



November 17, 2009

Talking Points:

Food Vendors on School Grounds Administrative concerns

The biggest concerns around food vendors on or adjacent to school property are safety and supervision. Yes, the vendors would provide a convenience for students and another choice of what to eat. This does not outweigh the safety and supervision concerns.

I. Safety and Traffic Congestion

There is a significant amount of car, bus and pedestrian traffic around the high schools. The traffic is a combination of students, staff and the general public. Gammon Road, Mineral Point Road, East Washington Avenue and Pflaum Road are very, very busy streets. There have been examples of people being hit by cars or buses because of the school congestion and many examples of near misses.

Food vendors located adjacent to schools adds another variable into the traffic mix at a very busy time. It would not be a problem for vendors to be outside the traffic congestion zone.

II. Supervision

Moving the vendors to school property adds the need for additional supervision: controlling the general public coming on to school grounds, the groups of students congregating and controlling litter. This is different situation than when students leave school grounds to go to the mall, PDQ stores or Walgreens.

It also becomes an issue of selecting vendors and limiting vendors. Should it be any food vendor interested? Non-food vendors? We need a system to identify and select appropriate vendors.

Current city ordinance does not allow vendors adjacent to city parks. We are requesting the same consideration for schools.

Steve Hartley

Sidewalk Food Vendors in Madison Schools
Bruce Dahmen and Luis Yudice

1. This provides a school safety concern parked so close to the Gammon Road Entrance on the pavement for students to stand while waiting for the bus. It is a sight line issue with traffic and students crossing, it is a gathering for students waiting for food and has potential for horseplay and pushing near the road, Cars on Gammon stop for food and have lined up 4 deep waiting with emergency lights on--including a city bus, city maintenance vehicle, a Car and SUV that were private owned. This creates a congestion and a pedestrian and traffic concern.

In addition, the intersection of Gammon and Mineral Point Roads has consistently ranked as having one of the highest traffic crash rates in the City of Madison. This is a highly congested area with high traffic volume which poses a high safety risk for pedestrians crossing these streets. The placement of a food cart in the vicinity of Gammon Road has the potential of distracting drivers and of adding to additional risk factors to an already accident prone location.

2. Board Policy does not allow us to supervise that Terrace--unless there is an issue from school. I do not want to begin having to assign staff for supv. at the food vendor. Lunch is a high supv. time for all the way it is.

If the food cart is placed in the vicinity of the school it will inevitably attract students who choose to leave campus during their lunch period. But in addition to students, the vendor may also attract non-students and it could create an atmosphere that could lead to fights, disruptions and involve criminal behavior. If this occurs, it will require the assignment of security staff or the school ERO to monitor to ensure student safety and will divert resources from the school. Simply, the perception of an unruly or disorderly campus which may be created by loitering students, trash and boisterous behavior will be detrimental to the school and should be avoided.

3. I understand our students do leave campus(33 minute lunch) for lunch--cross at the corner of Mineral Point/Gammon, Gammon/Tree Lane where there are traffic Lights for crossing. While some do cut across(jaywalk) our education plan is to use the lights for crossing. We do educate on School Safety. While the vendor will say this will eliminate the need to leave campus--it won't--part of lunch for some is to go to the mall.

In fact, many students do leave campus and have lunch at the mall. But, the placement of a food vendor outside school may entice additional students to leave campus and it will create other safety concerns. Furthermore, parents want their children in school and may not support or understand any district efforts to accommodate a vendor if by doing so, it will jeopardize their children's safety.

4. This is not a vehicle parking space--we ticket cars not in designated parking stalls--this is on a paved terrace. We also have cars lining up on our frontage drive(Memorial Way) to buy from the vendor which again creates safety issues for our students. Members of the general public who our not known by our staff.

The issue of non-students congregating or loitering in front of a school poses significant risks. It could become a hang-out for students who are truant, for gang members, or for adults who wish to prey on younger students. It could lead to conflicts involving opposing groups, involve drug sales and it could be seen as a viable alternative for students who don't want to attend classes. Ultimately, if conflicts arise, policing of the area would become a school and ERO responsibility.

This is a genuine concern which will impact Memorial HS, as well as Jefferson Middle School.

5. This is a very busy street with 5 lanes, a median strip, a speed limit of 30/20MPH. In addition cars traveling north on Gammon Road come over a crest blocking vision and creates an additional hazard.

6. If there is consideration for designating space for vendors in our parking lot we would not be supportive of that decision. This again creates a safety issue, supv. issue, possibility of other vendors being approved(vending competition) and it allows for people being on our campus with whom we are not familiar. Students do leave campus by car and vending has the potential to increase traffic in the lot.

If the parking lot becomes a designated space for vendors, it will create littering, as well as behavioral problems which will require supervision by district staff. This will divert attention and critical resources from other locations during key passing and lunch periods. School parking lots are already seen as potential problem areas and locations where students retreat to their vehicles to drink, smoke and/or engage in other activities. The potential for robberies and thefts may increase as well, as students with cash will congregate in this area. If additional vendors are allowed on the property, it will compound the problem and will place additional burdens of supervision on the school.

7. If one vendor is allowed access to our parking lot we are concerned that other vendors could request and be granted the same access. We would also have to ask if access is granted would it be allowed to expand beyond the lunch hour to after school, and evenings during athletic events. Extended access is concerning because of the potential for competition with booster groups who depend on those events as major sources of fund raising for the school. If it starts--where does it stop.

8. Moving the location of the vendor to another area such as Mineral Point Road(or Campus) does not solve the problem. As stated before this allows for the general public to be on our campus mingling with our students which could create safety issues.