

Amidon-Bowen Elementary School



Family Handbook

SY 2025-20256

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Contact Information

Amidon-Bowen Elementary School
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School History

Amidon-Bowen Elementary is a unique District of Columbia Public School (DCPS). Amidon-Bowen Elementary School is the product of a merger of two schools and represents the ideals of both schools' namesakes.

Margaret Milburn Amidon, daughter of Alice and George Milburn, was born in Alexandria, Virginia on January 21, 1827. Her father was a native of Dumfries, Scotland. Her maternal ancestors had migrated to Virginia soon after the Revolutionary War. Placed under instruction at the age of four years, Margaret continued her quest for formal education until she was sixteen years of age. In 1843, she organized her own school and was one of its teachers until 1849. At this time, Mrs. Amidon was appointed to serve as a teacher in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Successfully passing a later examination given by the Board of Trustees, Margaret M. Amidon assumed the position comparable to an elementary school principal of a primary school in the Fourth District. In 1854 she was promoted to principal of a grammar school. Mrs. Amidon held this position of educational responsibility until her death on December 3, 1869, at the age of forty-two years.

Born into slavery in Prince George's County, MD in 1809, Anthony Bowen never let his adverse circumstances determine his future. After purchasing his freedom from a plantation owner for \$425 in 1830, he worked to produce an enduring legacy in the nation's capital for the rest of his years. Respected in both white and black communities, Bowen was well-known for his leadership in establishing churches, religious instruction, and education for free blacks in the District of Columbia. By the time he died in 1871, Anthony Bowen had become a prominent religious leader and educator, council member of the District's Seventh Ward, the first African-American clerk at the US Patent Office, and founder and president of the world's first African-American YMCA.

A school, erected at Sixth and F Streets, Southwest, in 1882, was named in honor of Margaret M. Amidon. Until its closing on June 30, 1957, the Amidon School presented a fine educational program for children in the Southwest area.

A new community was planned as part of the redevelopment of Southwest Washington. To serve the emerging neighborhood, a new school building was erected at the corner of Fourth and Eye Streets, Southwest. On September 7, 1960, the children of Southwest once again attended a new school named in honor of Margaret Milburn Amidon – educator, leader, friend, and pioneer. In the fall of 2009, DCPS made the decision to merge Anthony Bowen Elementary School with Margaret Amidon Elementary School. The school was officially renamed Amidon-Bowen Elementary School.

After the merger, the school continues to serve the students of Southwest Washington D.C. with a commitment to academic excellence.

Mission Statement

At Amidon-Bowen Elementary School, students will be accepted, appreciated, nurtured, and challenged according to their individual needs. Through their education at school, students will gain the skills, strategies, and desire necessary for continued learning. They will also develop a strong sense of responsibility for themselves and toward each other, their community, and the Earth's resources.

At Amidon-Bowen Elementary School, staff will use various sources of data to drive instruction and promote individual growth. We will foster collaboration among adults in service of our students. We will align resources to support our students and their needs; foster their unique identities, and create and sustain a responsive, inclusive, diverse, safe, and welcoming school community.

Vision Statement

- To become a high performing elementary school in Washington D.C. as measured by multiple means,
- To provide a rigorous, responsive, challenging, and joyous learning environment where every student will develop a love for learning, innate curiosity and be eager to fully participate in the learning process, and
- To exemplify exceptional teaching and learning practices in every classroom.

Student Pledge

I promise to do my very best
I am expected to keep the peace,
I will respect the adults who teach me and the learning that
takes place here, My future is bright, high hopes are mine,
I will do what is right
to make Amidon-Bowen shine.

School Hours of Operations

The instructional day begins promptly each day at 8:45am and ends at 3:15pm. Students may begin to arrive at school each day at 8:15am. As a reminder, there is no adult supervision for students prior to the doors opening at 8:15am. Students should NOT be left outside without a parent/guardian present to supervise them before they enter the building.

Main Office Hours

The main office is staffed each day from 8:00am until 4:30pm from Mondays through Fridays.

