

Students and parents,

As Vandegrift continues to grow, we will inevitably experience some growing pains. At this time, parking availability has become a hot topic with staff and students. In an effort to promote transparency and enhance communication on this topic, I have compiled a brief Q & A that address most of the pertinent questions. The questions and answers are based on student input, questions, and suggestions concerning parking at VHS. I hope you find this information useful.

In addition, if you would like to ask additional questions, or provide a possible solution, please feel free to provide your input by clicking here: [VHS Parking Input](#)

PARKING QUESTION AND ANSWER:

1. *Why can't we require the sophomore drivers to park in the FPMS lot, or not allow them to drive at all?*

Answer: Having a separate lot for underclassman is an option to look at for next year; however, it would require different tags and additional support to enforce. Furthermore, the additional increase in the number of sophomore drivers has not reached a point where there are physically no spaces available. We have sufficient parking to address even our projected peak enrollment of 2800 students. Limiting sophomore parking is a solution that will be studied for next year.

2. *I'm a senior with off-campus 1st period. By the time I get to school, there are no spaces available. Can we have a special area for seniors? What about reserved parking?*

Answer: We realize that the shortage of close-in parking is more of a challenge for our off-campus seniors. Although regrettable, there is no solution to this dilemma. Students who arrive early will also park in the closest spots. As for reserved parking spaces, research has shown that students will still seek the closest spot to their destination, and will leave reserved spots empty. This leads to a lack of efficiency and contributes to decreasing the number of parking spaces.

Students don't like to hear it, but the distance from the front of the school, to the back of the school is a greater distance than the actual distance from the worst parking spot to the VHS front door. Even the farthest walk from the worst parking spot is generally closer than students will ever encounter during their college experience. In addition, our parking fee is generally lower than surrounding districts, and we typically have more parking available for a campus of our size. Becoming more expensive and restrictive is always one possible solution. For example, in Westlake, sophomores do not get permits, and juniors must buy permits per trimester. Juniors are allowed to purchase 2 out of 3 trimesters. Also, a senior parking tag costs \$150. In my opinion, we are not yet at a point for these type of restrictive measures.

3. *What about letting students use the band lot in the spring? Also, I hear this is allowed at other LISD campuses.*

Answer: The following response is from the VHS Band Head Band Director, Mr. Mike Howard.

- The practice field is our outdoor classroom. It gets use during the school day and after school during August, September, October, November, April, May, June and July.
- The practice field is used during the school day and after school by students in preparation for Leadership Auditions during the month of March.
- Limiting the ability to use the band practice field during the school day or after school creates a disadvantage to the program and the students in it.
- Cedar Park HS, which is the closest to our program in terms of systems, processes, has even stricter parking and access procedures regarding their band field
- Vista Ridge HS does not allow parking on their band lot. This only happens during large district events such as February conference
- Rouse HS does not allow parking on their band lot

- Glenn HS does not allow parking on their band lot
- Parking allowed only during football games has created wear and tear on the field and grass immediately surrounding the field. Constant driving on the surface could prove to become an issue in terms of the need to resurface, repaint, etc. There is also no curb surrounding the field which creates the potential for damage to surrounding athletic fields, storage facility and observation tower. For this reason, the district added gates to the band fields in the early 2000's

4. *I heard that the school has over-sold parking permits just to make money?*

Answer: We have not “over-sold” parking spaces. We have 1100 parking spots, and have only issued 813 parking permits. All parking fees go to the district general fund, not the campus. We monitored the parking lot during peak times and identified more than 100 spaces that are available in Lot B (side of FPMS) and Lot C (near the tennis courts). See the map below.

5. *Why do I get a ticket when I park on the unmarked curbs in the parking lots?*

Answer: Parking on the curb is not permitted due to safety issues in the event a fire-truck or first responder needs access to the lot. However, based on student input, I agree that this was not adequately communicated to our student drivers. Therefore, students who owned a VHS parking permit, and received a ticket for curb parking prior to February 28th, 2017, will have that ticket waived. We will study the possibility of painting some of the curbs to increase parking spaces, where safe and appropriate.

6. *I saw a Twitter account asking me to sign a petition and/or refuse to purchase a parking permit as a protest.*

Answer: I encourage healthy, transparent dialogue concerning all campus issues. Student concerns are important, and we know parking is something that affects students daily. However, students who park on VHS property will be required to have a permit. It is not fair to the students who purchase permits to allow others to take their spots. Starting this week, if you do not have a valid parking permit displayed, your car may be booted, and/or you will be asked to move your car to park along McNeil Drive. Hopefully, consistent, equitable enforcement of parking rules will help us improve the current situation. Please note that it is campus policy that all student fines, dues and responsibilities must be met to participate in the graduation ceremony. If you have any question about this policy, please see your campus principal or assistant principal.

You can purchase a permit at: <https://leander.edpay.net/p-1781-vhs-parking-permit.aspx> Please make sure you also fill out the application, bring proof of insurance, and your driver's license to the attendance office.

