

**From Beki Cook**

*Parent of two children in 1st grade*

Traffic meeting wrap-up:

First, I want to say that I went into the traffic meeting without really feeling strongly about much. I see that there are some problems at pickup, but they don't seem like a huge deal to me.

I think the takeaways for TCGIS parents from the meeting are:

- The school and the neighborhood community are forming a committee to look at solutions to the traffic and parking stress. Please contact Ann Jurewicz ([ajuwericz@tcgis.org](mailto:ajuwericz@tcgis.org)) or Jeff Horton ([jhorton@tcgis.org](mailto:jhorton@tcgis.org)) if you would like to be on this committee.
- The school will be hiring traffic police officers to help get things moving, to address the illegal activities happening (blocked fire hydrants, driveways, alleys), and to get a neutral set of eyes on the situation.
- Pickup is the problem. Dropoff seems to be generally okay for all.
- Parents really need to follow the rules (and of course traffic laws). Insomuch as please DON'T GET OUT OF YOUR CAR in the pickup lane, pull all the way up, drive away as soon as it is possible (and safe) to do so. (If you need to get out of your car, please find a nearby place to park and walk your child a few blocks).

My personal takeaway was that there seems to be a lack of perspective-taking on both sides. We, as a school, have a hard time seeing the perspective of the families whose neighborhood has seen a 10-times increase in traffic, (in addition to all of the construction, which, no, isn't about traffic, but of course colors their opinions.)

SOME neighbors seem to struggle to take the perspective that this is a different kind of school than has been in the space before, and that we, as parents (and as a school), have young children who need to get into and out of the car to get to and from school.

The chief complaints I heard from the neighbors were regarding:

- Lack of communication between the school and the neighborhood from the get-go.\*
- Illegal parking.
- Disrespectful parking (In front of sidewalk openings and trash/recycling bins out for pickup).
- The line of cars idling on the street for long periods of time (at pickup mostly).
- Parents/drivers disrespecting or not following the direction of Ann, Jeff or other staff directing traffic (and therefore double-parking or otherwise causing problems).

My hope is that we, as parents, can try to remember that even if we don't agree with their concerns, I hope that as parents, and as a school, we can get better at realizing, and voicing that while we don't necessarily SHARE their concerns, their concerns are valid.

\* My one note on the communication issue is that it's easy to 'blame' the school for this, but I would say blame is probably shared. The school did probably miss some opportunities to communicate, but I also believe the neighbors may not have sought the communication until they were unhappy about what was happening.