

Norman Public Schools: Operations Update


**Community Planning & Transportation
Committee**

February 23, 2023





Agenda

- Typical Procedures
 - School Drop-off Time
 - School Pick-up Time
 - How does Sanitation Deal with Trash Pick-up Around Schools?
 - How does the USPS Deal with Mail Delivery Around Schools?
 - Summary
 - Norman Public School and City Initiatives Moving Forward
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Typical Procedures (Any School)

- When any complaint regarding operations at a school is received, Staff reaches out to NPS to discuss and to meet if necessary
- This is necessary because the solution can involve things that both NPS and the City can do to alleviate the issue in the complaint
- Both NPS and the City know that particularly the pick-up time presents challenges at most schools
- Neither NPS nor the City try to get too concerned about complaints that come in toward the beginning of a school term as these complaints are generally because something seems new or different—all are treated the same and are evaluated over a series of discussions and/or observations



Collaboration

- NPS takes criticism of its pick-up/drop-off procedures very seriously
- NPS has a dedicated staff member, Mr. David Teuscher, assigned to collaborate with the City on school traffic related issues
- There have been a number of successes that have resulted from this collaboration including:
 - Irving Middle School came up recently as the Principal had initiated some changes to the pick-up/drop-off process that may have helped the students and faculty but created traffic gridlock
 - McKinley Elementary School has been an issue for a number of years. The City worked with NPS to improve the pick-up/drop-off procedures by constructing an exclusive lane to have this traffic queue outside of the normal travel lanes



School Drop-off Time (Any School)

- The impact to the neighborhoods is minimal during the drop-off time before school
- There is no queuing of vehicles 30-45 minutes before school
- Drop-off is a fairly quick procedure—there is no pairing of the student with the vehicle necessary
- The only reason for back-up is if all arrive at the same time
- These chances are reduced by early drop-off opportunities



School Pick-up Time (Any School)



- This is a much more complicated process as parents/grandparents tend to arrive well before the school dismissal time for pick-up
- Schools located in residential neighborhoods on relatively narrow streets have limited space to accommodate the queues that develop prior to pick-up time
- Photos like the following could be taken at nearly every elementary school and middle school in Norman
- The following photos were taken in the neighborhood containing Jefferson Elementary School and Longfellow Middle School







School Pick-up Time (Any School)

- We have all seen situations like are depicted on the previous pictures
- There are cars parked everywhere and it seems like complete gridlock
- The basic community services like trash service and mail delivery seem to be compromised by the traffic on these narrow streets not to mention irregular services such as emergency vehicles



Trash Pick-up (Any School)



- The City's Sanitation Division of the Utilities Department was contacted
- How do their drivers treat neighborhoods with schools located in them?
- The answer received was: Under normal circumstances our drivers normally avoid schools during student drop off and pickup times.
- Further: We cannot perform our services in said areas when the streets are blocked by parents picking up and dropping off.

Mail Delivery (Any School)

- Norman Public Schools reached out to the United States Postal Service (USPS) regarding mail delivery
- How do their carriers treat neighborhoods with schools located in them?
- The answer received was: The USPS carriers are aware of the areas and work it into their routes the best time to deliver while avoiding pickup and drop off times at the schools.



Summary of School Pick-up Time

- The Sanitation Division works around the school to make sure trash pick-up does not coincide with busy times around the schools
- USPS carries adjust their routes so that mail delivery does not coincide with busy times around the schools
- The only thing left is emergency vehicle access and those vehicles waiting to pick-up students will have to allow the emergency vehicles through the area



What can NPS do moving forward?

- At Jefferson Elementary School, construction was recently completed on the new office portion of the building the week of January 23, 2023, which allows the bus pick-up/drop-off area to move back to the east side of the school
- NPS observations during the pick-up period confirmed that no vehicles were parked on Stewart on the west side of the school
- Staff observations during the pick-up period confirmed what NPS relayed following their own observations



How do NPS Bond Programs Help?



- The most recent bond program helped NPS to construct a new office at Jefferson Elementary School
- The new office was completed about the time the complaints came into the City about the school
- The new offices allowed the relocation of the bus pick-up to the east side of the school which has helped the congestion
- Future bond programs will always find ways to address congestion at schools

What can the City do moving forward?

- Based upon NPS observations of the pick-up queue extending west along Hughbert Street to Findlay Avenue and then both north and south along Findlay Avenue from Hughbert Street, staff will schedule an evaluation of the Findlay Avenue intersection with Hughbert Street to see if any improvements, such as signing and/or striping, can be offered to assist with the traffic conditions present
- This intersection is key to both Jefferson Elementary School as well as to Longfellow Middle School
- Continue ongoing collaboration efforts with NPS to respond to issues as they arise



QUESTIONS?

