



Building Purposeful Leaders Where Everyone Shines Through Achievement

Zachary Strom, Principal

Bonnie Curran and Amy Nass, Assistant Principals

July 21, 2025

Palm Valley Academy Bobcat Families,

I hope this week's message finds everyone doing well. I don't know about you, but these hot and humid mid-summer days seem to be flying by! Maybe it's just my excitement and eagerness to fill the halls again, but it feels like we were just planning July 4th celebrations and now here we are, heading into the final stretch of summer break. Ready or not, Day 1 is coming quickly! However you choose to spend these last couple weeks, I hope they're filled with rest, fun, and great memories.

Now, onto this week's content focus...

- ~~July 14, 2025 - General Welcome and Immediate Information~~
- ~~July 21, 2025 - PVA Upcoming Events and PTO/Volunteer Information~~
- July 28, 2025 - All Things Logistical and Operational
- August 4, 2025 - Official Welcome Back and PVA Day 1/Week 1

This, the third July communication, is focused on "All Things Logistical and Operational" at PVA. While the topic may seem repetitive to some, the policies and procedures presented are in place for the sole purpose of student safety and security and thus, are of the highest importance. When time allots, please read through the attachments (detailed below in This Weeks Content) and keep in mind where to find them to reference as needed throughout the year. But first, a quick reminder of upcoming important dates.

Upcoming Dates:

~~7/14-7/15 Kindergarten Screeners~~

~~7/22-7/23 Middle School Schedule Preview (sign into HAC to PREVIEW your student's schedule.~~

~~As a reminder, this is only a PREVIEW and classes are subject to change.~~

~~7/24 Kindergarten Social~~

7/31 6th Grade Orientation (See flyer for sign-up and additional info below)

8/4 Kindergarten staggered start information and sign-up will be sent via email

8/6 All elementary families will receive an email from their child's assigned teacher

8/7 Middle school schedule available in HAC

8/7 Kindergarten Meet the Teacher from 5pm-6pm

8/8 **Staggered Elementary Meet the Teacher:**

- 8:00am-9:00am for Last Names = A-J
- 9:30am-10:30am for Last Names = K-R
- 11:00am-12:00pm for Last Names = S-Z

Staggered Middle School Walk Your Schedule (teachers will not be available):

- 12:30pm-1:00pm for Last Names = A-J
- 1:30pm-2:00pm for Last Names = K-R
- 2:30pm-3:00pm for Last Names = S-Z



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- 8/11 First Day of School 😊
- 8/11-8/14 Kindergarten Staggered Start (sign-up using link in the 8/4 email)
- 8/15 First Full Day for Kindergarten Classes (Tears and Cheers Parents breakfast in the Café from 8:45-9:30am)
- 8/20 1st PTO General Meeting in Café @ 9:00am – JOIN US!
- 8/26 Elementary Curriculum Chats (PM) – Details forthcoming
- 8/28 Middle School Curriculum Chats (PM) – Details forthcoming

THIS WEEK'S CONTENT

ALL THINGS LOGISTICAL AND OPERATIONAL

Without question, the safety and security of all students and staff at PVA is the most important responsibility I carry. It's a duty I take seriously—one that can only be upheld through the consistent understanding and implementation of well-established policies and procedures by everyone involved.

To that end, I want to make two commitments to you:

1. **We will clearly communicate our expectations and procedures**, both by reviewing them thoroughly at the start of the year and by making them readily accessible on our school homepage for reference throughout the year.
2. **We will remain committed to upholding these expectations and addressing any inconsistencies**, even when it requires difficult conversations or creates additional work for our team—because these Bobcats are worth it.

To operate at our very best, it's essential that *everyone* who steps onto our campus—students, staff, families, and visitors alike—understands the importance of our policies and is aligned with them.

To support that alignment, you'll find the key logistical and operational documents both embedded below and posted on our website for your convenience. I encourage you to review them when time allows. These resources will also be posted to our PVA website and remain available all year long as needed.

