

Addison Traffic Safety Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to help Addison students and parents safely commute to and from school. We appreciate you taking the time to read and review it with your children so that they are familiar with the rules and procedures.

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1) Options for Getting To and From Addison

Traffic has been identified as one of the top community problems in Palo Alto, especially during peak hours when many parents drive their children to school. As a neighborhood school with a fairly small attendance boundary, Addison is primarily designed for students to walk or “roll” (bikes, scooters, skateboards) to school. As a result, we encourage parents to consider commute options carefully and to avoid driving if possible.

If we can reduce the number of cars around Addison, we can create a safer environment for our students and make our community a better place to live. Walking and rolling are healthy habits and offer the opportunity to practice safe street skills with your child. The light exercise helps them settle down. By walking or rolling to school--even a few times a month--you can make a difference! Make driving your choice of last resort. If you must drive, carpooling minimizes the time you have to spend behind the wheel and reduces traffic on our busy streets.

No matter how your child travels to school, commuting safely is important. As parents, you can help by:

- Helping your child learn how to use the streets safely.
- Being a good role model.
- Educating other drivers about Addison’s traffic safety rules.

2) Safety Procedures for Driving to Addison

All parents know that the “morning rush” can be hectic. Still, safety for all should be the primary consideration. Leaving a few minutes earlier than usual can help avoid rushing.* To lighten congestion at the school’s entrances on Addison Avenue, consider dropping off students

at or near entrances on the other streets immediately surrounding the school—our campus isn't large, and students can easily get to their classrooms.

Please do your best to drive in a clockwise direction around the school with the exception of Webster since that is the entrance to the construction zone. Students will then be dropped off at a curb, avoiding illegal and dangerous mid-street jaywalking. Don't drop students off in stopped traffic—find a curb. If you must park across a street, use the nearest corner crossing to cross it.

Parking at Addison:

If you must park, limited space is available on Middlefield Road, Lincoln Avenue, and Webster Street. To avoid congestion, consider parking on a street adjacent to the school and walking a short distance. Some example areas are Addison (north side) and Fulton Avenues east of Middlefield Road, Byron Street south of Lincoln Avenue, Webster Street north of Addison Avenue, and Lincoln Avenue west of Webster Street. (Download a [map of the Addison neighborhood](#)).

Dropping-off and Picking-up:

Because it was designed as a neighborhood school, Addison doesn't have a good off-street zone for student drop-off and pick-up by automobile. Thus, the four city streets surrounding the school are the drop-off/pick-up "zones." Each has its own features:

Addison Avenue:

During construction, please avoid stopping and dropping on Addison Ave. as students will also be biking to access the racks closer to Middlefield.

The side of the street fronting the school is a bike lane--waiting/parking there is prohibited (except 5 minutes commercial). Cars are allowed to but discouraged to "pause and drop" and then ease into traffic, looking out for bicyclists. For an efficient drop-off, have students ready to get out when you stop, and exit from the right-hand doors only. Don't get out of the car. Please do not park/drop-off/pick-up in the school bus red zone at the main entrance. The parking lot of the Roller & Hapgood & Tinney funeral chapel is strictly off limits for Addison parents. Cars parked there will be towed.

Middlefield Road:

Please do not park in either the bus stop zone near Addison Avenue (which blocks the crossing guard's vision and visibility), or in the mid-block Fire Lane entrance.

Lincoln Avenue:

Please do not park in the red-curb zones, or across the mid-block crosswalk at Byron.

3) Driver Safety Tips

Observe the 25 mph speed limit in school zones at all times. When a car going 20 mph hits a pedestrian, the chance of death is 5 percent. At 30 mph the likelihood rises to 45 percent and at 40 mph, the chance is 80 percent. Speed matters.

Be alert for young children. Young children cannot judge the speed or distance of vehicles moving toward them, and they think cars can stop instantly.

Avoid making U-turns and other unsafe maneuvers on the streets surrounding the school. Make full stops at all stop signs.

Obey “No Right Turn on Red” signs where posted at school intersections. This allows children to cross safely without cars turning through the crosswalk. Where adult crossing guards are posted, obey their instructions.

Watch for crosswalks, bike lanes, red curbs, and bus zones. Wait until pedestrians have completely crossed before your car enters a crosswalk. Don’t park at red curbs or in bus zones, or in bike lanes when “no parking” is posted or if you are fully blocking the lane. Set a good example.

Always use child safety seats and safety belts correctly every time you and your children ride. Remain buckled up until the car stops. Children who have outgrown a convertible seat should graduate to a booster seat until they are eight years old and eighty pounds (recommended) or six years old and/or sixty pounds (the law).

Avoid rushing. Leave home a few minutes earlier instead. Those few minutes will help to keep us all safer.

4) Special Notes about Crosswalks/Intersections

Whether you walk, roll or drive to Addison, you need to be aware of the different safety issues for the intersections around campus:

Addison Avenue/Middlefield Road:

During drop-off and pick-up times this intersection is controlled by a crossing guard. An adult guard will be on duty approximately one-half hour before and after school. Please [report any crossing-guard absence](#) to the non-emergency Palo Alto police number, 329-2413, and a patrol unit should be dispatched to cover the intersection.

Crossing guard rules for pedestrians:

Look both ways and wait for the guard to call before stepping off the curb. Stay inside the crosswalk, from start to finish.

Do not cross on the north side of the intersection, where there is no marked crosswalk. Bikes and scooters may cross there.

Crossing guard rules for drivers:

Do not enter the crosswalk until it is completely clear of pedestrians.

Obey the “No Right Turn When Children Present” sign on northbound Middlefield.

Crossing guard rules for bikes and scooters:

Do not run, or ride bikes, scooters, or skateboards in the crosswalk.

