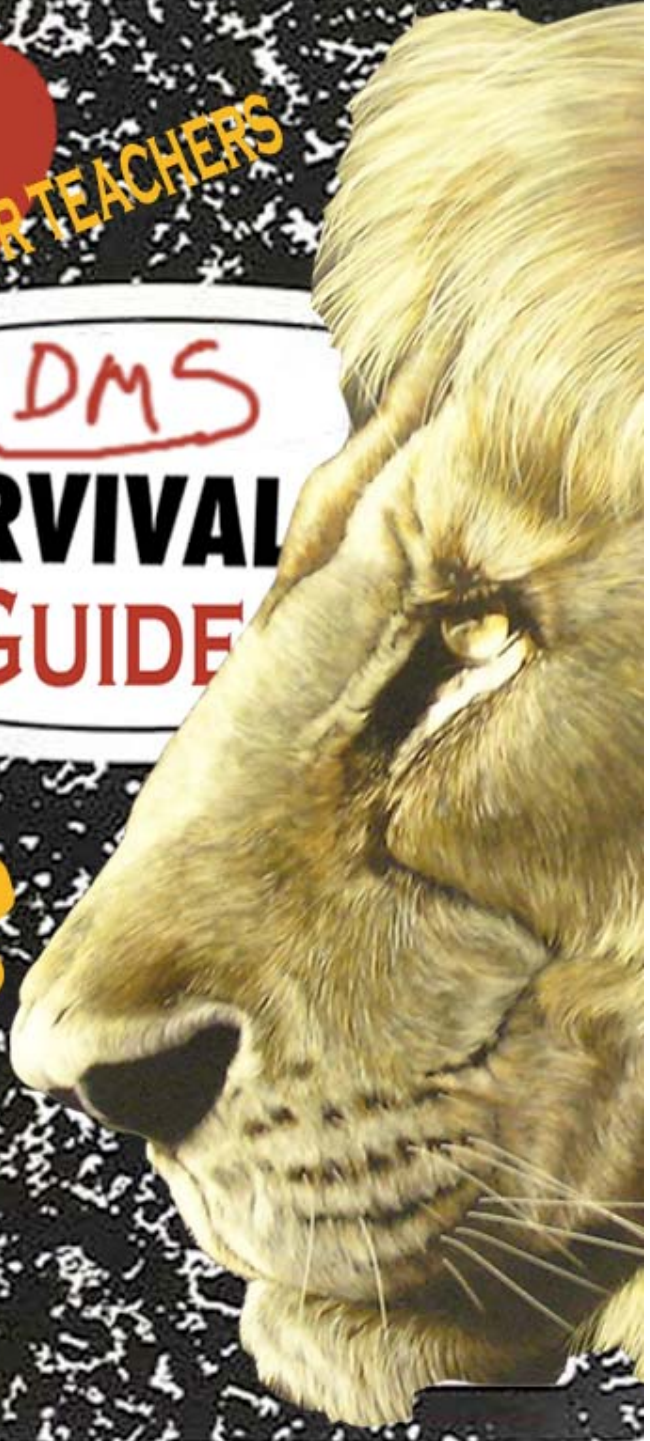


LEARN TO TAME YOUR TEACHERS



DMS  
**SURVIVAL**  
**GUIDE**



*The Dumbarton Writer's Club Presents:*  
**Learn to Tame Your Teachers:**  
DMS SURVIVAL GUIDE

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# Lockers: Opening and Closing

Ok, so you are all new to middle school, which also means you are new to lockers. I don't mean those little cubbies you had your name on in elementary school, I mean big confusing lockers to go with your small, even more confusing locks. The first thing you want to know is that your lock will be frustrating at first, but you'll get it in the end. But you have to remember not to get frustrated, because trying to rip it off does not do any good.

To open the lock, look at the paper that comes with the lock in the box. It has a bunch of numbers on it (three to be exact). This is your combination (or "combo" for short), which you need to memorize if you want to ever open your lock. You know the time they give you at the beginning of the first day for trying to open the lock? Use it wisely, and try to open it. Now, let's get down to business, opening your lock. The first thing you want to do is take a deep breath. It can be slightly confusing, and overwhelming on the first try. First, turn the dial three times or so to the right, starting and ending on zero, to clear it. Then, begin your combination by turning the lock to the right, ending on the first number of the combo. Then turn the dial to the left, two times to the left, ending on the second number in your combo. Finally, turn your lock to the last number in your combo, and lightly pull. Your lock should open. If it doesn't, don't worry, just start over. Now, let's hear from a 6<sup>th</sup> grader's point of view, on opening your locker:

*"Opening a locker is quite stressful, but when you get the hang of it, you will suddenly not have a problem with opening a locker. Above all, you just have to remember that it's just a lock."*

Well, closing your locker is not rocket science. You just have to lift up the handle and push the locker closed. This is only tough if you have so much stuff crammed into your locker that it won't even shut. Then you push it all into the space you have and close the door desperately and slam the door closed. It will fall open sometimes, so just be ready for it.