- PVA SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (Arrival, Dismissal, Parking, Transportation Changes, etc.)
- PVA RAINY DAY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES
- PVA GOLF CART POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
- PVA BRIDGE DIAGRAM (Golf cart loop details)
- PVA CAR LINE MAP (Traffic Patterns)
- BICYCLE SAFETY AT PVA (Statement on E-Bikes)



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PVA SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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BUILDING OPENS FOR ALL STUDENTS AT 8:20am:

Car riders will begin arrival at 8:05 a.m., but will need to stay in their designated area until they are allowed into the hallways (See detailed information below). The building will officially open for ALL students at 8:20 a.m. *In order to meet their teacher sponsors, only Leadership Students with morning duties (e.g. Safety Patrol, News Crew, etc.), may enter the building prior to 8:10 a.m.*

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL; CAR LINE; PARKING:

Once a drop-off, or pick-up line has formed, you may not get out of line for any reason, unless otherwise directed by school-personnel. This is an extreme safety concern for everyone. We have been in constant communication with law enforcement to help us fix this problem, but it truly comes down to drivers following our school guidelines to ensure the safety of all. Additionally, please remain alert when on school grounds; phones should be put away and speed limit signs should be followed. As everyone is aware, there are large amounts of cars for both arrival and dismissal each day and with the safety of more than 1,500 students as our top priority, it is our sincere request that everyone is vigilant in following common traffic laws and considering the safety of our students when driving on and off the PVA campus.

WEST GATE: The west gate entrance (Crosswater Prkwy/Bobcat Lane) is our designated parent drop-off/pick-up, and parking area for all Kdg – 8th grade students. We will be following a unique traffic pattern, which proved very efficient and effective over the years (see the attached map for details). Parents may drop off their children in the car line from 8:05 a.m. – 8:35 a.m. Students arriving between 8:05 a.m. and 8:20 a.m. will be sent to the cafeteria and held until the hallways open. At 8:20 a.m., all hallways and areas of the building are open for transition. When dropping off, please remain in your vehicles, while the staff on duty assists with helping your child in and out of the car. As a reminder, all students need to exit the passenger side of their vehicle. After 8:35 a.m., we ask that all parents park in the lot and walk their children into the front office, as there will no longer be adult supervision or unlocked doors. At this time, students will be marked tardy. **The car line is the ONLY place students coming to Palm Valley via car should be dropped off (unless otherwise arranged with admin.)**

EAST GATE: Also known as the Bus Loop, the East gate entrance is designated for staff parking, bus drop off/pick-up and access to the overflow parking lot. Staff can park in the East lot prior to 7:55 a.m. Between 7:55 a.m. and 3:15 p.m., the gate between the EAST and WEST LOTS will remain locked, as this loop is dedicated to buses and authorized personnel only. If you are utilizing the overflow lot (near bike racks and golf carts) for approved reasons, please adhere to the policy below.

OVERFLOW LOT: If you are coming onto campus to park and walk into the building for any reason during the school day, which includes arrival or dismissal, you may either (1) wait in the car line until it is safe to turn into the parking lot (again, you may not get out of line for any reason, unless otherwise directed by school-personnel), or, (2) use the East Entrance (Palm Valley Rd.) and park in the overflow lot on the right side of the road, adjacent to the bike racks and pedestrian bridge. As previously stated, the East entrance is NOT a student drop-off zone, it is only to be used for those parking and entering the front office. Please utilize the biker/walker path and the crosswalk to enter the building.



