

School parking and traffic safety

The Surrey School District makes student safety a priority in school buildings and on school grounds, including parking lots.

It is always a challenge for schools to balance the need for a convenient and intuitive traffic flow and parking pattern with the need to respect neighbours' driveways, neighbourhood traffic, city bylaws—and the most important consideration—student safety.

The challenge is considerable when you are trying to accommodate a sudden rush of often hundreds of cars onto a one-block, or even half-block, street frontage.

Considerable planning is put into each school's specific traffic and parking circumstances; however student safety is the most important consideration, even if it causes some inconvenience to drivers.

Therefore, it is important for the safety of your child and other students that parents and others who drop off or pick up students at school obey all posted signage and follow established traffic flow patterns.

Many schools in the district have one-way driveways, restricted turn lanes and designated pick-up and drop-off areas designed to keep everyone safe. Failing to observe the rules puts students as well as motorists at risk. With pick-up and drop-off zones in particular, it's imperative that drivers obey posted signs. It's inappropriate and dangerous to misuse these areas for even a few seconds.

Some schools also have rules aimed at reducing harm to the environment, such as requiring motorists to turn off their vehicles while parked.

Motorists who don't respect the rules can expect a visit from a staff member, volunteer or student reminding them to comply.

Tips for drivers

- Drive only part way—or don't drive at all! Most students are usually well within walking distance of their school, so arrange a "walking school bus" with other parents. It's healthier and green!
- Think 30! A 30 km/h speed limit is in effect from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in school zones.
- Stop for school buses when their lights are flashing – it's the law.
- Children who are driven to school should exit the vehicle on the side closest to the curb or sidewalk.
- Use caution when a vehicle in front of you stops as the driver may be yielding to a pedestrian crossing the street.
- Always yield to pedestrians.

Tips for students

- Walk, don't run across the street.
- Before crossing the street, wait at the curb and make sure all vehicles have stopped. Look left and right, then over your shoulder for vehicles that may be turning.
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing at a crosswalk – it's the best way to ensure they see you.
- Don't jaywalk. Drivers don't expect to see pedestrians away from intersections and crosswalks, so pedestrians are even less likely to be seen.
- Don't wear headphones, talk on the phone, text or use handheld devices when crossing a street.

