growth for our students. Our goal is to strengthen social and emotional skills and to support a vision of success through community connection and collaboration.