DCPS School Calendar – SY 25-26

Date	Event
August 25 th , 2025	First Day of School (K-5)
August 28 th , 2025	First Day of School (ECE)
September 1 st , 2025	No School - Holiday
October 9 th , 2024	No School (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
October 10 th , 2025	No School (Teacher PD Day)
October 13 th , 2025	No School - Holiday
November 3 rd , 2025	No School (Teacher Records Day)
November 11 th , 2025	No School - Holiday
November 26 th – 28 th , 2025	No School
December 22 nd , 2025 – January 2 nd , 2026	No School
January 19 th , 2026	No School – Holiday
January 26 th , 2026	No School (End of term 2)
February 13 th , 2026	No School (Teacher PD Day)
February 16 th , 2026	No School – Holiday
March 12 th , 2026	No School (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
March 13 th , 2026	No School
April 6 th , 2026	No School (End of Term 3)
April 13 th – 17 th , 2026	No School – Spring Break
May 25 th , 2026	No School – Holiday
June 16 th , 2026	No School
June 17 th , 2026	Last Day of School for Students
June 22/23, 2026	Snow Make Up days

Attendance and Tardy Policy

The Compulsory School Attendance law requires all students between 5-years-old and 18-years-old be sent to school daily. Students are expected to arrive at school on time and remain at school until dismissal each and every day. Once families elect to enroll their child in Pre-K they are bound by the same attendance rules and expectations.

Attendance is taken each day at 8:45am. Any student arriving after this time will be marked tardy for the day and must obtain a tardy arrival slip from the main office before reporting to class. Failing to do so may result in the student being marked absent for the day instead of tardy.

When a student is absent:

- 1) Call the office the day of the absence
- 2) Provide a written excuse note to the main office or email to latetia.cureton-alston@k12.dc.gov within 5 days of the absence.

Failing to do both of these steps will result in the students absence being marked unexcused. The note must be dated, indicate the dates of the absence, and the reason for the absence. Verbal excuses do not excuse the absence. Excuses must be provided as written excuses via paper copy or email to the office. In alignment with DCPS policy, the following are acceptable excuses for a student absence:

- Death in the student's immediate family
- Illness of the student (A doctor's note is required after the 4th consecutive day of absence)
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Medical reasons such as a doctor or dentists' appointment

Building Access and Classroom Visits

In order to ensure safety of all of our students and staff, all visitors must enter via the front entrance and report to security. We have a 100% ID Check requirement regardless of how often an individual visits. After signing in with security, all visitors must report to the main office to check in.

We are happy to have parents visit classrooms for any event hosted by the school or teacher as long as the visit does not impact the teaching and learning environment. Unscheduled classroom visits will not be accommodated. If an authorized parent/guardian needs to see their child for an emergency situation they can report to the main office, and we will call the child to the office to speak with you.

Those wishing to have repeat visits are required to obtain a DCPS clearance.

Drop Off Procedures:

Early Childhood (PK3 and PK4) – Pre-K parents are welcome to enter the first-floor orange hallway via the main entrance prior to 8:45am in order to drop their child off directly with the instructional aide in the orange hallway. After signing their child in at the table, they should also exit out the main doors.

Kindergarten – 5th Grade – Parents are welcome to walk their child into the main lobby before sending them to class. Parents should not pass the security desk. Members of the school staff will be in place to help students get to their assigned locations.

Pick-Up Procedures

Early Childhood (PK3 and PK4) – Parents will enter the building via the CDC entrance beginning at 3:15pm. They will report to the classroom and sign out their student.

Kindergarten –5th Grade (outdoor dismissal) - Parents will report to the blacktop where they will pick up their child from the grade level line.

Kindergarten –5th Grade (indoor dismissal) - Parents will report to the gym entrance via the blacktop and pick their child up inside from the grade level line.

All students should be picked up each day between 3:15 pm and 3:30 pm (unless they are enrolled in aftercare). Any student being picked up after 3:30 must be signed out by an authorized individual.

