

## Our Parking Lots

As the winter approaches, we are sending out this note about the parking lots used here at St. Anne School.

St. Anne School is considered a “walking school” which means that the majority of our community lives within a 1.6 km radius. Only 6 students, of our almost 600 student population are considered bus students. With over 590 walking students, we understand that there will be times when parents and/or grandparents come to the school to drive children home. In order to accommodate the vehicles around our school, we have provided options and accommodations to help with the flow of traffic. However, the ultimate responsibility and choices made fall on the shoulders of those driving the vehicles and not the staff at the school.

Our parking lot on the Primary side contains 49 available parking spaces (plus two designated Handicap spaces). There are almost 190 FDK students alone, along with the additional 400 students leaving from either side of the school. This is simple math: there are not enough parking spaces for everyone to pick up their child at our school. In order to help alleviate congestion, we have provided many options to parents.

One option we could control at the school was to allow for dismissal of our FDK students at 3:00pm. This allows for a first wave of vehicles to enter, and then exit our parking lot within ten minutes. Our regular dismissal for the remainder of our students begins at 3:10, with all of our Primary teachers directly “handing off” students to parents at our back gate. Traffic in our parking lot continues to flow nicely daily, with a typical empty lot by 3:21pm.

As a school, we have also posted guidelines on our website, and communicated many times via email, all of the options that parents have if entering our lots, or where else to park. Doug Wright Park Parking lot continues to be one of those options, as your Catholic School Council advocated to have it plowed during the winter months. Just yesterday, only 9 of the available 30 spaces at the park were being used. Other parents have also chosen the option to park close to the school on side streets where posted parking signs allow, and then make the short walk to the school using the crossing guard at Hopkins and Doug Wright. Other parents are also choosing to drop off (but not exit) their vehicle along Palladium Way, however there is currently a NO STOPPING sign along this road. Your Catholic School Council is continuing to advocate for some changes to this street, although the City of Burlington has informed us this will likely not change.

Therefore, if you choose to use our parking lots, please realize the amount of parents wishing to do the same. If you see that the lot is full, as with any other parking lot in the city, then you should park somewhere else. If you choose to enter the parking lot, then you must be patient, and continue to follow the flow of traffic within it, knowing that it may take up to ten minutes to pick up your child and exit the lot. If you are not prepared to wait 10 minutes, then do not use the lots.

With the winter expected, it will also become a reality that some of these spaces will be taken up by snow as our removal company noted that there is simply no where to put the snow, given all of our

sidewalks. Again, this means even fewer parking spaces available for everyone. We are looking at the option and cost of having excess snow actually transported out of our lots, but this has yet to be confirmed.

We must remind you that even though all of our parents would like to be able to pick up their child from the closest space, this is simply not the reality. A few extra steps will help alleviate congestion, reduce anxiety, and support the fact that St. Anne School is a walking school. Please continue to set the example for your children, by following expectations from the school, as well as posted signs by the City of Burlington. As we teach your children, we must respect one another and continue to live our lives as Jesus has taught us. Keep your patience, choose wisely, and remember that it's you the parents that control how the parking lots flow. All we continue to ask is that you use it properly and safely.

As a school, we have established many things to support drop-offs and pick-ups at our school. The rest is up to our community, and the choices you make, which is beyond our control. As always, we are here to support valid concerns and questions, or even advice on what to do. We are proud at how well our lots flow, how well our students use the sidewalks, and how well our Staff supervise the safety of our students when crossing at the crosswalks. Thank you to the many parents and grandparents that do follow the expectations, and that do keep their patience as they encounter those that don't. Many things are beyond our control, but it is how we react that make us who we are – living examples of Jesus.

Thank you for your cooperation.

N. Dinolfo & B. Melanson