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PVA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CONT.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES:

All transportation changes must be **either** written and submitted to the teacher on the **PVA DISMISSAL CHANGE** form (attached, but also be found on our website), OR completed and submitted virtually through the PVA homepage (preferred). Please ensure the form contains all information necessary and is submitted by the NOON deadline each day. If a third party is picking up your child, we only accept written notes and the adult must be on the pre-approved pick-up list in eSchool (contact the front office to edit your pre-approved pick-up list). You must include the full name of the adult picking up your student on the note, as well as, your telephone number (for verification purposes-if needed). Again, for your convenience, a transportation change form is available on our website for your use as **emailed transportation changes are not accepted**. If you have an emergency same-day transportation change, please telephone the front office at (904) 547-4200 before NOON each day. We will be happy to assist.

The cutoff time for early pick up of your student from the front office is 2:15 p.m. (Wed. - 1:15 p.m.)

DISMISSAL CHANGES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE 12:00PM NOON DAILY DEADLINE

RAINY DAY DISMISSAL:

In the event of inclement weather, we will be sending out a School Messenger by 2:30-2:40pm if at all possible. This messenger will be short and to the point, announcing either a RAINY DAY HOLD or a RAINY DAY RELEASE (see attached procedures). In short, we will likely experience delays during a RAINY DAY HOLD, but students will be dismissed as normal when the inclement conditions have passed. However, if the conditions look to be long lasting, or increase to a concerning level, a RAINY DAY RELEASE will be communicated. At this time, the bridge is officially closed and ALL bridge-goers WILL BECOME CAR RIDERS. There will be no exceptions. We understand this is not an ideal scenario, but please be patient with us and give grace to the staff that is going above and beyond to ensure all students make it home safely and securely. We have had to call a RAINY DAY RELEASE only a handful of times over the years. We certainly appreciate your flexibility and understanding. Please note- the bike rack will remain accessible until dusk on Rainy Days.

NO BUS PASSES:

Transportation has advised schools cannot write any bus passes for students, including same bus, different stops.

SCHOOL ACCESS/VOLUNTEER:

All adults (including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) **must be cleared** and able to sign in at our kiosk in order to enter the school building beyond the front office. This includes parent/teacher conferences, plays, performances, class parties, etc. If you have not done so, please immediately follow the link available on our school website to complete the application.



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PVA RAINY DAY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

RAINY DAY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

2025 - 2026

RAINY DAY HOLD vs. RELEASE

What you need to know...

Rainy day dismissals require an all-hands on deck approach, in which we will all need to work diligently to ensure students get home safe and sound. This is not an ideal dismissal scenario, but by working together, all students will get home as safely and quickly as possible. We appreciate your patience and support as we work to accomplish this feat.

There are TWO different types of Rainy Day Dismissals that we will use at PVA. One for passing weather and another for severe, sustained weather. Depending on local skies, administration will make the call to do one or the other by 2:40 p.m. if at all possible. A school messenger will be sent out announcing the dismissal changes (BE SURE YOU ARE SIGNED UP AND RECEIVING TEXT ALERTS). Please read and become familiar with BOTH types of Rainy Day Dismissals and prepare as necessary.

RAINY DAY HOLD:

A **Rainy Day HOLD** will be called when inclement weather is in the area but looks to be quickly passing. If this is called, all bridge goers will be held within the building. Once the weather lightens and it is safe for student travel, the hold will be lifted and students will be able to dismiss as normal. In a HOLD, students will go home as planned, they will just be **delayed**. A message will be communicated to parents both when the Rainy Day HOLD is placed and when it is lifted. **No check-outs will occur at this time.**

RAINY DAY RELEASE:

A **Rainy Day RELEASE** will be called when inclement weather is in the area and looks to be long lasting. If this is announced, all BIKER/WALKER/GOLF CART students will be held within the building and **EVERYONE** will become a car rider. The bridge gates will remain locked and closed, as NO walk-up check-outs will be allowed. A message will be communicated to parents when a Rainy Day RELEASE is announced (no later than 2:40 p.m. if at all possible) so arrangements can be made for student pick-up. **AGAIN, THERE WILL BE NO BRIDGE ACCESS WHEN A RAINY DAY RELEASE IS CALLED AND ALL STUDENTS WILL BE CAR RIDERS**. Please make sure you have your students name and grade level on your dashboard, along with your ID.

