

August 7, 2008

Dear Staff, Parents and Students,

Beginning last spring, the Town of Chevy Chase, in collaboration with Montgomery County Public School Transportation Department, Montgomery County Police Safety Coordinator, Montgomery County Government and several traffic engineering consultants, developed a traffic safety plan. The goal is to make sure everyone traveling around the school zone area will be safe and to alleviate the congestion at arrival and dismissal during the school day. We, the staff of CCES, want to thank the stakeholders that were involved in the work sessions, keeping in mind the neighbors, students, staff, and parents. We appreciate their hard work and dedication to the safety of our children.

On August 6, 2008, the Town Council approved the new traffic plan for the area around Chevy Chase Elementary School (CCES). The plan, which is posted on the Town's website (<http://www.townofchevychase.org>) and described below, will be in place prior to the beginning of the school year.

The plan consists of several elements: 1) signage changes; including parking, standing, and stopping restrictions around the school, 2) a school speed zone designation, and 3) new car and bus routing.

The first element includes signage to prevent cars from stopping, standing, or parking in or near intersections around the school in order to prevent traffic jams, provide sufficient space for vehicles to maneuver through these intersections, and allow unobstructed pedestrian access to crosswalks. These signage changes also are intended to prevent the drop-off or pick-up of students anywhere other than on Hillcrest Place adjacent to the school.

The second element establishes a speed zone around the school, in which the speed limit is 15 mph, lower than in the rest of Town. The zone extends out approximately two blocks from the perimeter of the school property. Signs indicating a school zone and the reduced speed limit define this area.

The final element involves new car and bus routing and includes two changes that may be of particular interest to residents, especially those residing near the school. The first change will prohibit cars from entering southbound Hillcrest adjacent to the school during student drop-off and pick-up. This change will allow for orderly student loading and unloading and prevent students from crossing into oncoming traffic. The original ordinance established the 'Do Not Enter' hours at this location from 8 to 9 a.m. and from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Buses will be prohibited from entering eastbound Rosemary during drop-off and pick-up hours. Buses will enter from Connecticut Avenue onto Rosemary Street and will exit by continuing west on Rosemary Street to Maple Avenue and Bradley Lane. To ensure that buses follow this route, the Town will install a sign prohibiting buses from entering eastbound Rosemary Street at Rosemary Circle from 8 to 9 a.m. and from 2 to 4 p.m.

The Town Council has approved hiring an off-duty Montgomery County police officer to assist with enforcement of the traffic plan during student drop-off and pick-up hours. This officer will be dedicated to the school during these hours.

A summary of the major changes are:

- ◆ **15 mile an hour** speed zone,
- ◆ no parking, standing, or stopping 20' - 50' feet from a corner, crosswalk, or stop sign(see below for exact corner information),
- ◆ students being transported by cars can **only** be dropped off going north (downhill) on Hillcrest Drive in our drop off zone (not in front of the school),
- ◆ cars will be allowed to stand (car running and driver in the car) for up to 10 minutes on Hillcrest Drive going North while dropping off or picking up students,
- ◆ no entrance to Hillcrest Drive south (uphill towards circle) from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.,
- ◆ no cars will be allowed to stop, stand, or park in the Rosemary Hills bus circle at **anytime**,

The following terms are defined below:

- ◆ “No parking” prohibits parking but allows standing or stopping;
- ◆ “No standing” prohibits halting a vehicle except for loading/unloading passengers,
- ◆ “No stopping” prohibits halting a vehicle even for loading/unloading passengers;

CCES staff will be visible at strategic places during this transition period. We know that our parents will support the new safety plan for our children. We will monitor the plan during the first few weeks of school and make modifications, if necessary.

CCES became a Green School this past spring. We are very proud of the work that staff, students and parents did to receive this honor. To continue this effort, we are asking students to ride a bike or walk as much as possible. We have purchased new bike racks to handle the increase in the number of bikes and to have another safe place to lock up the bikes during the school day. We ask that parents carpool as much as possible to support our Green School plan.

We appreciate your cooperation with the new plan. Please feel free to contact the Town at 301-654-7144 or the school at 301-657-4994 with feedback during the transition period.

Change always comes bearing gifts. ~Price Pritchett

With Warm Regards,

Jody L. Smith
Principal

Copy:

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