Addison Avenue/Webster Street; Lincoln Avenue/Webster Street:

These are presently unguarded, four-way stop intersections. Drivers should come to full stops, and yield to crossing pedestrians. They should also follow usual four-way stop rules: the first car to stop has the right of way; for simultaneous stops, yield to the right-hand car. **During construction, please ask your child to get off his/her bike or scooter on the corner of Addison Ave. and Webster and WALK their wheels to the entrances on Addison Ave.**

Lincoln Avenue/Middlefield:

This intersection is a two-way stop, in the Lincoln direction; there are no marked crosswalks in any direction. Cars move fast on Middlefield—crossing it may be somewhat hazardous. Pedestrians should consider using the guarded crossing at Addison Avenue.

5) Safety Procedures for Walking to Addison

Here are a few tips that will increase safety for students that walk to Addison. Please practice these habits when you walk with your children and review them carefully before they head out on their own.

Choose the safest route and walk it with children. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings. Walk the route with children until they demonstrate traffic safety awareness. They should take the same route every day and avoid shortcuts.

Be alert. Children need to understand that everything else on the road is bigger and moving faster than you are--from skateboards to bicycles to cars.

Don't assume drivers see you! Make eye contact--especially at intersections and driveways. Obey crossing guards or the safety patrol. Look both ways, and wait until the crossing guard calls you before stepping off the curb. Don't run, or ride bikes, scooters, or skateboards in the crosswalk.

Don't enter the street from between cars or from behind bushes or shrubs. Darting into the street accounts for the majority of child pedestrian fatalities.

Cross the street at a corner or crosswalk. Make sure children allow plenty of time to cross. Teach them to walk, not run, across intersections. Tell children to listen to adult crossing guards or safety patrols at monitored intersections.

Understand and obey all traffic signals and markings. A flashing "WALK" sign is not an automatic "go" signal. It means a pedestrian has permission to cross but must first stop and look both ways for cars. In addition, teach children to walk within the marked crosswalks.

6) Crossing the Street

Children must learn traffic safety rules at an early age. Parents should teach them to follow these nine steps, developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

Cross at an intersection or crosswalk, if available.

Stop at the curb, the edge of the road, or the corner before proceeding. Look left, then right, then left again for traffic in all directions. If you see a car, wait until it goes by. Then look left, right, left again.

When no cars are coming, walk--do not run--across the road.

If a car is parked where you are crossing, look to make sure there is no driver and the car is not running. Then go to the edge of the car and look left-right-left to see if cars are coming.

At intersections with traffic lights, watch for cars and obey all traffic signals. Wait until you see the WALK signal and the green traffic light. Remember, the WALK signal and green light mean it's your turn to cross the street, but does not mean it is SAFE to cross. You need to LOOK, and then go if no traffic is coming your way.

A flashing DON'T WALK signal means you should not start to cross the street. However, if you have already started crossing when it begins flashing, continue walking.

If you see a steady DON'T WALK signal, don't begin to cross the street. Wait for the next WALK signal.

If you must walk through parked traffic, stop and look carefully before stepping out from between vehicles.

Don't run between cars and buses. Don't run across the street or through a parking lot.

7) Safety Procedures for Biking and Scootering to Addison

Biking to school is a great option, especially as children get older and are more confident cycling. Please follow these guidelines to keep students safe when biking to Addison:

Plan a safe cycling route. A safe cycling route to school may not be the same as a safe walking route. Streets with a steady flow of fast-moving traffic are not appropriate for young cyclists with limited traffic experience. **Bike racks at Addison are located at the entrances on Addison Ave. and entrance near Middlefield/ Lincoln.**

Street cycling should be supervised until a child is age 10 and can show how well they ride and observe the basic rules of the road. Adult supervision is essential until students have demonstrated knowledge of traffic skills and safety rules.

Make eye contact with drivers. Do not assume that drivers see bicycles, especially at intersections and driveways! Watch for right-turning cars whenever the bike lane border is dashed. Cars may enter the lane at that point.

Be predictable. Avoid accidents and traffic tickets by obeying ALL stop signs, traffic lights, and other traffic laws and signs. Teach children that bicycles must follow the exact same rules of the road as cars and other vehicles.

Wear a bike helmet. It's the law. Make sure your child's helmet fits properly so it will protect the brain in case of an accident. It should be snug, level, and covering the forehead. Adults need to wear a helmet to model safe practice. For tips on how to properly fit a helmet, download the following [Tips For Helmet Fitting document](#).

Ride on the right. Use bike lanes whenever possible. Wrong way riding is extremely dangerous. If there is no bike lane, ride as far to the right as practicable. Stay visible to traffic by not weaving in and out of parked cars.

Be alert & visible. Watch for opening doors from parked cars, cars turning left or right, and cars coming out of driveways. Avoid riding on sidewalks--you are most visible in the roadway with other vehicles.

Become a pedestrian in dangerous or congested traffic: Get off bikes if an intersection is crowded or there are too many cars. Be sure to walk bikes in the pedestrian crosswalks.

Keep hands on the handlebars. Secure anything you or your children need to carry on a bike rack or basket and keep backpacks snug, not dangling low where they can throw off balance. Do not carry anything in your hands while riding.

Do not ride on campus during school hours: Students and adults need to walk their bikes once they reach the Addison fence. Riding on campus is not safe for anyone.

8) Accidents

Report all accidents involving students to the Palo Alto Police at 329-2413, even if there are no injuries. Understanding where and how crashes involving school children occur helps the city and school district identify the best ways to make school routes safer. Also contact the Addison office to fill out the PAUSD Incident Report Form.

THANK YOU for helping to keep Addison students safe!