## Presetting Gone Bad

For starters, we want to say what presetting is. It's when you dial your combination fully and then leave it there before you need to use it. The downside of this is that anyone can now open your lock, take your stuff and/or back-lock you. Instead, dial your lock through the first two numbers and just leave it like that. If no one knows the combo, then you are safe. This normally works for most cases, but sometimes people will change the number that you dialed-for no reason. But partial presetting is normally effective.

## FAQ About Lockers

### **Q: Why won't my lock open?**

A: There are many reasons why it won't open. Sometimes, you might be using the wrong combination. You have 2-3 combinations, one for the hall, one for gym, and sometimes one for an instrument. It's very hard to keep track of all of them, so try the combination(s) for your other lockers. Another reason is that you might have just put the combination in wrong, so you just have to try it again. Another possibility is that you are at the wrong locker, so remember your locker number. (You will never open your lock if you are at someone else's locker.) Your lock might also be sticky (hard to open); if this is so, tell your teacher and have them get you another lock.

### **Q: How do I open my lock? You explained this, but it was really hard to understand.**

A: Well, this diagram might help (see figure 1). But really, you just have to practice.

### **Q: What is back-locking, and how do I prevent it?**

A: Back-locking is when your lock is taken off your locker, and put back on backwards. This makes it very hard to open the lock.

### **Q: Can I decorate my locker?**

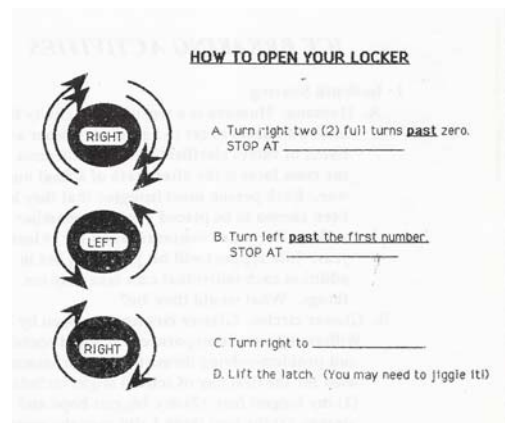
A: Yes, you can put wallpaper, pictures, and other stuff on your locker. BUT, be warned: things that are on the outside of your locker are very vulnerable to being destroyed. Face the truth - not all Dumbartonians are as respectful as others. Some people will scribble, rip, tear, and otherwise deface your decorations.

### **Q: How much can I *really* fit in my locker?**

A: In most cases, enough. A locker is generally big enough to fit a backpack, a coat and the books you don't need. Unfortunately, if you have a rolling backpack with, like most rolling backpacks, a large plastic bottom, the chances are it *won't* fit. Also, in the winter, when you come into school with a large, heavily insulated coat, you'll probably have trouble cramming that in as well.

### **Q: What if the actual *locker* won't open?**

A: Then, you might have a real problem. When the actual locker gets stuck, *not* the lock, it usually means that something is stuck between the locker door and the frame. This could be a coat, folder, backpack strap, lunchbox, etc, etc. To avoid this, be aware of anything hanging out of your locker when you close it. However, if it does happen, ask your teacher for assistance.



**Figure 1:** Diagram of instructions for opening your lock.

# Schedule

If you want to at least get to your next class, knowing your schedule is important. For when it comes to the schedule, there's so much to master.

No one wants the bell ringing unexpectedly and still not know which class is next. If you have to dig through your binder just to find your next class, it can make you late. So always keep your schedule close so you can always be ready.

One thing you have to know is that every day is different. There are two columns with two different schedules. (see figure 1) These are called A days and B days. These days alternate throughout the week. Your classes will be switched, rearranged, or just different, so always be ready. Your specials will always be different.

After a few weeks at Dumbarton, you'll have it memorized, but in case of emergency... **DON'T THROW IT AWAY.** You have no way of knowing if you'll need it so have it in case. In a moment of a complete memory blackout, you'll be thankful you still have your schedule. And if you're just a complete nervous wreck, you *definitely* want to keep it.

