

October 11, 2017

Good Afternoon,

If you haven't had the chance to see it yet, be sure to take a look at the Peace Pinwheel art installation on the hillside at BSS. The students and Ms. Bailey did a wonderful job on this project.

Here are this week's updates...

(1) **Virtus Training Sessions:** We have three upcoming Virtus training sessions for parents to attend. As a reminder, this is the required training session for all parents that serve as volunteers with our children here at school. You only have to attend once, so if you have attended a session during a previous year, you are all set. The three upcoming sessions are:

Thursday, October 19 - 2:45-4:15 at Blessed Sacrament School
- if needed, your children are welcome to use our extended day program for free while you attend this session.

Thursday, November 2 - 6:30-8:00 at Blessed Sacrament School

Sunday, November 19 - 11:30-1:00 at St. Mary's Church, East Walpole

You can sign up for these sessions here:

https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_list2.cfm?theme=0

(2) **Parent Collaborative Meeting - Thursday, October 12 at 8:15am:** Our next Parent Collaborative Meeting will be held tomorrow morning, Thursday, October 12 at 8:15am in the cafeteria. We hope that many of you can attend to learn more about the upcoming events being planned by the PC.

(3) **Trunk or Treat Halloween Party - Sunday, October 22:** We are still looking for a few more families to help out with our Trunk or Treat Halloween Party on Sunday, October 22 here at school. See the attached flyer for more information.

(4) **Fall Family Hike:** Families can still sign up for the Fall Family Hike scheduled for this **Saturday, October 14** at 9am at Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary in Sharon. In honor of our school's patron St. Francis, families will enjoy and contemplate nature together through prayer and a nature scavenger hunt. We will be doing an easy hike so even little ones can participate! If you have questions or would like to sign up, please contact Carolyn Herman at carolyn.w.herman@gmail.com

(5) **BSS Parking Lot Reminders:** With the first month and a half of school completed, I ask that all families review the attached BSS Parking Lot Rules & Expectations to ensure that all of our rules are being met during the morning drop off and afternoon pickup periods. If you are not the one that picks up or drops off your child, be sure to share these expectations with that person. Please remember that these rules are in place for one reason: to keep our children safe.

Enjoy the rest of the week.

Jim

TRUNK -OR- TREAT



A Halloween celebration for the whole family,
sponsored by the BSS Parent Collaborative

**\$5/child or
\$20/family**

When: Sunday, October 22

Time: 1-3 p.m. (setup starts at 12:30 p.m.)

Where: BSS Parking Lot & Gym

BSS students are invited to wear costumes and trick or treat from decorated cars in the school parking lot. Games, pizza and baked goods will be hosted in the Gym.

For more information or *to reserve a spot for your decorated vehicle*, visit the “BSS Parent Collaborative” section of the BSS Parents page on the BSS web site, or contact Sarah Mercuri at (bsspc@blessedsacrament.org).

The event will include:

Costume contest

Trunk decoration contest

Pizza & sweet treats

Face painting

Games



**BLESSED SACRAMENT
SCHOOL**

Blessed Sacrament School Parking Rules & Expectations

In recent years, the Parking Lot Advisory Committee carefully considered feedback from the community to create these parking expectations. The end result was a list of expectations for all members of our community to follow during morning drop-off and afternoon pickup times. The Committee asks that all people follow the expectations that have been established, recognizing that there is a reason behind every one of these recommendations—the primary one being the safety of our children. Obviously, following certain expectations may not always result in the most convenient, quickest, or easiest parking lot experience for our parents. We ask, however, that every member of our community consider the common good of our larger community, and work together with us to ensure that these expectations are being met at all times.

Note: You'll see that each of the expectations is followed by a sentence in italics. These sentences are meant to provide the rationale for why these expectations have been put in place.

Morning Drop-off Expectations:

- Upon arrival in the parking lot, all cars that are dropping off students should circle toward the back of the parking lot, before looping back towards the exit alongside the curb line closest to the school.
 - *Doing so will help to ensure that there is only one line of traffic flowing through the parking lot.*
- Cars should pull up as far as possible along the curb line closest to the school, staying inside the cones that have been put out.
 - *Staying inside the cones helps to ensure that there is only one line of traffic for teachers to moderate.*
- Once your car is along the curb line, and has pulled up as far as possible, students should exit the car through the passenger side doors. Students should never exit their cars through the driver's side doors.
 - *Exiting through the passenger side doors ensures that no student will exit his or her vehicle into an area where cars may be passing by.*
- Students should not wait until their car is at the front of the line to exit their car—they should exit onto the sidewalk once their car has reached the curb line and pulled up as far as possible.
 - *If students only exit once their car has reached the front of the line, a tremendous backup of cars onto Diamond St. will ensue.*
- Parents should never get out of their cars while in the drop-off line.
 - *Doing so holds up the drop-off line, which can often back up into Diamond St. during the busiest times each morning.*
 - *If parents do need to get out of their car for any reason, they should park their car in one of the available spaces and assist their children away from the drop-off line.*
- There should be no dropping off on Diamond St.
 - *Since teachers are stationed at the crosswalk, facing the incoming traffic, it is difficult for them to see students who are coming in behind them.*

- All students and parents who are entering the building for morning assembly must cross at the designated crosswalk.
 - *This will allow our teachers to control the flow of pedestrian and automobile traffic in ways that will ensure the safety of all students and adults in the parking lot.*
- The BSS administration will work to ensure that no cars are parked to the left of the convent driveway, so that more space is available for drop-off along the curb side.

