

Superintendent Scoop: Dropping Off and Picking Up Students at Central Elementary

On October 11, Police Chief Corey Murphy conducted a meeting at the Tioga Ambulance building to address citizens' traffic concerns in Tioga. Dropping off and picking up students at Central Elementary School were part of this discussion.

Central Elementary, built in 1953, is land-locked; it is surrounded by residential property, churches, and businesses. Parking is difficult at the school due to this reason. That evening, the biggest concerns dealt with the drop off/pick up in front of and behind Central School. Twenty minutes in the morning, from 8:15-8:35, and ten minutes in the afternoon, from 3:25 to 3:35, were the focus of the dialogue.

Many attendees offered potential solutions, and through the years, I have also received input concerning these problems along with what should be done. Some "fixes" suggested are relatively simple and require very little research, time, and money, while others are complex and could potentially create unforeseen complications to residents.

The suggestions from the community meeting were discussed by the Tioga School Board on Monday, October 21. The board approved two ideas that can be implemented immediately. Signs will be posted for drop off/pick up from the main front door (Door #1) and extend north to the intersection. This will be effective from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 3:00-4:00 p.m. During these times, patrons wishing to visit with teachers, the principal, or any other school personnel will need to park on side streets or behind Central. Traffic will move at a quicker rate from south to north, and children will be dropped off by the sidewalk and not in the middle of the street. We also ask parents to drop students off heading north so children are not crossing into a lane of traffic. During other school hours, parents will be allowed to park in that area to share lunch with their child or meet with a school employee.

The school has contacted the city office to determine what steps need to be taken in order for the police to ticket vehicles left in the posted drop off area for an extended period of time. Once the school receives information from the city, we will follow-through and complete the process to help parents and to keep children safe.

The second approved change is to assign a school employee to monitor the pick-up area on Main Street at dismissal time. This person will help keep the crosswalk clear so students and adults can cross safely; therefore, we ask parents and students to use the crosswalk, and those picking up children after school, not to park in the crosswalk.

We appreciate the ideas and the concerns generated from the meeting. We are aware of the parking problems at Central, and the board and administration think these two actions, along with parent support, will help the situation. The proposed changes are being implemented, and as all changes, it will take time to determine if these items help the traffic flow and improve the safety of our students. Please continue to support and communicate with us as we work to improve the dropping off and picking up of students.