

Drive-to-Five⁺

**Planning for Effective Execution of
Drive-to-Five⁺ programs at Nanaimo Schools**



What is drive-to-five⁺?

Drive-to-five⁺ is basically a program where parents drop-off and pick-up their children at locations that are a five-fifteen minute walk from the school. There are various ways to structure this program, depending on the age of the students and the capacities of the school [Parent Advisory Council \(PAC\)](#).

Option 1: Just an email

For schools that cannot commit any PAC time to a drive-to-five+ program, the easiest thing to do is just to send out an email to parents informing them that if they need to drive their children to and from school that they are encouraged to drop-off and pick-up their kids at locations about a five-fifteen minute walking distance from the school. For older students, the students can walk on their own. For younger students, the parents can park and walk with their children. See Appendix A for a draft email to parents for Option 1.

Option 2: Mapping and Signs

For schools that cannot commit much PAC time to a drive-to-five+ program, a simple version of the program involves mapping out five-fifteen minute walking locations from the schools, putting-up signs and sending out emails.

1. Map out five minute walk locations from the school

The first thing to do is to determine several areas that are a five-fifteen minute walk from the school, and are safe and convenient places for parents to drop-off and pick-up their children. PACs can either do the mapping themselves along with their children, or can work with the school to have teachers do the mapping with their classes. These locations should be located in areas that:

- Have ample room for parking
- Are convenient for parents (are in the direction of where students live)
- Are not inconveniencing anyone else (such as neighbours or businesses)
- Are safe (low vehicle traffic and well lit)

2. Put-up drive-to-five+ signs

Either the night before or the morning of days that are being promoted as drive-to-five+ days, put up drive-to-five+ signs at the mapped-out drive-to-five locations. If these locations prove to be utilized, the City has committed to having a proper drive-to-five+ metal sign made to designate the spot.

3. Send out drive-to-five promotion email

See Appendix B for a draft email to parents for Option 2.

Option 3: Add Greeters

For schools that are able to commit a bit more PAC time to a drive-to-five+ program, this version of the program is the same as the second option but adds parent greeters at each mapped out drive-to-five+ location.

1. Follow steps 1, 2 and 3 of Option 2

2. Parent greeters at each mapped out drive-to-five location

Twenty minutes before school starts, have parent volunteers located at each mapped-out drive-to-five+ location. This is a nice way to promote the program and to get parents comfortable with the idea of dropping their kids off at locations five-fifteen minutes from the school. If possible, also have volunteers at these locations again after school; this way students can have a trusted adult to wait with them until their parents arrive for pick-up at the mapped-out drive-to five+ locations.

Option 4: Add a Walking School Bus

For schools that are able to commit even more PAC time to a drive-to-five+ program, this version of the program is the same as the third option but adds parents at each mapped out drive-to-five+ location that actually walks the groups of students to and from school.

1. Follow steps 1 and 2 of Option 3

2. Parent walkers at each mapped out drive-to-five location

In addition to the parent greeters that welcome students and their parents to the mapped-out drive-to-five+ locations, also add parent volunteers to walk with the students to and from school.

This is a great way to get parents and students really comfortable with the drive-to-five+ program and the mapped-out walking routes.

Appendix A: Email to Parents (Option 1)

Dear parents,

Our school encourages all students to get to and from school in active ways. There are many benefits for students to walk, cycle and roll to school – including both physical and mental health benefits. There are resources available on School District 68’s website and the City of Nanaimo website to support parents with their efforts to help their children get to and from school in active and safe ways.

Having said this, we also understand that some parents do need to drive their children to and from school. In these cases, we encourage a “drive-to-five+” approach. We urge parents to determine safe locations roughly a five-fifteen minute walk from the school where they can drop-off and pick-up their children before and after school. For older students, they can walk on their own from the drop-off location. For younger students, parents can park and walk with their children.

Taking a “drive-to-five+” approach to getting students to and from school has many benefits. Students experience both physical and mental health benefits from the additional 5-15 minutes of exercise they will receive each day. Walking and cycling also makes for safer and more connected communities, because we get to know neighbours and other families, and we reduce traffic congestion around the school. It is also excellent bonding time when parents walk or cycle with their children to and from school.

Thank you for supporting our students to get to and from school in the safest and healthiest ways possible.

Sincerely,

Appendix B: Email to Parents (Option 2/3/4)

Dear parents,

Our school encourages all students to get to and from school in active ways. There are many benefits for students to walk, cycle and roll to school – including both physical and mental health benefits. There are resources available on School District 68’s website and the City of Nanaimo website to support parents with their efforts to help their children get to and from school in active and safe ways.

Having said this, we also understand that some parents do need to drive their children to and from school. In these cases, we encourage a “drive-to-five+” approach. We urge parents to drop-off and pick-up their children before and after school at locations that are roughly a five-minute walk from the school. To support parents, our school PAC and staff have already mapped-out safe drive-to-five+ drop-off and pick-up locations.

These locations are:

- location 1
- location 2
- location 3

The locations are marked with drive-to-five+ signs. [Parent greeters will also be present at the locations.] [Parent greeters will also be present at the locations and additional parent volunteers will walk the students to and from the drive-to-five+ locations.] For older students, they can walk on their own from the drop-off location. For younger students, parents can park and walk with their children.

Taking a “drive-to-five+” approach to getting students to and from school has many benefits. Students experience both physical and mental health benefits from the additional 5-15 minutes of exercise they will receive each day. Walking and cycling also makes for safer and more connected communities, because we get to know neighbours and other families, and we reduce traffic congestion around the school. It is also excellent bonding time when parents walk or cycle with their children to and from school.

Thank you for supporting our students to get to and from school in the safest and healthiest ways possible.

Sincerely,