In Dumbarton, all the classes are shorter; thus, there are more subjects. There are ten periods a day. Two periods are combined because they overlap with other grades' lunch periods, so they are only one class. For sixth graders, periods 5/6 and 7/8 are each one class. (see figure 1: periods 5 & 6 are Reading)

You all probably want to know, what about recess? Well, I'm sorry to say, there is no recess in your schedule, but you do have walk and talk. Walk and talk happens during lunch.

If you didn't pay attention to what you just read, that's your loss. But remember - **YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS!**

| Periods             | A                                  | B                                  |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Homeroom            | Homeroom<br>Bauer- 108             | Homeroom<br>Bauer- 108             |
| Period 1            | Math<br>Hostetler-124              | Math<br>Hostetler- 124             |
| Period 2            | Woodwinds<br>Miskimon-Audit.       | P. E.<br>Morrison- Gym             |
| Period 3            | World Cultures<br>Hinchberger- 111 | Language Arts<br>Bauer- 108        |
| Lunch<br>(Period 4) | Lunch A<br>Middlebrook-Caf.        | Lunch A<br>Middlebrook-Caf.        |
| Period 5            | Reading<br>Taylor- 115             | Reading<br>Taylor- 115             |
| Period 6            | Reading (con.)<br>Taylor- 115      | Reading (con.)<br>Taylor- 115      |
| Period 7            | Science<br>Smith- 122              | Science<br>Smith- 122              |
| Period 8            | Science (con.)<br>Smith- 122       | Science (con.)<br>Smith- 122       |
| Period 9            | P. E.<br>Morrison- Gym             | Art<br>Summerson- 199              |
| Period 10           | Language Arts<br>Bauer- 108        | World Cultures<br>Hinchberger- 111 |
| Homeroom            | Dismissal<br>Bauer- 108            | Dismissal<br>Bauer- 108            |

**Figure 1: Model Schedule**



# Hall Navigation

Next year, you will find yourself immersed in the wonders of Dumbarton Middle School. So, there are a few things you need to know about navigating the hallways. First, unlike elementary school, we do not walk in lines directed by the teacher. Yet we do not push and shove each other in the hallway, for we are courteous and polite at all times, wherever you are. Furthermore, it's a good idea to stay to the right of the hallway. So, you can follow the flow, going in the same direction.

Also, in elementary school, you do not need a pass to go to the bathroom. You had it very well. But in middle school, you need a pass to go to the bathroom, and if you go during class, teachers may scold you and ask you to finish the written assignment being done in class before you go. In elementary school you can go to the bathroom, library, water fountain, or office without a pass written by your teachers, but in middle school you need a pass which is written in the back of your agenda. (see figure 1) Your teacher must then initial it.



Figure 1: Hallway passport

Another difference from some elementary schools is that you may have had to wait outside the school before going in to homeroom; yet at Dumbarton, you have to wait in the cafeteria with most of the entire school. Scary, huh? Yet there is a way out of the horrific madness! If you play a musical instrument, then you are allowed to play your instrument in room 101 until the 8:15 bell rings, which signals that you have to go to homeroom.

Here at DMS, the room numbers go up to the 200s, which is the upstairs area where the seventh and eighth graders are. The first level, the 100s, is where the sixth graders are as well as the

- Gym,
- Cafeteria,
- Music rooms,
- Auditorium, and
- Art rooms and yes,
- THE OFFICE! Frightening, isn't it?

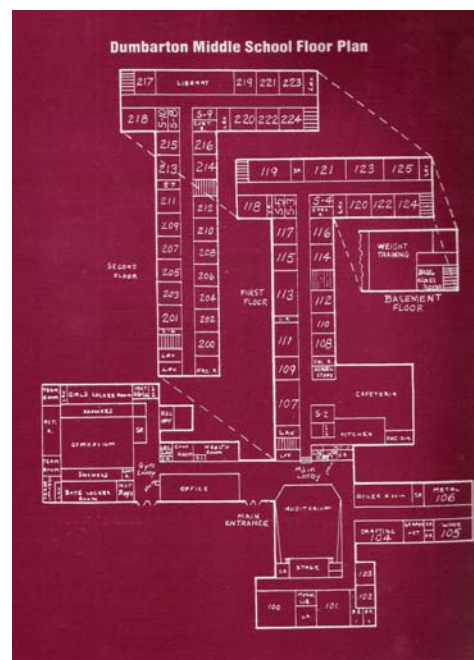


Figure 2: Map of Dumbarton Middle School

# Surviving the Cafeteria

In Dumbarton Middle, the one safe haven for us students is the cafeteria. Although homeroom seating is an unforgiving mistress, free seating is like a beautiful goddess descending through the clouds with angels singing and the light hitting their face just right (if you believe in such things).