****In the event of Rainy Day Hold or Release, please be attentive to all alerts and messages****



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PVA GOLF CART POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GOLF CART PROCEDURES



2025 - 2026

GOLF CART GENERAL REMINDERS FOR ALL...

- Bridge Gates Open by 8:10am for arrival.
- Crosswalk Gate will open at 8:18am allowing student access to the building.
- Kindergarten "Fast Pass" STOPS ABRUPTLY at 2:50pm. If you're not at the gate by 2:50pm for whatever reason, you've missed the window and must get back in the normal line. DO NOT DRIVE AGAINST TRAFFIC.
- NO Cell Phone Usage Allowed (State Statute).
- Carts must pull ALL THE WAY UP before stopping and then remain in your carts (or outside the school gates if Biker/walker) until student/s are brought to you.
- NO PARKING allowed unless a pre-scheduled conference has been arranged.
- REMEMBER - IF WE HAVE TO CALL A RAINY-DAY DISMISSAL, THE BRIDGE WILL REMAIN LOCKED, AS ALL STUDENTS MUST BE PICKED UP VIA THE CARLINE

Arrival/Dismissal Specifics

Morning Arrival

- Gate to the golf cart lot opens at 8:10 A.M.
- Crosswalk gate to the school opens at 8:18 A.M.
- Students must stay on their cart outside the gate.
- U-turns outside the gate are not permitted.
- In the morning, there is only one lane of traffic inside the gate (see picture below).
- Pull forward to mid-point of the loop, before students exit the cart.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Kindergarten students are dismissed first, and arrive at the lot between 2:35 P.M. and 2:40 P.M.
- Gate to the golf cart lot opens at approximately 2:40 P.M. on regular days, and 12:40 P.M. on Wednesdays, for our "Kindergarten Express Passes" (see last section of document)
- All other students start to be dismissed at 2:55 P.M., and will arrive to the lot shortly thereafter
- Please MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR STUDENT'S NAME AND GRADE DISPLAYED
- Please DO NOT PARK IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD on the other side of the bridge, or have your student(s) walk out from the golf cart lot to be picked up in the neighborhood.
- Students must wait inside the gate, in the golf cart area, for their cart to arrive.
- U-turns outside the gate are not permitted.



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PVA GOLF CART POLICIES AND PROCEDURE CONT.

Afternoon Dismissal Cont.

- In the afternoon, there are two lanes of traffic inside the gate.
 - Shorter, four-seat carts: If there is room, use the inside, center lane. If this lane is filled, use the outside, right lane.
 - Longer, six-seat carts: Use the outside, right lane. These carts are too long for the inside, center lane (it is harder for them to make the turn).
- Pull forward, all the way around the loops, before stopping to pick-up your student(s).
- Remain in your cart. A staff member will bring your child(ren) to the cart.
- There is **no parking** inside the gate, unless a previously scheduled appointment has been made.

Morning Arrival



Afternoon Dismissal



Kindergarten "Fast Passes"

- All PVA parents will arrive and line up at the bridge. Kindergarten families will be pulled into an express lane from 2:45-2:50 pm (1:45-1:50 pm on Wednesday).
- If kindergarten pass holders arrive after 2:50 pm (1:50 pm on Wednesday), you must remain in the regular golf cart line. Your kindergartener will stay with teachers until your arrival in the regular golf cart pickup line. **Do not line up in the exit lane before being pulled from the normal line by PVA staff.*
- Once in the "express line" those with ONLY KINDERGARTNER RIDERS will receive a green pass. Permanently display this "express pass" in your windshield. These carts will be sent through the normal golf cart loop.
- Once in the "express line" those with KINDERGARTNER AND RIDER/S IN OTHER GRADES will receive a yellow pass. Please permanently display this "express pass" in your windshield. These carts will be sent into a separate loop where a teacher will escort your kindergartener and you can wait for your other riders. To ensure the safety of everyone, **keep all riders in your cart at all times.**

