

It has been an active week at school, with a fire drill on Tuesday, MAP testing beginning in 1st-8th, picture day today, and a fun surprise for students tomorrow, that I'm certain they'll come home talking about in K-8.

Today they likely came home telling you that Student Council announced the first themed dress for **TOMORROW with Sounders Free Dress! Students and staff are invited to wear Sounders colors or gear and show some support for one of our local teams!** This is not a plain free dress day, but a themed dress day. If your child does not want to participate, a uniform is perfectly fine. Colors/ gear must be clearly visible throughout the day (green socks only do not count). Please review the dress code for free dress/ themed dress days on the parent info page on the website.

In other exciting news, we welcomed back Ms. Heidi, one of our preschool teachers, who has been away from school, and are so glad to have her back. Thank you to the amazing teamwork in ELC, navigating the first few weeks without one of their core teachers. Thank you especially to Ms. Heather for stepping up as the solo lead teacher and for Ms. Lisa who has also been an integral player in the smooth start to the year. At OLG, it takes the effort of many to make things run smoothly, and I appreciate the hard work and leadership of all of our staff members, at all grade levels, in all departments and roles.

This weekend, information regarding Partners in the Gospel will be shared. I invite you all to consider joining an input session, to let your hopes and concerns be voiced and recorded. Many changes have been made with Partners in the Gospel since its inception, based on feedback from the many voices that make up our archdiocese. **You do not need to be a Catholic family to participate** in these sessions, and we will be offering two specifically for school families, in addition to the parish offerings. You are encouraged to sign up. **Your voices matter.**

While there are many unanswered questions about Partners, especially around schools and changes with learning, a message that has been made very clear by the Archdiocese of Seattle and the Office for Catholic Schools (OCS) is that **there are not any plans, hopes or desires to close schools**. Schools are a key part of our ministry as parishes and as an archdiocese. While parishes will form families, it is possible for a family to have more than one school. Any school relationships, changes, adjustments, according to the FAQ, meetings I've attended, and OCS directly, will come much further down the line *if at all*. Strong, stable, mission driven schools are what we need and plan to keep. Know that our parish, Fr. Kevin and school leadership are all very involved and invested in making sure OLG remains the special place that it is, and are confident that together we put our best foot forward. For more info on input sessions, FAQ, etc regarding Partners in the Gospel, please review the information below in the parish news session.

The last bit of news is simply "housekeeping" for the safety and well being of the kids, staff and your cars regarding dismissal.

Afternoon pick up this week has been going quickly, which is great, however it's also been chaotic and has potential to be unsafe. Additionally it causes backup on 35th and the police department has asked that we make efforts to not have that occur.

Though dated, [please review this video](#) that walks you through carpool. In essence, this is what you do:

- Enter off of 35th and form two lines of cars, one on the right, hugging the hillside closest to the playground and one on the left, that loops down into the gravel and then around to be parallel with the other line.
- When forming lines:
 - The line closest to the basketball hoops needs to pull ALL THE WAY UP, stopping at the fence for the big toy (playground). Please pull forward, and as close to the fence line as you can. While no lines are actually painted, if the first car does this, the other cars can follow suit, allowing for two lanes of waiting cars and a third lane of exiting cars in the middle.
 - The line on the outside: pull as close to the outside fence as possible and pull all the way forward, forming two parallel lines of waiting cars.
- The middle lane is for exiting cars.
- Once your child is in your car **use your blinker** and exit to the middle lane. Do not pull all the way forward and then exit, as it creates backup and bottleneaking.
- **Use your blinkers.** Yesterday I might have seen one single blinker. One. This helps people know if you're waiting for your child and moving forward in line OR if you're trying to exit. If you're exiting, be in the center lane. Period. Be courteous if one another and let people in. **Use blinkers.**
- Watch out. Be aware of kids crossing to their cars, teachers crossing kids to their cars, and families who walk.

Playground at Pick Up: the **playground is closed from 3-3:10**. Why? It's difficult for us to determine who is waiting for a parent, who is waiting for EDC, who is supposed to be walking, or who has been picked up. For the safety of all kids, and for our youngest who are waiting for their parents and can't understand why a friend can play but they can't, we thank you for enforcing this with your kids, and simply wait until 3:10. I will personally be reminding classrooms as well.

Walking/ Biking Safety: If your child walks or rides a bike home, please remind them to walk on the **school side** of the street, if heading west toward the park. Use the crosswalk only. **Do not walk in front of the cars exiting carpool, or J- walk on 34th.** It is dangerous. Thank you for setting the safe example, even if it's a few extra steps. If your child walks without an adult (or takes the city bus), please let the office and their homeroom teacher know that's the plan.

Non-carpool pick up: It is awesome that so many parents walk up to pick up their kids. I'm all about it. However for the safety of the kids and the peace of mind for school staff, please do not have your child jump out from line as they are exiting school, running to meet you, without communicating clearly and with confirmation, with the teacher. As a former teacher, if I left my class with a full line of students, especially our youngest, and got out to the parking lot with 3-5

kids, I'd have panicked; when in reality the kids have simply been picked up as they were walking out. If you can, please wait to pick them up until they're in line by carpool. If you can't wait, please make sure that the teacher sees you and acknowledges verbally, or with a wave that they see you and it's okay for your child to leave line. Your kids are so excited to see you at the end of the day, and you probably feel the same, but remember that the teacher's job is to keep the whole class safe and accounted for. Help make this task a little easier on them if you can. It's important.

Have a wonderful weekend and remember that tomorrow is **Sounders color/ gear free dress**. If your child would prefer to not participate in this themed day, regular uniform is the perfect alternative.