

Carpool Clarity

Starting tomorrow morning, we would like to bring more structure to our drop off process in the morning. Over the past few weeks, we have been trying to get as many students in the school on time as possible and we have been a little lax in adhering to our drop off rules. In the morning, we will make sure each child is dropped off in our safe zones, but we need your help.

Students must be dropped off in the safe zones ONLY (in the front and the back carlines). The safe zones are:

- Front carline: the 5 designated spaces (in the parking spaces between the stairway leading to K-2 door and the stairway leading to the entrance to The River Church)
- Back carline: The space between the elementary ramp and the middle school (just before the tree that is next to the parking spaces)

Note: The following are NOT Safe Zones: 1) in the front of the middle school, 2) the sidewalk leading to the KHES front office, 3) anywhere other than the described safe zones ☺

Please do not let your child out of the car outside of the safe zone. Students released from their vehicles outside of the safe zone will be sent them back to the car.

At 7:45 am, the staff members will indicate the last car to be safely unloaded. Any cars behind the last car will need to park and those students will need to be signed in at the front office. Students who arrive at the front office at 7:45 am are tardy. Students are supposed to be in their seat learning at that time.

We are reinforcing this because it is not safe for students to be released from cars and attempt to run to the doors to get in on time. We also do not want any students or families to feel as if they were purposely left out. We want to be safe, consistent, and just in this process.

If you need to walk in with your child for any reason, remember to use the parking spaces on The River/Kinetics side of the building. You must go through the front carline to get to the parking spaces (No School Traffic may enter using the Englert Drive traffic entrance to the building).

If students are tardy to school, they must be escorted into the building. Their escort (parent/guardian) must sign the student in at the front office and the student will receive a late pass. Tardies are excused for the following reasons: student illness, medical or dental appointments, and death/illness in the immediate family with proper documentation from the medical office. Traffic delays, lost items, oversleeping, missed ride, etc. are not valid reasons for tardiness and will be unexcused. (Elementary Code of Conduct - pg. 11)

Remember: There is virtually no traffic between 7:15 -7:29 am - this is the time where only Elementary School families are dropping off students. At 7:30 am, Elementary and Middle school traffic is intermingled. *Take advantage of this practically traffic free time.*

Thank you for your assistance to ensure that we have a safe drop off time in the mornings.

Dr. Renita L. Webb
Elementary Principal
Kestrel Heights School

What is Refocus?

I am so glad that you asked. I am sure that your classroom teachers have given you this brief overview, but I wanted to make sure that I highlighted a few points and gave you more background about what happens before a student has a time of Refocus.

Refocus is a part of the new discipline model we implemented this year called Time To Teach! It is meant to handle more low level behavioral disruptions effectively as to stop them from becoming higher level disruptions. This program provides us with clear systems to implement to lower levels of frustration in both students and teachers so that there can be more class time for effective teaching and learning.

As a part of this system, we spent the first two weeks of school explaining and modeling our expectations for school behaviors (i.e. how to walk down the hall, how to raise your hand). In our first school-wide assembly, the students were able to see the teachers exhibiting the behaviors the right way, almost but not quite, and completely wrong. (It was quite funny!) You might also hear of some teachers making changes to the set up of their classroom tables or desk to have a more effective teaching and learning environment.

The Refocus portion of this model is a time when a student's behavior has become a low level disruption that is either distracting the teacher from teaching or that student or other students from learning. The students are given an opportunity to correct the behavior after the teacher gives them a prompt ("quiet hands please"). If the student chooses not to correct the behavior after having a few moments of time to digest the request, they are given a chance to Refocus to get themselves prepared to learn effectively again.

The Refocus Process:

1. The students are able to exit the situation (in-class for Kindergarten or in a buddy classroom for 1-5) through the modeled process. At this point they get a Refocus sheet to complete during their time of opportunity.
2. The student then either goes to the Refocus station in the classroom (K) or in the buddy teacher's classroom calmly without negative attention or implications.
3. The student then completes their Refocus form.
4. The student is welcomed back into their classroom and learning resumes.

I just wanted you to know that Refocus is not a scary time. It is an opportunity to refocus the mind and get back to a place where they can be effective students in a classroom where learning can occur.

I hope this brings clarity to the process and removes concern from the heart.

Dr. R. L. Webb - Elementary Principal - Kestrel Heights School