



August 30, 2026

To: Dr. Grace Taylor, Acting Superintendent; Anthony Peña, Chief Operating Officer; MeChale' Johnson, Head of Transportation

Urgent – SY2026–27 Walk Zone Designations; Requesting Expedited Review of Dangerous Conditions

The Del Ray Citizens Association (DRCA) is reaching out to request immediate reconsideration, interim transportation, and an expedited, route-specific safety survey reviews for two groups affected by the revised SY2026–2027 walk zones:

1. Mount Vernon Community School students living north of West Glebe Road; and
2. Jefferson–Houston students living north of Braddock Road.

ACPS defines an “unusual walking hazard” as a location where a safe walking route to or from school is not available under normal conditions. The changes ask students to traverse intersections and roads in the city that have already been identified as dangerous areas for pedestrians, with improvements meant to address safety concerns approved, but not yet constructed. Asking students, as young as Kindergarten, to navigate these areas clearly puts them at physical harm and safety risk, and doing so while the city has already identified these areas as in need of safety improvements could put the city at legal risk as well.

We are aware that affected families have submitted Safety Review Requests regarding their assigned walking paths and requesting that transportation services be reinstated. Our understanding is that the district may take until September 30th to review these forms. Given the extreme hardship that losing bus access has created for families in this situation, particularly in Chirilagua, we respectfully ask that this review be expedited so that students can safely access school, and for some – begin their school year. Affected students should not remain without practical, safe access to school while those reviews continue.

MVCS Students North of Glebe Road – The school board meeting last week featured several of these families expressing, through translators, the level of disruption the change has caused. Many students have not begun their school year at all, or families have been forced to disrupt the schooling of older children to assist younger siblings to school safely. The intersection of Glebe Road and Mount Vernon Avenue has a long and dangerous crash history, including pedestrian fatalities. Although plans to improve it with an approved roundabout design exist, these improvements have not yet begun construction. Further, navigating to this intersection requires passage through the active construction area around Sansé y Naja, where sidewalks are missing or significantly obstructed. This area clearly represents a Hazardous Area/Unusual Hazard as





defined by ACPS' Student Transportation Services Regulations Code EEA-R /EEAB-R. These students must have their bus transportation restored as soon as practical to ensure their safety.

Jefferson-Houston Students North of Braddock Road – This is a smaller group of students, and a similar risk dynamic applies. Walking routes for these students require them to cross Braddock Road, which has a dangerous pedestrian crash history, as well. Likewise, improvements have been identified and approved, these improvements have not yet been implemented, and until they are, elementary school students should not be asked to cross this road as a part of their walk to school. Bus service for these students should be restored as soon as practical to ensure their safety.

We appreciate and respect that there are always logistical hiccups as a new school year begins, and there is of course much to do as everyone settles in. However, dozens of children are being prevented from accessing school and their deserved education in our neighborhood. This is not simply a routine beginning-of-year transportation adjustment; it is an immediate student-access, equity and safety concern. The consequences of this are too dire for us to wait through the month of September for administrative review to catch up with the reality on the ground.

We urgently and respectfully request your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or would like a joint walk-through of the area to better understand the concerns, we welcome the opportunity.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Leach, DRCA President

Logan Davis, Traffic Calming Committee Chair

cc:

School Board Chair Christopher Harris and Members of the School Board,
Mayor Gaskins, Members of the City Council, and the Alexandria City Manager,
MVCS Principal Hamilton, Jefferson Houston Principal Kelly