

# A Definitive Guide on School Parking Management Systems



# **Avoid common parking management headaches and create a safe, functional space at your school**

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# Why Schools Need a Parking Management System

Why do schools even need a school parking lot management system in the first place? It's a fair question, and one that deserves a closer look.

Picture this: it's a typical morning at your school, and the parking lot is a chaotic mess. Students are circling around, trying to find a spot before the bell rings. Staff members are jockeying for position, hoping to snag a prime location close to the building. And visitors? Well, they're just trying to figure out where they're allowed to park without getting a ticket. Sound familiar?

That's where a parking management system comes in. By implementing a structured, organized approach to parking, you can help alleviate all of these headaches and create a more welcoming, efficient environment for everyone who sets foot on your campus.

But the benefits of a parking management system go beyond just reducing morning stress. Here are a few key reasons why your school needs one:

- 1. Safety first:** When you have a clear, enforced parking system in place, you can help ensure that emergency vehicles can access your school quickly and easily in case of an emergency. You can also reduce the risk of accidents and injuries caused by haphazard parking and overcrowded lots.
- 2. Fairness and equality:** With a parking management system, you can make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to find a spot, regardless of their role or status within the school. No more favoritism or "reserved" spots that sit empty while others circle endlessly!
- 3. Sustainability and cost savings:** By optimizing your parking setup and using tools like digital permits, you can reduce the amount of paper waste generated by your school and save money on printing and distribution costs. Plus, by encouraging carpooling or alternative transportation options, you can help reduce your school's carbon footprint and promote eco-friendly habits.
- 4. Better first impressions:** Let's face it – the parking lot is often the first thing visitors see when they arrive at your school. By having a well-organized, clearly marked parking system in place, you can create a positive first impression and show that your school is a welcoming, professional place.
- 5. Improved overall experience:** When your parking lot runs smoothly, it has a ripple effect on the rest of your school day. Students and staff arrive on time and in a better mood, visitors can easily find their way around, and everyone can focus on what really matters – learning and growing together.
- 6. Revenue Generator:** For students, parking is a privilege that not all schools can offer, and with budgets tight as ever, wouldn't it help to have a little more revenue in the general fund? Well, with a school parking management system, you can easily charge for parking. At Vanco, we've worked with schools across the country and have seen yearly earnings in the range of \$9,000 to \$26,000 just for one high school parking lot. This money can be reallocated to parking lot maintenance or other programs. These numbers don't even take into account what schools make off of event parking, which can also provide funds to your school's general fund.



# PART 1: The Basics of School Parking Management Systems

A school parking management system is like having a super-organized friend who makes sure everyone follows the parking rules and keeps things running smoothly.

Now, you might be thinking, “That sounds great, but what does a parking management system actually include?” Well, it usually has a few key components:



1. A way to assign and distribute parking permits to students, staff, and visitors.
2. Signs and markings that clearly show where everyone should park.
3. A method to monitor and enforce parking rules, like regular patrols or cameras.
4. A system for keeping track of parking data, such as who has which permit and how many spots are available at any given time.

“OK, but why do we need all of this?”, you might ask. Implementing a parking management system at your school comes with a wide range of benefits, including:

1. **Increased safety:** When everyone parks where they’re supposed to, it reduces the risk of accidents and makes it easier for emergency vehicles to access the school if needed.
2. **Better organization:** With a clear parking system in place, you’ll spend less time dealing with parking-related chaos and confusion.
3. **Improved security:** Keeping track of who’s parking on your school grounds can help you quickly identify and address any suspicious activity.
4. **Fairer access:** A well-managed parking system ensures that everyone has a fair chance to find a spot, rather than some people constantly taking up all the good spaces.

# PART 2: Understanding Digital Parking Permits

Now that we’ve covered the basics of school parking management systems, let’s talk about one of the coolest parts: digital parking permits. These high-tech permits are the all-stars of parking management, making your job a whole lot easier and more efficient.

So, what exactly are digital parking permits, and how do they work? Imagine trading in those old-school paper permits for virtual ones that live on your phone or computer. Instead of handing out physical permits, you can assign them electronically to each person’s account. When someone parks in your lot, they simply pull up their digital permit on their phone or device and then, they’re good to go.

You might be thinking, “Why bother switching to digital permits when the traditional ones work just fine?” Well, there are plenty of



reasons! For one, digital permits are way more eco-friendly than their paper counterparts. No more wasting trees on permits that inevitably get lost or damaged. Plus, going digital means you can say goodbye to the hassle of distributing, collecting, and replacing physical permits every year.