Following the guidelines above will help to ensure safety and fairness for all golf cart riders

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

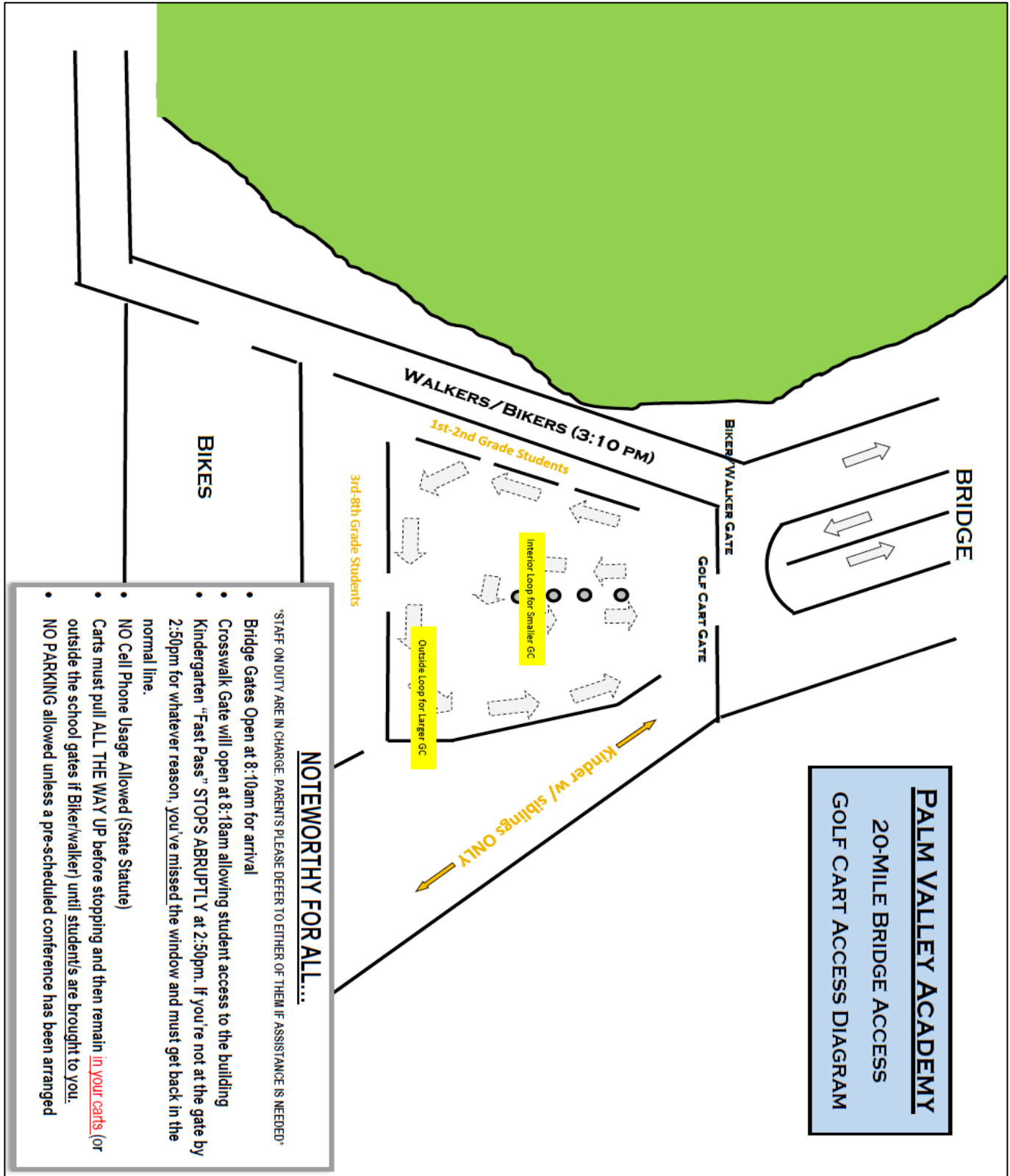


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PVA BRIDGE DIAGRAM (GOLF CART LOOP PICK-UP DETAILS)