Before Care

Amidon-Bowen Elementary School does offer a limited before care program to families at a cost of \$10 per week. Drop off for before care begins at 7:15am and ends at 7:45am. Programming runs until 8:15am when students are brought to their drop off locations. This service is provided as a first come, first serve opportunity while space allows.

School Volunteers

Anyone wishing to volunteer at the school or serve as a chaperone must adhere to the DCPS Volunteer Policy. Please visit the DCPS website (<https://dcps.dc.gov/page/volunteer-our-schools>) or call the office and schedule a time to speak with Ms. Brock to get further details on how to get your background check and volunteer clearance processed properly.

Parking

Unfortunately, Amidon-Bowen Elementary School does not have parking available to families and visitors. Any non-staff vehicles parked in the parking lot will be towed at the owner's expense. Visitors parking on the street should ensure they fully adhere to all posted signage to avoid tickets or towing.

Early Dismissal Policy

Any student being picked up prior to the 3:15pm dismissal must be signed out by 2:30pm. Dismissing students following 2:30pm becomes disruptive of the learning environment and a potential safety concerns and thus will not be allowed.

If you plan to pick your child up, please plan accordingly. Parents must be in the main office by 2:30pm to ensure sign out can occur. Calling ahead does not meet this requirement. Students will not be called down until a parent has arrived and signed them out. Parents arriving after 2:30pm will need to wait until 3:15 to pick up their child except for instances of a documented emergency.

Inclement Weather

Amidon-Bowen Elementary School follows the DCPS Inclement Weather Policy. Any decision to close school or delay school opening are made by the Chancellor and the Mayor. Parents are encouraged to monitor local news channels, the DCPS website, or twitter for information about school closings or delays.

Afterschool Programs and Athletics

Amidon-Bowen offers DCPS aftercare to students in grades 3-5. Students in ECE through 2nd Grade can contract with Polite Piggies for afterschool programming. Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis while spaces are available. Programming runs after school from 3:30pm – 6:00pm.

Amidon-Bowen also offers athletics and after school activities to students in good standing. These clubs operate daily from 3:15pm – 4:15pm on select days. Participation requires a signed permission slip and on-time parent pick up.

Food Restrictions and Allergies

In order to ensure a safe learning environment for all, Amidon-Bowen Elementary School does not allow students or families to bring food items or drinks that contain nut product (other allergens may be added based on student needs). Please help us ensure a safe environment by checking your child's home-packed meals, if they bring one.

Any parent whose child has a food allergy must notify the nurse and the cafeteria to ensure appropriate accommodations are adhered to.

Field Trips

Field trips are beneficial experiential learning experiences for all. In order to ensure that your child can participate, please ensure that all signed permission forms are returned on time. Late permissions slips will prevent a student from participating as we often have to submit final numbers in advance of the trip and cannot make adjustments after certain dates/times. Verbal permission cannot be accepted for safety and legal purposes. There are times when it may be deemed necessary to require a parent to attend a trip with their child when safety is a concern.

Lost and Found

We strongly encourage families to label their child's items with their name to help us return them when they are lost and found. Any item that is not labeled will be placed in the lost and found in the front lobby. Please check in at the office to be able to look for an item in the lost and found. The lost and found will be cleaned out twice per month on the 15th and last day of the month. Any item not claimed on those days will either be donated or thrown away so please be sure to check the lost and found as soon as you identify that an item is missing.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays can be celebrated during the last 30 minutes of the school day with prior approval from the teacher. Parents should communicate with the teacher directly to get approval for a celebration. As a reminder, any items brought in for birthday celebrations must be free of nut products.

Staying Informed

Amidon-Bowen Elementary School utilizes the Remind App for regular announcements and communication from teachers and the school. Please contact your child's teacher or the main office if you need assistance getting set up in Remind.

Student Lunches/Food

Students may not have food delivered to school. Deliveries will not be accepted. The school will not warm students food.

If a parent is dropping off food for a student it should arrive on campus by 10am so that we can ensure that it arrives to the student before the beginning of their lunch period.