Afternoon Pickup Expectations:

- Upon arrival, please pull up as far as you can to the car in front of you, and close to the cars in the rows next to you.
 - *By parking close to one another, we can maximize the limited space we have in each row and in the parking lot as a whole.*
- If you are the first one in a new row, please park perpendicular to the school building and pull up all the way to the end of the parking spaces where drop-off occurs each morning.
 - *If all cars park in the same direction, there will be very little wasted space in the lot.*
- There are four specific sections for pickup—please make sure that you park in the section designated for the oldest child in your family or your carpool.
 - *If a car parks in the wrong section, it will inevitably lead to delays, because other cars will be unable to depart at the appropriate time.*
- The four sections for afternoon parking are:
 - Preschool, Pre-K & K: approximately the first three rows, with the first row reserved for Preschool and Pre-K
 - Grades 1-3: from the end of the Preschool, Pre-K & K parking section to the dumpsters
 - Grades 4-5: from the end of the Grades 1-3 parking section to an area approximately halfway between the convent driveway and the dumpsters
 - Grades 6-8: from the end of the Grades 4-5 parking section to the playground
 - Families with students whose oldest child is in Grade 6 should try to park closest to the playground, since the Grade 6 classes are typically the last classes to exit the building.
- If you prefer to wait outside for the arrival of your child, please return to your car as promptly as possible upon your child's arrival.
 - *It is important to clear the waiting area quickly so that teachers can begin directing cars out of the parking lot quickly and safely.*
- If a cone is placed at the end of a row, it means that these rows have been closed off for the remainder of dismissal.
 - *By closing off rows, we help to ensure that no cars are blocking the entrance way to the parking lot, thereby allowing all cars to safely navigate their way to the back of the parking lot.*
- Even though spaces will open up at the front of the parking lot as dismissal continues, these spaces should remain empty, with all late arrivals pulling into the spaces reserved for middle school families.

- *The issue here is one of both safety and equity:*
 - *Safety—when cars that pull into these spaces seek to depart the parking lot, it is often difficult for the teacher moderators to negotiate two different traffic patterns, while also making sure that students are crossing safely into the parking lot.*
 - *Equity—parents who follow the established protocols for dismissal shouldn't have to wait longer to depart than parents who have entered these open spots.*
- There should be no parking on Diamond Street.
 - *There are several problems related to parking on Diamond St.:*
 - *Students who walk towards cars parked on Diamond St. walk behind the backs of teachers who are directing traffic out of the parking lot. If the teacher fails to see them, the safety of the children is at risk.*
 - *We want to make sure that we are good neighbors to our neighbors who live on Diamond St. Families who live on Diamond St. have often expressed concerns to us about having difficulty getting in and out of their driveways, and about BSS families using their driveways as places to turn their cars around.*
 - *When cars on Diamond St. are looking to depart from school, they often do so by pulling into oncoming traffic, thereby creating a difficult situation for the teachers who are directing traffic.*
- The one exception to the above expectation regarding Diamond St. is the following:
 - The parking spaces on Diamond St. that are in front of the parish house may be used by drivers that need to leave school quickly for a valid reason (medical appointment, etc.).
 - *Parents that wish to park in these spaces should make a request to the BSS administration.*
- The convent driveway should not be used as an exit driveway during dismissal time.
- Cars may use the 15-minute temporary parking spaces at the top of the convent driveway during the school day. This driveway is a one-way road that can only be entered from the parking lot (not from East St.)
- Please do not leave your car idling while waiting for your children to be dismissed.
 - *The Massachusetts Anti-Idling Law implores us to limit unnecessary idling to no more than five minutes. This is one small way that we can be better stewards of our environment.*
- The BSS administration will work with our teachers to make sure that our dismissal times are as consistent as possible.

Additional Thoughts:

- If your children are being dropped off or picked up by someone else—grandparents, nannies, babysitters, etc.—please make sure to share this information with them so that everyone is well aware of our community expectations for the parking lot.
- Please make sure to always be conscious of your speed as you drive through the parking lot, and on our surrounding streets.

- Please remember that as parents, we must be a model for our children, especially when following the directions being given by teachers. If any parent feels that they have been treated unfairly or disrespectfully in our parking lot, we ask them to notify a member of the BSS administration as soon as possible.