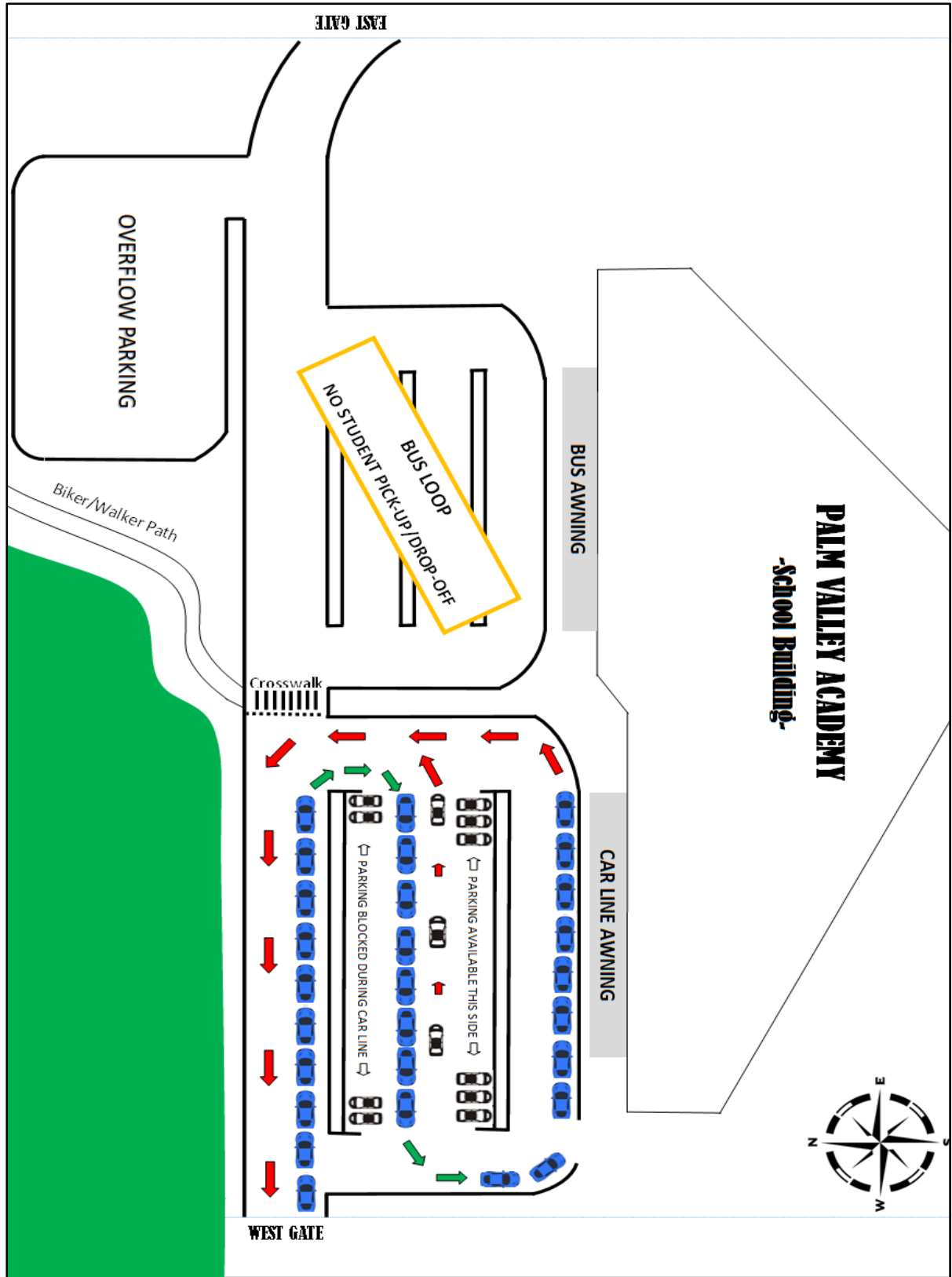


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PVA CARLINE MAP DIAGRAM (Traffic Flow)





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BICYCLE SAFETY AT PVA

E-Bike (Non-Pedal) Ban

Effective immediately, electric bikes that do not have functional pedals (commonly referred to as electric motorcycles or mopeds) are not permitted on campus as a mode of student transportation. These vehicles, due to their speed, weight, and classification, present significant safety concerns, particularly around young pedestrians and in congested traffic areas. To clarify, this restriction **does not apply to traditional bicycles, pedal-assisted e-bikes (where pedaling is required), or standard scooters.** This policy is specifically aimed at fully motorized vehicles that **lack pedals entirely**, which are not considered bicycles under Florida law and are not permitted for use by minors on public roads without proper licensing.

We understand that transportation preferences are evolving, but we must align our campus practices with both legal guidance and our responsibility to maintain a safe school environment.

Thank you for your cooperation and partnership in keeping PVA safe and secure for everyone. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted, please don't hesitate to reach out to our front office.

LET'S WALK & ROLL SAFELY!

Parents, HELP teach kids to RIDE SAFE!

Encouraging our kids to walk or roll (bike, wheelchair, scooter, skateboard, etc.) to school is a good move in the right direction. When they get out of the car and walk, bike or roll, they learn valuable lessons about independence, plus get a healthy dose of exercise and fresh air. Our neighborhoods benefit from fewer cars on the road and less congestion around school.

(1) Get Ready, Get Set...

