

King County Metro

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

ENFORCEMENT



Enforcement activities aim to deter unsafe behavior and ensure everyone shares the road around schools. Safer traffic conditions make students and families more comfortable walking and rolling to school.



SRTS COMMITTEE

Form a School SRTS committee to focus on safety and education/encouragement activities.

This group of individuals and/or organizations share a common goal of creating healthy, convenient, and fun opportunities for students and their families to walk, roll, and carpool to school.

Make sure to involve people reflecting the community, including people with disabilities and from the racial, religious, or ethnic groups.

A safety committee should include a representative from local law enforcement to coordinate enforcement efforts; for example, police can enforce the speed limit in school zones, get involved in helmet fittings and give-aways, and lead bicycle safety presentations.

SRTS COMMITTEES CAN...



- ★ Address safety concerns
- ★ Identify walking, biking, carpooling and bussing needs around schools
- ★ Seek SRTS funding for infrastructure improvements and programs
- ★ Coordinate with other groups working with youth
- ★ Host community-wide events, such as Walk to School Day
- ★ Create long-term, significant, and permanent change



CROSSING GUARDS AND SCHOOL SAFETY PATROLS

Adult school crossing guards help students safely cross the street as they walk or roll to and from school.

The guard stops traffic with hand signals or a STOP paddle. Crossing guards can be volunteer community members or paid employees. Regardless of whether or not crossing guards receive compensation, a coordinator must conduct screening and hiring, perform background checks, handle insurance coverage and equipment purchase/ maintenance, and monitor the guards daily.

School Safety Patrols are students who have been trained to use high-visibility flags or other props to help other students cross a busy road. Special training and adult supervision is required for all school safety patrols.

BENEFITS

- ★ Motorists are more likely to stop for people crossing
- ★ Discourages unsafe student behavior
- ★ Creates temporary gaps in traffic to help student cross safely
- ★ Provides more “eyes on the street.” Crossing guards observe incidents or conditions that present a potential safety hazard

Please refer to page 111 of Appendix B for more information about crossing guard programs.



SCHOOL SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Conduct a School Safety Campaign to focus attention on people obeying traffic laws near schools at key times, such as the beginning of the school year and during daylight savings changes.

Use media — such as posters, business window stickers, yard signs, or street banners — to remind drivers to slow down and use caution in school zones.

These campaigns build awareness of students walking and biking to school and encourage safe driving behavior, as well as address other specific hazards or behaviors, such as school bus safety, distracted driving. They also guide parent drop-off and pick-up behavior. Consider integrating messages to encourage carpooling to reduce traffic congestion.

Collaboration between the police department and the school district can expand the reach of the campaign.

BENEFITS

- ★ Can extend beyond school families and students to educate the general public
- ★ Can be targeted at specific “hot spot” safety locations and reinforce school zone speed limits
- ★ Can help develop good travel behavior and habits among students, parents, faculty, and staff - including those who live too far away to walk or bike to school
- ★ Can establish positive community norms around safe driving near schools
- ★ Can be funded through traffic safety grants within or outside SRTS programs

Please refer to page 112 of Appendix B for materials to help you plan your school safety campaign.



WALK AUDITS & IMPROVEMENT PLANS

A school walk audit is an assessment of the walking and biking conditions around the school area. At an audit, SRTS staff document conditions that may discourage walking and biking to school, and work with the community to identify solutions to improve those conditions.

Stakeholders should come together to observe drop-off or pick-up and assess traffic facilities and operations (e.g. presence of designated loading areas, walking routes on campus, location of bike parking, etc.). Document the behavior of students, parents, and motorists where it could contribute to unsafe conditions for people biking, walking, taking transit, or carpooling (e.g. speeding, jaywalking, failure to yield to pedestrians). Hold an infrastructure assessment or inventory as part of the audit to confirm the built environment around a school (e.g. streets, sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks and intersections, bike routes, traffic controls). Use information from the walk audits when identifying walking and biking routes for Suggested Route Maps.

Also consider policies around how families drop their students off and pick them up again. Consider valet drop-off with older students assisting with the process, platooning vehicles, and designating carpool priority lanes to make the traffic flow easily and safely.

BENEFITS

- ★ Provides “on the ground” assessment and recommendations to improve school access and safety
- ★ Facilitates local input to identify issues and engages stakeholders on potential solutions
- ★ Helps document the public planning process for a specific improvement, which helps in grant applications and decision-maker approval
- ★ Improved drop-off and pick-up policies can improve safety for all families accessing schools. Because school traffic is focused narrowly around the bell schedule, parents driving children to school cause congestion and safety hazards. Inefficient drop-offs and pick-ups can also increase local air pollution and strain relationships with adjacent residents and community members.

Please refer to page 113 of Appendix B for additional guidance.



SUGGESTED ROUTE MAPS

Suggested route maps help families choose the best route for walking and biking to school.

Maps should show stop signs, signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, bikeways, paths/trails, school entrances, bike parking, and crossing guard locations around a school. Maps may also show transit routes and stops, school enrollment areas, pick-up/drop-off zones, and important destinations, such as community centers and parks. Other things to consider include recommended routes, good walking/biking routes, travel times (e.g., 1/2 mile = 10 minutes), and hazardous locations. The back of the maps can include safety tips for walking, biking, skating, and driving, plus additional local resources or information.

School districts in Washington State are required to establish walk areas for all school buildings where students are enrolled, attend class, and transportation is provided (WAC 392- 141-340).

BENEFITS

- ★ Identifies safer routes for students use when walking, biking, and skateboarding to school
- ★ Directs students and families to routes with more complete biking/walking infrastructure and better/improved street crossings
- ★ Identifies potentially unsafe areas that students should be aware of or avoid
- ★ Shows travel times for walking or biking, correcting misconceptions about how long it takes to get to school

Please refer to page 115 of Appendix B for materials to help you create your school's route map(s).