

2/5/09

Principal's Corner

School dismissal procedures are very important for two main reasons. First, dismissal is a time when safety issues are paramount. It is essential that structures and procedures are in place to ensure that students leave the school building and arrive home safely. Second, dismissal is important because we want children to transition from their school to home lives in as smooth a way as possible. Routines and structures help them feel safe and comfortable.

Bus transportation is a safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly option for students. Appropriate behavior is expected on the buses and rules are enforced. I board the buses regularly to remind students about behavior and safety rules and they know that they are responsible for reporting inappropriate behavior to me. Parents and students have been very helpful in making me aware of incidents of misbehavior, and I have been able to address them quickly. I can confidently state that the West Side School buses are safe and comfortable for our students.

I encourage parents who are used to picking their children up from school to consider using the bus service. I have been told by parents that they choose to pick their children up because they are on a tight time schedule. Please remember that school is dismissed at 3:10. The last bus rolls out of the school driveway by about 3:20. I encourage parents to check with their neighbors to find out when the bus arrives at their home stop. I believe many parents will be surprised (and happy) to find out that it arrives at a very reasonable time.

The pick up line has been an ongoing problem at West Side. Parents are frustrated about the time they are spending on the line. Traffic often becomes backed up on Stewart Lane and the Nassau County Police have advised us that they will begin ticketing cars that are blocking the road. As much as we try to keep the line moving, please remember that we are dealing with young children. One child who forgets his math book and runs back to his classroom can hold up the line. Another who drops her water bottle can cause a delay. No matter what we do, it will take at least fifteen minutes for forty cars to move through the pick-up circle.

If you need to pick your child up from school, please consider the following suggestions:

- Pull your car up as far as you can in the circle. In that way, more children can be loaded at once.
- Please do not wave your child over to your vehicle when you are at the back of the line. Children may only enter cars in front of the school, and they must enter on the passenger side.
- Please resist the temptation to engage in conversation while on the line. Even a minute of conversation will have an effect on the line's movement.

The staff and I appreciate your patience and support. As always, we welcome your questions and suggestions.

Yours,

Mrs. Herschlein