

Dear Key School Neighbor,

We hope your New Year is off to a good start! As promised, we are sharing a notice sent to all Key School parents this week reminding them of our traffic safety and parking procedures. We apologize again for any inconvenience caused to neighbors by our morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal periods. We appreciate your patience during these times and will continue to encourage best, safe driving and parking practices from our parents and bus drivers. Recognizing that our entire community benefits from better communication, we'd like to share some more information about our school with you.

In 2008, Key Elementary achieved a milestone when the U.S. Department of Education named us a National Blue Ribbon School. Principal David Landeryou and his staff continue to maintain the high performance standards and expectations that achieved this honor. We also receive excellent marks on our annual "scorecard." Visit <http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/Key+Elementary+School> to see how we compare to other DCPS elementary schools.

Currently, we have approximately 384 students in Grades Pre-K – 5th. We start our school day at 8:40 a.m. and dismiss at 3:15 p.m. With respect to our traffic woes, mornings are busiest. Not only do we have neighborhood parents and children arriving, but several buses from across the city transport out-of-boundary students that are able to attend Key through the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation and through our outstanding Hearing Impaired Program, which is only available at a limited number of DCPS elementary schools. These buses can clog our streets, and we continue our efforts to streamline their efficiency at drop-off and pick-up. Also with respect to buses, students are transported to Fillmore Arts Center in Georgetown (www.fillmoreartscenter.org) on Mondays or Thursdays where they receive weekly art and music instruction.

You may also notice brief parking demand Monday thru Friday around our before- and after-care program hours (7:45 a.m. drop-off and 6:00 p.m. pick-up.) Afternoon traffic around our 3:15 p.m. dismissal is less troublesome due to walking and driving carpools for "play dates," extracurricular sports, activities, playground time and in-school after-care.

Our school calendar (<http://www.keyschooldc.org/2009/documents/2011-2012-SY-Calendar.pdf>) notes school-wide events that may account for neighborhood parking to be in high demand. Our next open house is February 8th, science night is March 2nd, our end of year picnic is planned for June 8th, and the 5th grade graduation is June 12th.

Key's PTA is able to supplement the academic curriculum by helping to fund or coordinate a foreign language program, World Family, chorus, and winter after-school enrichment classes. These enriching programs are just one of the ways the PTA helps the administration present a well-rounded elementary experience right here in the Palisades. The PTA also manages our annual Harvest Festival and Christmas Tree Sale—events thankfully supported by our entire community.

At the moment, we're busy preparing for our spring auction on March 17. This event is critical to the success of Key School as it funds about half of the PTA's operating budget. Our theme this year is "Glimmers of Green" in honor of our growth as a school, our planned redeveloped outdoor spaces and playground, St. Patrick's Day and of course, the funds we need to raise. The PTA is embarking on our biggest fundraiser ever, a joint project with DCPS to renovate our entire outdoor space, including needed fixes to drainage and erosion issues around our hillside. As featured in the [NW Current](#) on November 2, 2011 we have launched the "Play It Forward" initiative with a goal of raising \$150,000 by summer 2012.

Our student population has nearly doubled since our modernization over 15 years ago. Our outdoor space and playground that once accommodated 225 students now sees almost 400 students. To support this important legacy project, please visit kesptadc.ejoinme.org/auction2012 to donate online. Or contact us at playitforwardkey@gmail.com to get involved.

As a Palisades resident did you know, thanks to the support of the Palisades Community Fund, we even host a weather station right in our parking lot? You can get up to the minute weather reports straight from Key School and learn even more about us by visiting our homepage at www.keyschooldc.org. Thank you for your time, interest and support.

Karen Kelliher, PTA Co-president

Sunny Kaplan, PTA Co-president

(Notice sent to Key Parents: 1/26/12)

Be safe. Be courteous. Be Patient. Traffic Safety, Drop-off & Parking Reminders

As we settle into the new year, the PTA would like to remind parents to please observe our traffic, parking and drop-off procedures which are highlighted below. Safety is our top priority. These procedures were developed to make all our commutes easier and to protect all our children. We expect Key families to respect the neighborhood, to drive and park carefully, and to obey all traffic and parking laws. Help us be a good neighbor! Please read the following CLOSELY—especially if you drive your children to school:

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 🍏 Please strictly observe standard 'clockwise' traffic pattern around Key and mind the 15 mph speed limit
- 🍏 Observe Drop-off Zone rules at main entrance (NO parking/NO standing/Driver must remain in vehicle)
- 🍏 Consider alternatives like walking the last block, carpooling or even using Metrobus to ease congestion
- 🍏 Do not block or turn around in alleys, driveways or school parking lot and observe No Parking signs

Clockwise traffic pattern: Follow the one-way 'clockwise' traffic route: Up Dana, left on Hurst Terrace, right on Garfield and right on Eskridge. Parents/Caregivers should not approach Eskridge from Dana Place. This reverse approach may appear more convenient and time-saving, but it creates congestion, gridlock and safety problems. Observe the 15 mph speed limit.

School Loading/Drop-off Zone 7:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. (NO parking/NO standing/Drivers must remain in their vehicle): If you wish to drop-off your child, form an orderly line on Eskridge as you approach Key. When it is your turn, pull in to FARTHEST open spot (closest open spot towards stop sign at Dana Pl.). We are working hard to get all our buses to be mindful and pull up to farthest available spot as well. PLEASE DO NOT STOP YOUR VEHICLE AT FIRST AVAILABLE SPACE IN DROP-OFF ZONE. THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR SIGNIFICANT GRIDLOCK AND NEGATIVE IMPACT ON ALL VEHICLES TO YOUR REAR - PULL FORWARD. After you pull up to farthest available spot, pull up completely to the curb to let your child(ren) out from the passenger side only, then pull out carefully. Drivers must remain in the vehicle.

Members of the school Safety Patrol are on hand to assist younger students who may need help managing car doors, backpacks, lunchboxes and projects. (Reminder, Pre-K students should be escorted to classrooms - they cannot be let out on Eskridge Terrace like K-5th graders.)

Consider alternatives like walking that last block or blocks to school, carpool or use Metrobus to ease congestion: Near-by parents and students are strongly encouraged to walk or bike to school. Others should consider parking near school and walking the rest of the way, forming walking or driving carpools with friends, leaving home a few minutes earlier to allow enough time for commute, taking advantage of the new Drop-off Zone at the Eskridge Terrace main entrance (see rules above) or using Metrobus.

Key encourages families to arrange carpools and we are continuing to learn more about a new initiative "School Pool" and how it might assist us. Parents may consider Metrobus as an option for older students. D.C. Metrobus #D6 stops at the corner of Dana and Macarthur where a nearby crossing guard is stationed. DCPS students are eligible for a "Student Transit Subsidy". To learn more about discounted bus and metrofare for DCPS students, please visit

<http://ddot.dc.gov/DC/DDOT/Services/Transit+Subsidies/School+Transit+Subsidy+Program>

Do not block or turn around in alleys, driveways or school parking lot and observe No Parking signs. Be mindful of our neighbors and respect private and public property. Parents should not block or turn around in any neighbor's alley or driveway. It is also critical that parents do not enter or block the staff parking lot. No Parking signs are posted for a purpose. Parking illegally negatively impacts safety by blocking visibility and accessibility for pedestrians and other cars and drivers, including emergency vehicles. Observe No Parking signs.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation. Please make sure any caregivers are familiar with the school drop-off and pick-up rules and procedures. We hope together we can continue to make all our commutes safe and sane! If you would like to learn more about the SRTS program please visit: <http://ddot.dc.gov/saferoutes>