

Safety First

*Woods Cross Elementary School
Woods Cross, Utah*

Traffic patterns near and around Woods Cross Elementary School created unsafe conditions for students and drivers. The principal and the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) met with the PTA Safety Committee to identify the problems and seek solutions. The ATP involved community members and parents to establish a safer traffic environment near the school.

Changing the traffic patterns around Wood Cross Elementary required extensive communication. The principal and a PTA representative discussed the problems in the Community Council. The PTA and ATP met with an officer from Wood Cross Police Department to discuss different ways to rework traffic around the school. The principal sought input on problems and possible solutions in weekly memos to parents and PTA newsletters. After much collaboration, the ATP and a PTA representative met with the Traffic Advisory Committee from Woods Cross City to discuss the traffic challenges.

City officials came to Woods Cross Elementary to analyze the problem firsthand. The Traffic Advisory Committee made recommendations to the Community Council and the PTA on how to change traffic patterns around the school. Members of the city council approved sign and traffic changes required to implement the plan. The principal requested that the district place the new signs on the property and issue citations on school property.

Once these safety measures were in effect, the school needed to communicate to parents the new changes. The City Traffic Committee sent letters to the neighboring residents

of the school who would be the most affected by the changing traffic patterns. The principal wrote articles in the PTA newsletter letting families know what changes would be made and when. The ATP handed out fliers to drivers around the school, describing the new traffic patterns. The school included a map in the 2003-04 Parent Handbook that showed the new traffic patterns, including drop-off and pick-up areas for students. To enforce the new traffic patterns, police increased their patrol around the school.

After a year of collaboration and communication efforts, traffic near the school is now flowing more smoothly and safely. Parents, students, school staff, and community members appreciate the safer end result.

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