

## KIDS LEARN SUPPLY AND DEMAND LESSON

By ERIC FIDLER  
WINNETKA, ILL. (AP)

Call it an early economics lesson. When rich kids have nowhere to park during high school, somebody is going to make some serious money.

Overwhelming demand and limited supply at New Trier High School - one of the state's wealthiest - is so bad that many pay hundreds, even thousands, of dollars a year to secure a space near school, either in a resident's driveway or a business's parking lot.

The 3,100-student school offers just 220 parking spaces to students, spots doled out by lottery, and only to seniors. Others must fend for themselves, with no street parking allowed.

Prime spots are so rare they become family legacies.

"I only got this because my sister had it," said Chris Bartlett, a junior who parks his Toyota Celica convertible at nearby G&W Auto Clinic. "We handed it down."

Taking the bus to school isn't a desirable option for many image-conscious teens in this affluent, tree-lined suburb north of Chicago.

"I'd be leaving 20 minutes early," Bartlett said. "You have to wait outside. It's a pain."

Bob Woyner rents out four to six spaces at G&W. In the past, he's charged \$500 a year, payable in advance. This year, it's \$750.

The rent increase drew no protests.

"People just said fine," Woyner said. "Five hundred, 750, it's the same thing to these people."

Dylan Nagle got his spot at G&W through a sibling, too. Calling the school bus no fun, he feels lucky to have someplace to park his sleek Acura SLX there.

"It's kind of a hot thing around here," Woyner said. "I've had people say, 'How much is it? I'm willing to pay double.'"

The average household income in the village of roughly 13,000 residents is about \$150,000. While not everyone who attends the school is rich, the average house in town is valued at more than half a million dollars and it's common to see students driving Audis, BMWs and Volvos.

"As a high school in the midst of a residential area, we're a different story," said

Judy Brinton, New Trier's dean of students.

Even the school's highly coveted 220 student parking spaces come at a price: \$270 a year.

With the school expected to grow by 1,000 students over the next seven years, the situation is only going to worsen, Brinton said.

"We don't have any place we can expand to," she said. "We don't have any empty fields we can pave."

A 1994 New Trier graduate, Kristen McGill, said the situation has been bad for years.

"Around here, kids are throwing two grand at the people for a semester," she said.

McGill rented a spot in a driveway across the street from the school for \$500, but that bargain ended after other students offered \$2,000 for spaces.

"Finally, my senior year, they threatened to take it away," she said.

Asked why students didn't just take the school bus, McGill wrinkled her nose.

"You don't take the bus when you go to New Trier."