

Doering School Welcomes You!

The Doering School staff and administration welcomes all incoming 5th graders and new families to the Roberta G. Doering Middle School. This is a big transition year for both parents and children. There are a lot of new experiences in store for your children. In an effort to help you all make a smooth transition to middle school, we have put together the following information to get you started.

General Information

- **Student Start Time:** 8:20AM/ End Time: 2:50PM
- **Contacting Teachers and Staff** – In addition to calling the school directly (413-789-1400), Agawam Public Schools provides the email naming conventions for all staff rather than direct email links. Teacher websites can be accessed through your child's or your ParentsPlus account. All Agawam Public Schools Staff - (First Initial & Last Name)@agawamed.org. Example: jdoe@agawamed.org
- **Student Drop Off Procedure** - To ensure the safety of students, in conjunction with the police department, town engineering department, school department and bus company, the Roberta G. Doering School has instituted a comprehensive student drop off and pick up plan. Starting on the first day of school, all **buses** will access school grounds through the Town Hall parking lot and stage in the drive on the Town Hall side of the school in the morning and afternoon. The front parking lot will be closed off to all traffic for morning drop off and afternoon pick up. Student drop off will take place by driving down the left hand side drive off Main Street, around the back of the school, then down the Town Hall side drive to the front door where students will exit cars and enter the building. There will be a brief wait on the rear parking lot at 8:19 when buses will enter the Town Hall side drive alongside the school, in 2 phases, to let students off. After buses leave the grounds, student drop off will continue at the Town Hall side front door.
- **Student Pick Up Procedure** - Student pick up will occur in the rear of the building on the parking lot. Parents will be able to enter the left hand side drive beginning at 2:30 p.m. and stage in lines designated by cones on the rear paved lot. Students will exit the rear of the school on the Town Hall side when they will walk to cars for dismissal. Walkers will be dismissed after buses are called. Please note that auto traffic should not enter or leave through Town Hall nor should they park at Towne Insurance Agency at the corner of Reed Street. There will be ongoing bridge construction in this area. Your cooperation in instituting this plan will be appreciated as we work to ensure the safety of students, staff and parents.
- **Bus Information** - The 2019 - 2020 bus routes are available on the school's web site under News as well as the Back to School Edition of the *Agawam Advertiser*.
- **Late Bus Information** – Typically, the late bus begins about two weeks after school starts. Students who stay after regular school hours for activities are dismissed at 3:40PM. There are 2 late buses, one that goes to AGAWAM and one that goes to FEEDING HILLS. When the students get on the late bus, they need to inform the bus driver of their home address. The bus driver will do their very best to drop off the students closest to their home or existing bus stop. We will notify you of the date late buses begin.

Clubs & Activities

Because many of afterschool activities are volunteer driven, when afterschool clubs/activities become available students and parents will be informed. Please look for these opportunities on the Doering web site. Established clubs include Year Book, Chorus, Chess Club, and a parent run Ski/Snowboard group.

5th Grade Band (*Mr. Zachary Scherpa, Director*)

Fifth Grade students will have the opportunity to try a concert band instrument. Instruments offered are the flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, trombone and combined percussion (keyboard percussion, battery and auxiliary percussion). Later in the year students are able to try bass clarinet, tenor sax, baritone sax, baritone horn and tuba.

No prior music or instrument background is required. Students will learn proper instrument assembly, playing posture and techniques. Also, students will learn how to play and practice proficiently. The Rental Night will be held in our cafeteria, and lessons will start in October. The lesson book used is Standard of Excellence Book 1. Full band rehearsals start late January every Thursday before school. This band plays two concerts a year. The first concert is always the Band Time concert at the High School in May, followed by the 5th Grade Spring Concert at our school in June.

Jazz Band (*Mr. Zachary Scherpa, Director*)

Doering's Jazz Band is an award-winning band. It has medaled at the *International Jazz Educators Association* competitions. Students must audition to be accepted for this band, because the music is much more difficult. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays before school and start in early January. The Jazz Band requires dedication and lots of individual effort and practice. The Jazz Band participates in *6th Grade Spring Concerts*, *Jazz Night*, a tour to two Agawam Elementary Schools, and possibly a competition.

Chorus (*Mr. Daniel Rose, Director*)

Chorus enrollment is open to both fifth and sixth grade students, and meets on Friday mornings, beginning in October. Beginning this year, students who wish to participate in chorus at the Agawam Junior High School will have had to participate in at least one year of chorus at Doering Middle School. At Doering Middle School, students may participate in both band and chorus! No prior singing background is required, and there is no audition for membership. Sixth grade students who did not participate in fifth grade are welcomed to enroll!

In chorus, students will learn music literacy skills, as well as how to perform with proper singing technique and expressive musicianship. Practice is an essential component to success - students will be asked to log progress. Chorus members are expected to arrive prepared for rehearsals with a 1" binder and a pencil for note-taking. The chorus performs at the Winter and Spring Concerts (attendance is mandatory), and additional performances may be scheduled. Individual fifth grade chorus members may elect to audition for the All-State Treble Chorus Festival, while sixth grade chorus members may elect to audition for the MMEA Western District Festival. It is an honor to be accepted into these select ensembles and represent the Agawam Music Program!

About the PTO

All parents, teachers and staff are welcome to join the PTO and are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings. The PTO meets the **second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Cafeteria** with the exception of the September meeting, which will be held on **Wednesday, September 19th**. PTO Officers: Melissa Montagna - President, Jamie Duncan - Vice President, Erica Lunden – Treasurer, Amy Iellamo – Secretary and Jasmine Griffin - Fundraising Coordinator. For more information, please see separate document from the PTO.