In the Dumbarton middle school orientation you were probably told that one day in middle school you will get to eat a beautiful garden salad or some succulent steak - all at a good price of course - outside with your friends. Unfortunately, that is just delusional.

1. Find out if you can drop your books off at your class you have after lunch. If you can, then you might not have to stop at your locker after lunch cutting back on the elbowing and shoving free-for-all as everyone puts their lunchboxes away.
2. When the puppet master or mistress comes up to the microphone, for the love of God, be quiet!!!!!!! It's not that hard of a concept to grasp, and if you cannot grasp this concept you will get homeroom seating.
3. When lunch is over and we must drag ourselves to class - PICK UP YOUR TRASH!!!!!! It's easy as long as you have the use of your arms and legs. Yeah, I know, walking trash all the way over to that trashcan six feet away is a chore, but it's the courteous thing to do.
4. There is always the issue of seating. Get there early enough to be at the table without making there be more than nine people. This way you won't get stuck with the dorks, nerds, or other people that no one wants to sit with.
5. During homeroom seating, just sit with your homeroom. They can't be that bad; besides, that's how you make friends.
6. Use the middle line if you're not concerned with what the meal of the day is. The outside lines always have pizza or chicken patties making them always crowded. Head for the middle line for your basics like snacks and fries.
7. Walk-and-Talk is the middle school equivalent to recess where you get to mill about outside and chat with your friends after lunch. It only lasts a few minutes, but it's invaluable social time. But, once you go out, you have to stay out, so make sure that's what you want. And in the winter, don't forget to bring your coat to lunch.

# Phys. Ed. Issues

## Uniforms & Dress

Gym uniforms are essential for all students. Every week, we take home our gym uniform to wash it, so it will stay clean and smell good. Also, you have to tuck your gym shirt into your BIG, UGLY, POOFY, MAROON gym pants. But don't worry, since everyone has to do it, you aren't the only one who looks weird in gym pants! And you may want your friends to sign your gym shirt in Sharpie, but sorry, if you do, the teachers will make you buy a new one for a billion dollars (or so it would seem). You could use that precious money to buy a new iPod or go to Uncle Wiggie's - SO DON'T SHARPIE YOUR SHIRT! Finally, please, for all our sakes, make sure you have something in-between your gym uniform and your skin. This will save you a heap of awkwardness.

Make sure to bring socks because if you don't, your feet will smell really bad. Once, I wore really long dorky grandma-ish socks, and I had to tuck them in my shoes. It was very uncomfortable. So just remember to wear ankle socks. In gym, you also must bring your own sneakers! If you don't, you have to borrow old, smelly, gross, used ones! Although, you can always buy sneaker fresheners in stores!

You might be wondering, "Can I wear jewelry?" The answer is a decisive no. Sorry to say, but if you do, you have to go all the way back to the locker room, take it off, unlock your locker, put it in, close your locker, leave, and you missed a lot of gym. Girls (and maybe some guys) have to wear their hair up in a ponytail or bun with a headband or clip.

Quite frankly, you don't need sunscreen, because you will never need it. The gym teachers won't let you outside if it's that hot. So don't be afraid of the sun!

## Locker room

The first thing you'll notice about the locker room is the spectrum of odors you smell. For example, B.O. can be overpowering, so don't be shy with the deodorant. If you have extreme odors, then perhaps some high-powered cologne/body spray is in order.

If you have ashy legs bring some yummy scented lotion.

Your locker smells bad so bring an air freshener—preferably apple!!

At the end of the week you take your gym uniform home (hopefully) so you should bring a recyclable bag to save the environment and carry your uniform in!

Sadly, you need at least 2 locks: one for gym, homeroom locker and possibly music. Also, beware of strangers in the locker room.

People enjoy screaming because of the acoustics/echoes. RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO ...SCREAM!

## Rules

IMPORTANT: You must bring your books to gym or else the teachers will send you back to get them!

If you chuck shoes, pants, etc. across the locker room, you will get in trouble!

BEWARE: teachers yell at the whole locker room, even if it was only one person. So don't be sad if they yell at you!

There is a bathroom in the locker room, so RESIST THE TEMPTATION AND... don't flush people's uniforms/stuff down the toilet!

## Personal

Don't be self conscious about yourself because you rock! Also...BEWARE: starting conversations while undressing is awkward!

Boys may be nervous about undressing, and so will girls, so you can know, it's not only you!

The units go by fast, so when you start to like one unit, don't get too attached because they'll change it to another one.☹



**See You Next  
Year!!**