Start in the right direction by showing them the way. Go on the route with your child. It's the best way to share the rules – not to mention a fun way to spend time together!

(2) Look for the Signs

Your child will need to recognize, remember and obey traffic signs, signals and pavement markings.

(3) Practice Safe Habits

Practice with your child by walking or rolling together. Repeated practice helps kids get better at it and you feel more comfortable with their skills.

(4) Iron Out the Best Route

Identify a safe route to and from school or the bus stop. The school may already have route maps with recommendations. If not, here are some considerations:

- Look for less busy roads and slower speeds.
- Choose crossing locations that have a clear view of traffic.
- Practice the route with your child until you are both comfortable.
- If no sidewalks, choose roads w/ shoulders where people walking can face oncoming traffic.

PALM VALLEY ACADEMY BOBCATS

HOW TO FIT AND ADJUST YOUR CHILD'S BIKE HELMET

1

**MEASURE
YOUR CHILD'S HEAD**
Use a soft tape measure to measure the circumference of the child's head about 1" above their eyebrows (or the thickest part of their head).
FIND A HELMET that includes your child's measurement in its size range.

2

**POSITION THE HELMET
ON YOUR CHILD'S HEAD**
Place the helmet squarely on top of your child's head.
TWO FINGERS TEST The helmet should sit level on the head – about two finger widths above the child's eyebrows.

3

**TIGHTEN
FOR A SNUG FIT**
Tighten the internal width of the helmet so it's snug, but not uncomfortable.
• Dial-adjust knob: Turn right to tighten.
• Pads: Swap the thick or thin pads to widen or loosen the inside.
SHAKE TEST Rock your child. Shake their head back and forth. The helmet should stay firmly in place.

4

**MAKE A 'V'
WITH THE SIDE STRAPS**
ADJUST THE SLIDERS so that the straps come together to form a V at the base of the child's ear. The helmet should be centered on the head.

