

The 10 Car Rider Commandments

Educator Barnes – 12/13/18

When I attended school, I don't remember that many kids being dropped off in a car. Most students rode the bus or walked to school. Today, some parents arrive at school at least thirty minutes before school starts or ends to transport their children to and from school. So many schools are old and were not made to handle that much vehicle traffic. If you must be one of those people that drop your kids off at school, could you please consider these commandments?

Thou shall arrive on time

I teach in Indiana. That means when winter hits, it is cold outside. Don't wave frantically at us to wait because you are late.

Thou shall organize your child's stuff

There is nothing worse than the car line being held up by an unorganized child. The kid can't find his or her backpack, binder, or lunch box. The car line is backing up into the neighborhood while your child tries to get items together.

Thou shall comb and brush his or her hair at home

Let me direct this especially to the parents who sit in front of the school for thirty minutes. Instead of searching the internet on your phone, finish your child's hair. Why are you trying to finish it when the car line starts moving?

Thou shall follow the car rider duty staff's directions

I did not show up to school to get run over by one of my students' parents. When the teachers on car rider duty ask you to stop or slow down, please obey. We are trying to keep everyone safe. Our goal is to get you in and out of our school's parking lot.

Thou shall feed your children at home

Most schools serve breakfast. If you don't have time to fix food at home, your child can eat at school. I've seen kids refuse to get out of the car because they want to finish their food. Then, we have to be the bad guys to get the child out of the car.

Thou shall not demand to speak to the principal or your child's teacher

At my current school, a lot of people think I look like the principal. I get called by her name at least once a week. It's December and this still happens! One day, a parent roled up, called me by my principal's name and demanded a conversation. Once I identified myself, the parent's tone changed, and she dropped off her child. This is not the time or the place for conversation.

Thou shall clean your vehicle

Picking up trash or random items that fall out of vehicles is a task I complete almost every single week. Again, it holds up the line. It also puts us at risk trying to get the attention of the cars behind you to fetch the item.

Thou shall give your child your daily pep talk before the car line starts moving

Yes, it is important to say words of encouragement to get your child's day started right, but a five-minute speech is not needed...especially when you are holding up the line.

Thou shall leave your pets at home.

I know you love your furbabies. We don't want to chase them in the parking lot because your two dogs leaped out of your car while your child was leaving the car.

Thou shall tell us if you are sending someone else to pick up your kids.

My favorite (*please note sarcasm*) is when a person shows up and states he or she is here to pick up children, but we have never seen this person before in our lives. It is our job to keep your children safe. This person could be a restricted person on your children's file. My other favorite is when a parent sent a Lyft driver to pick up their children, but the Lyft driver didn't know who the parents were.

Let me throw in this bonus commandment...

Thou shall consider putting your kids on the bus.

Life would probably be easier for you and the school if your child rode the bus. You can sit in your vehicle at the bus stop if you'd like. You won't have to be there 30 minutes in advance either.

Parents, please work with the school so we can ensure everyone gets inside safely.