



DRACUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Steven Stone
Superintendent of Schools

September 30, 2022

Re: Complex Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Dear Englesby and Brookside Parents and Guardians,

The recent renovation of the complex grounds is nearly complete. Observations of the site confirm that safety concerns that had always existed are very much improved. Additional signage, which is delayed because of supply-chain issues, will be installed in various places to further enhance the safety of all students, staff, and visitors.

As you are aware, the traffic in the complex has also improved. That said, there are still improvements that can be made. Of particular concern is the impact arrival/dismissal is having on the learning time available each day. I am writing to provide information on adjustments to the arrival/dismissal process at the Englesby effective Monday, October 3rd. As those adjustments affect the same process at the Brookside (and in some cases, directly impact the Brookside), I am sending this message to both communities.

Before discussing forthcoming adjustments to process, I believe it is important to reiterate existing processes that need to be followed to ensure the safe and operation of all of the schools in the complex:

- Parking in the Dracut High School Parking lots adjacent to Complex Road is prohibited before 2:15 PM each day. DHS students and staff have assigned parking spaces. The district reserves the right to have cars removed from the lot and/or notify the Dracut Police of the presence of those vehicles.
- The Dracut High School parking lots are not roads, and as such, travel must be limited to cars that park in the lots. Observations make clear that some individuals are using the lots as entry/exit routes. At elementary arrival time Dracut High is in session and often there is foot traffic in the lots. At elementary dismissal time, staff are leaving DHS and students are involved in extracurricular activities, which often has them outside of the school.
- Travel patterns in the DHS lots have been altered as part of the renovation of the complex. Road markings clearly indicate the appropriate direction in which vehicles should travel.
- Bus entry lanes and intersections must not be blocked at any time.



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Adjustments to Englesby Arrival/Dismissal Effective Monday, October 3rd:

- Please refer to the attached map of the complex. As you will see, effective 10/3, cars exiting the Parent Pick-up/Drop-off lot will turn RIGHT towards the Richardson Middle School. Cars will proceed around the RMS front loop and then turn left at the new three-way intersection at Complex Road.
- As indicated above, parking in the DHS lots is prohibited before 2:15 PM daily. Parents may park in the lots after 2:15 PM.
- As the major remaining traffic problem is the prevalence of Englesby parents/guardians dropping/picking up their children in their vehicles, parents are encouraged to utilize the lots in the afternoon only.
- In the morning, parents are encouraged to park outside of the complex and walk their children to the school. More detailed information will be forthcoming regarding this matter.
- Students riding school buses will be prioritized for dismissal first.
- Parents of “walkers” may queue up to receive their children along the sidewalk between the bus entry on Complex Road and the area where the library walkway meets the main walkway only.
- Travel across Complex Road to the DHS lots (afternoon only) must cross at the new raised walkway on Complex Road. Crossing into traffic is dangerous and will delay the movement of traffic in/around the complex.

Queuing Too Early and Vehicle Idling:

- The primary reason for traffic delays remains the early queuing of parents/guardians in the complex. Observations confirm that some are queuing up as much as 90 minutes before the start/end of school.
- As stated above, parents/guardians are encouraged to park outside of the complex before school (additional details and information will be forthcoming) and in the DHS lots after 2:15 PM,; and walk with their children to/from the Englesby.
- The district has revised its Vehicle Idling policy. Consistent with state law, it is impermissible to idle vehicles on school grounds for extended periods of time while queuing.
- In coming weeks, the district will be evaluating the traffic situation and may begin restricting the ability to queue more than 15 minutes before arrival/dismissal begins. This may include the installation of signage along Complex Road and/or restricting the entrance to the pick-up/drop-off lot.
- Extensive conversations have occurred with the leadership of the police and fire departments, who have expressed concerns about how the traffic may limit the ability of public safety vehicles to travel in town. Restrictions and enforcement of queuing and vehicle idling laws may be utilized in the future in order to ensure that traffic is minimized and learning time is not negatively impacted.

Most concernedly, I continue to receive reports of some parents/guardians insulting, yelling, and swearing at staff in the complex. Our staff should not be subjected to such behavior. They are doing their best to manage the safe and orderly arrival/dismissal of hundreds of students each day. In support of our employees I have directed staff that may be subjected to such behavior to



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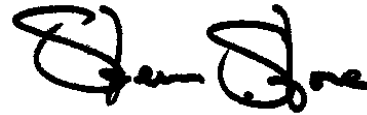
take steps to identify the person or vehicle so that we may refer the matter to building administrators and potentially the Dracut Police.

We are doing everything we can to ensure the smooth, orderly, and prompt start and end of school days. We will continue to assess progress and make further adjustments beyond those scheduled for implementation on 10/3. Those adjustments include refinements to bus routes to reduce ride times. Further refinements to routes will be forthcoming.

Once again, I encourage parents/guardians to purchase a bus pass. Dracut is one of more than 100 districts in Massachusetts that supplement the cost of transportation with user fees. Our current fee of \$.83 per school day, (which is free for those who are eligible for free/reduced lunch, or for those who live two or more miles from school), is a cost effective way to avoid the traffic in/around schools at arrival/dismissal times. To purchase a pass for your child/children, please see our letter with links [HERE](#).

In closing, I thank everyone who has done all that they can to eliminate traffic delays. I thank everyone in advance for your attention to the changes that will occur next week. If you have any questions about school-specific logistics, please reach out to either Principal Drohan or Principal Fulton. If you have questions about our transportation program or the renovation of the complex, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Superintendent of Schools



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Lakeview Avenue

Lakeview Avenue

Richardson
Middle School

Richardson Bus Loop

Englesby Elementary School

Parent Pick-Up
Standing Area

Pick Up/Drop Off Area

Crosswalk

Dracut High Parking Lot – NO parking before 2:15 pm