



# APS PROCESS FOR APPROVAL & DISTRIBUTION OF BACKPACK MAIL

The Superintendent has designated the Department of School and Community Relations to handle all requests for the distribution of outside materials to Arlington Public Schools (APS) students. Effective April 4, 2016, paper copies of flyers are no longer distributed to APS families. Backpack Mail is now sent to families via email through a service vendor called Peachjar. Below are the procedures and rules for non-APS entities or community organizations to secure permission to distribute flyers, brochures, or other printed materials. Information for using Peachjar is on Page 2 of this document.

## APPROVAL PROCESS

- **Provide proof of nonprofit/tax-exempt status:** Backpack mail is only available to verified outside nonprofit organizations\* who have provided proof of their nonprofit/tax-exempt status. **This document must be uploaded into your Peachjar account.**
- **Include disclaimer:** Any material from outside nonprofit organizations must contain, in letters that are at least thirty percent (30%) as large as the largest print on the notice or flyer, the following statement: *Arlington Public Schools does not sponsor or endorse the individual or group providing this material, or any message contained herein. [Las Escuelas Públicas de Arlington no patrocinan o respaldan al individuo o grupo que provee este material, ni asumen responsabilidad por su contenido.]*
- **Upload the flyer for approval:** Upload the flyer to Peachjar using the steps on Page 2. Applicants will receive a notification via Peachjar if the flyer cannot be approved.
- **Indicate Affiliations:** Youth sports groups that are affiliated with the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR), Sports Division are asked to indicate their affiliation on their flyer.

## OTHER IMPORTANT RULES AND REMINDERS

- Remember that all flyers are approved on **Wednesday at noon** each week for posting and email distribution on **Thursday** when school is in session. Nonprofits should upload their flyers with this schedule in mind.
- Fundraising materials may not be distributed through backpack mail.\*\* Backpack mail also may not be used to distribute materials that advocate the passage or defeat of any referendum question or advocate the passage or defeat of any matter pending before a local school board, a local governing

body, the General Assembly of Virginia, or the Congress of the United States.

- No outside nonprofit organization’s materials will be distributed to any school more than five (5) times per academic year.
- Backpack mail is available to outside non-profit organizations beginning the second week of the school year. Backpack mail is NOT available to outside nonprofit organizations during the summer break, or during the first week of the school year. Additionally, no items from outside nonprofit organizations will be distributed during the last week of school. During the summer, SCR will determine if flyers submitted by uploaders from inside the division are necessary to be sent to families. This effort will cut down on the amount of emails families receive from APS during the summer.

The complete Printed Materials Policy is available online at <https://www.apsva.us/k-6-distribution-of-non-school-materials-revised-7-16-21/>.

\* “Nonprofit organizations” are defined as entities that have provided evidence of their nonprofit status, for federal tax purposes, to the Superintendent or designee. “Outside nonprofit organizations” are those nonprofits that do not meet the description of those groups listed in number one above.

\*\* The prohibition against fundraising does not apply to organizations whose sole purpose is to support the educational or extracurricular activities of Arlington Public Schools, specifically the Arlington Outdoor Education Association, Friends of the David M. Brown Planetarium, and booster clubs that are sponsored by Arlington Public Schools. Additionally, fundraising activities from school clubs that offer a service to APS families are allowed but only to feeder schools, and 100% of the proceeds must go to the school club. Fundraising activities that are not considered a service include: auctions, dinners, magazine sales, car washes, etc. – these activities can only be promoted to the school community.

## MORE ABOUT Peachjar

APS has an agreement with Peachjar ([www.peachjar.com](http://www.peachjar.com)), a national company that provides a sustainable electronic solution to email school-approved flyers directly to families’ inboxes and to post them online. Families can easily receive and view the flyers online and, where applicable, take action immediately to sign up for activities and events through registration links embedded in the online flyers. Families can also share flyers with friends and neighbors with one simple click.

Peachjar charges a nominal fee to community organizations to use this service; however, since this service greatly reduces printing costs, the Peachjar fee is about 30 percent less expensive than the cost of duplicating and distributing copies of flyers in schools. It also saves time and eliminates the need to drive to each school to drop off flyers.

## HOW TO USE Peachjar

### STEP 1: REGISTER

Community organizations must [register](http://www.peachjar.com) online with Peachjar to upload their flyers for distribution to schools. Go to [www.peachjar.com](http://www.peachjar.com) – click on the “Community Organizations” tab and select “Register.”

### STEP 2: Peachjar TUTORIAL & FAQs

The Community Organizations tab on the Peachjar website includes FAQs and other information about the service. In addition, registered users have access to the free design services to help you communicate about

your program or event.

### **STEP 3: UPLOAD YOUR FLYER**

Please review the detailed instructions on uploading flyers, located on the Peachjar website.

### **STEP 4: APPROVAL**

- After your flyer is uploaded, it will be routed automatically to the APS School and Community Relations Department staff for online approval to ensure that the flyer fulfills the requirements outlined in the APS [Printed Materials Policy \(SBP 30-3.2\)](#).
- Once approved (ALWAYS ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS), it will be emailed electronically to all families ON THURSDAY, posted on the selected school Peachjar web pages.

## **NEED HELP?**

For questions or assistance with **Peachjar**, call 1-877-402-1786 or email [gogreen@peachjar.com](mailto:gogreen@peachjar.com). Support is available Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (EST).

For questions about the **APS Printed Materials Policy** or other issues, please call the Department of School & Community Relations at 703-228-2005 or email [peachjar@apsva.us](mailto:peachjar@apsva.us).

APS enthusiastically supports this program because it aligns with the school division's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. We thank you for your partnership in that effort

***Revised June 28, 2022***