5

**ADJUST THE CHIN STRAP
FOR LENGTH**
Adjust the length of the strap so that it's loose enough to buckle it.
1 FINGER TEST But tight enough that you can fit just one finger between the chin and strap.



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION (FIRST COMMUNICATED 7/14)

Access to the School:

Whether you are attending a conference with the teacher in person, volunteering in the classroom/events, escorting your kindergartener to class on their first official day of school, joining us for a presentation/celebration, and/or attending a field trip, you must have completed the **School Access Form: Volunteer Application**. This is a district policy and there are no exceptions. We truly do not like to turn families away, so please complete and submit the application by following the link:

<https://apps.raptortech.com/Apply/OTY0OTplbi1VUw==>

Elementary Meet and Greet:

This is your time to “Meet the Teacher” and get acquainted with the PVA campus. Please see the above staggered schedule to accommodate all families in our hallways and parking areas. During this event, students will walk the building, meet their teacher(s) and drop off any school supplies they’d like to bring. Representatives from Transportation, Food Service, School Clinic, Extended Day, and other areas of service will be onsite and available to answer questions.

Middle School Walk Your Schedule:

Middle school students and families are invited to visit the campus, pick up their class schedules, and walk through their day at their own pace. This is a great opportunity to locate classrooms, practice locker combinations, and get a feel for the flow of the school day before the first bell rings. Please note that teachers will not be available during this time, but staff will be on hand to help with directions and any general questions. We look forward to seeing you and helping you feel confident and prepared for a strong start to the year! Please see the schedule above!

An Important Legislative Update: K-8 Phone & Smart Watch “Away for the Day” Policy

Per Florida State Statute, students are no longer permitted to have cell phones or smart watches, that can communicate, during the instructional day. As a school, we will fully embrace an “Away for the Day” policy and know that our students will have more opportunities to just be a kid a little bit longer while reducing distractions during the instructional day. For more research and best practices, please check out the “Away for the Day” resource!

Additional PVA “Away for the Day” details:

- Student cell phones and/or smart watches must be “off and away” between 8:40-3:00 every day.
- Phones and/or smart watches may be out and used in the morning along with ONE earbud (8:20-8:40) and then must either be locked and stored in lockers, in a backpack, or in a place that is secured during the school day (8:40-3:00).
- PVA is not responsible for lost or damaged items.
- Teachers and staff will remain consistent from class to class and not allow students to use phones during the day; laptops or iPads will be used during the instructional day if internet is needed for a lesson or activity.



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- Students may not use their phones during class transitions or during lunch time.
- If a student is found using their devices, the following progression of support will be utilized:
 - 1st Offense: Device confiscated and taken to front office for student to pick up at end of day and an appropriate consequence will be assigned.
 - 2nd Offense: Device confiscated and taken to front office. Parent will be contacted to pick up device at end of day. Appropriate consequences will be assigned.
 - 3rd Offense: Device confiscated and taken to front office. Parent will be contacted to pick up device at end of day. Appropriate consequences will be assigned.

PTO, PTO, PTO!!

Palm Valley Academy and the PVA PTO share the same vision for success, which is only accomplished by leaning and relying on the strength of everyday working relationships between students, parents and staff. The effort the parent-members, chair-members, and board members put forth daily to support our students, staff and school is nothing less than extraordinary. On behalf of everyone here at PVA, we sincerely thank all our PTO members who work so hard year-round to ensure a safe and educationally enriched environment here at PVA.

- Check out the second Summer Communication sent on July 21st for tons of additional information on all the things PTO! Or, for more information about PTO membership opportunities and/or additional ways to volunteer see the attached membership flyer or visit the PTO website at <http://www.pvapto.org/>.

Have a great week everyone... stay dry, stay cool, and stay hydrated! We look forward to seeing everyone soon!

Zachary R. Strom
School Principal
Palm Valley Academy