Addressing Concerns

If there is a question or concern, the first step is with the individual involved or your child's classroom teacher. If a resolution cannot be reached, please contact the main office to speak with the RJ coordinator, Program Coordinator, member of the mental health team, assistant principal, or principal based on who is the most appropriate person to address the concern.

Promotion and Retention

While we strive to ensure academic and social-emotional success for all students in the building, there are times when retention may be in the best interest of a student. If a child is in danger of being retained, teachers will communicate that with parents during conference days and on report cards. By the end of Term 3, parents will be sent official communication indicating that a child may be retained, as well as the reasons why. A final notification letter will be sent following the close of the school year for all students who are being retained for the next school year.

Students can be retained for a number of reasons. In ECE and Kindergarten, students can be retained if it is deemed they are not socially-emotionally ready for the next grade. Students in K-5 can also be retained for accruing too many absences or not earning passing marks in their required courses.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All members of the school staff are mandated reporters and as such are required to report any instances of suspected abuse or neglect. This is required by law. Staff are not allowed to conduct investigations – they are required to report anything that *could* be considered abuse or neglect. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Medical neglect
- Education neglect

As a reminder, excessive absenteeism and frequent late pick-ups both constitute potential neglect, and staff are required to report situations of potential neglect.

Emergency Drills

Safety and security are essential at Amidon-Bowen Elementary School. In order to ensure student safety, we practice a number of different types of drills to ensure that we are as prepared as possible in the event that an incident ever occur. These drills include, but are not limited to fire drills, severe weather drills, Alert drills, lockdown drills, and 500 foot/relocation drills. In order to ensure an authentic experience, drills will not be announced in advance outside of the school's emergency response team.

Technology use

Students and visitors are expected to adhere to the DCPS Acceptable Use of Technology Policy at all times. If the use of technology becomes a concern students may lose their privileges with technology. Students should not bring any personal technology to school as the school will not assume any responsibility or liability for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.

Cell Phones

Cell phone usage is not allowed at school. Students are expected to turn off their device and turn it in to their homeroom teacher for the day or store it (powered off) in their backpack. Cell phones cannot be carried on the student's person during bell-to-bell times. Student use of cell phones during the school day will result in disciplinary action and the phone being confiscated until a parent

can arrange to pick it up. Repeated violations (3rd or more) will require the device to remain off of school property.

Civility Expectations

It is expected that all interaction at the school and with members of the school community be conducted in a civil manner. Any member of the school community who fails to uphold these expectations is subject to a loss of access and possible barring from the property at the discretion of the administrative team.

Immunization Requirements

DCPS students are expected to comply with DC Health's immunization requirements. Certain grades include exclusion for those students who are out of compliance. Please speak with the school nurse about any questions or concerns.

Updated contact information

It is the expectation that parents keep the school informed of current contact information at all times. This includes contact information for the parent/guardian as well as any and all emergency contacts. This information can be updated at any time by stopping by the main office.

Behavior Expectations

We expect that all students will act appropriately at all times while at school. Amidon-Bowen adheres to Chapter 25 in reference to all behavior incidents and consequences that occur as a result of those incidents.

Toys/Games Expectations

School is meant to be a positive and productive learning environment. As such, students should not bring in any toys or games to school. Any toys or games at school will be confiscated and a parent will need to pick the item up at a scheduled time.

Recess equipment is provided for all grade levels.

Uniform Expectation

Amidon-Bowen is a uniform school. All students from PK3 through 5th grade are expected to be in uniform each and every day unless the school communicates a dress down day.

Uniforms consist of:

- Navy blue bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts)
- Plain white, gray, or navy blue shirts (logo and text free)
- Close-toed shoes
- Hats, hoods, sunglasses, or other headwear is prohibited in the building unless a religious or medical exemption is granted
- Crocks and sandals are not allowed.

Students who arrive to school out of uniform will call home to ask for a proper uniform to be brought to the school for them. Students will not be allowed on field trips without proper uniform. Students who are in uniform daily have an opportunity for additional incentives and rewards.