But the benefits don't stop there! With digital permits, you can:

1. Easily update and change permit information on the fly, without having to issue new physical permits.
2. Set up automatic reminders for when permits are about to expire, so everyone stays on top of their parking game.
3. Quickly identify and track down any unauthorized parkers, since you'll have a digital record of every permit issued.
4. Integrate your permit system with other student information system or payment processor, for a more streamlined approach.
5. Make event parking even easier.

By embracing digital parking permits, you're not just making your own life easier – you're also providing a more user-friendly experience for your students, staff, and visitors.

## PART 3: Implementation of Digital Parking Permits in Schools

Alright, school admins, now that you're sold on the idea of digital parking permits, it's time to get down to business and implement them at your school! Don't worry; it's not as complicated as it might seem. With a little planning and the right tools, you'll be up and running in no time.

First things first, you'll need to make sure you have the necessary technological infrastructure in place. This includes:

- A reliable internet connection throughout your school grounds.
- A software platform for managing your digital permits. There are plenty of options out there, so do your research and find one that fits your school's needs and budget.
- Compatible hardware, like scanners or cameras, to help enforce your parking rules and monitor your lots.

Once you've got your tech setup sorted, it's time to start transitioning your school to the digital permit system. Here's a step-by-step guide to make the process as smooth as possible:

1. **Communicate the change:** Let your students, staff, and parents know that you're switching to digital permits well in advance. Explain the benefits and give them plenty of time to ask questions and get on board.



2. **Collect information:** Gather all the necessary info from your permit holders, like their names, contact details, and vehicle information. You'll need this to set up their digital permit accounts.
3. **Set up accounts:** Using your chosen software platform, create digital permit accounts for each person and assign them their virtual permits.
4. **Provide training:** Make sure everyone knows how to access and use their digital permits. Offer training sessions for staff and students, and provide clear instructions on your school's website or app.
5. **Monitor and adjust:** Keep an eye on how the new system is working and be prepared to make adjustments as needed. Listen to feedback from your school community and use it to improve your digital permit setup over time.

## PART 4: Key Features of an Effective School Parking Management System

Now that you've got your digital parking permits up and running, it's time to take your school parking management system to the next level! By incorporating some key features, you can make your system even more efficient, user-friendly, and secure. Let's dive into some of the must-have features for your school's parking setup.

1. **Integrations:** A key feature to consider is integration with other school management systems. By linking your parking system with your payment processor or student information system, you can create a more cohesive and efficient setup.
2. **Flexible data collection:** You should be allowed to require students to fill out the fields you want for your records, such as license plate number, car model and year.
3. **Simple online setup:** You don't want to burden yourself with having to manually input and enter details or requiring students or parents to fill out a tedious manual application. With online setup, you reduce headaches for parents and staff and easily ensure the drivers pay for their parking passes. Also, you want to be able to control who can purchase passes and how many they can buy.
4. **Ease of use and automation:** Features such as QR codes, receipts sent directly to the buyer, simplified reporting and easy reconciliation are game-changers for schools and with a digital focus in your parking management system, you'll have less cash to deal with in your school.



## PART 5: Challenges and Solutions

One of the most common issues schools run into is resistance to change. Let's face it – people can be creatures of habit, and some folks might be hesitant to give up their trusty physical permits for a newfangled digital system. To help win them over, make sure you're communicating the benefits of the new system clearly and consistently. Highlight how it will make their lives easier and improve the overall parking experience at your school.

Another challenge you might encounter is technical difficulties. Even with the best software and hardware in place, glitches and hiccups can happen. To minimize disruptions, make sure you have a solid plan in place for troubleshooting and tech support. This might include having a dedicated IT staff member on hand to help with any issues, or partnering with your parking software provider for remote support.

And let's not forget about the importance of training! While digital permits and automated features can definitely make your parking system more efficient, they won't do much good if your staff and permit holders don't know how to use them properly. Make sure you're providing plenty of training and resources to help everyone get up to speed on the new system. This could include in-person workshops, online tutorials, or even a handy FAQ section on your school's website.

Now, even with all these preventative measures in place, there's still a chance you might run into some snags along the way. But don't panic! Most common issues can be resolved with a little bit of problem-solving and persistence. For example, if someone is having trouble accessing their digital permit, you can walk them through the steps to reset their account or provide a temporary pass while you sort out the issue.

And if you do run into a problem that stumps you, don't be afraid to reach out for help! If you use a tool like Vanco, with live, U.S.-based support, you can get a hold of a real person to help you with whatever your issue is.

## Get into gear with the school parking solution trusted by districts across the country

The right parking management solution is a game-changer for your school. It helps you avoid common headaches and ensures the entire process runs smoothly and efficiently. Choosing a solution with the tools and features that allows you to create a safe, functional parking lot sets the tone for learning and success when students, staff and visitors arrive.

**[Click here](#) to get started on a digital parking solution tailored to your district's needs!**

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