



2012

Safe Routes to School Travel Plan



Chatham High School

255 Lafayette Avenue

Chatham, NJ 07928

Grades: 9 - 12

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Intro:

Chatham Township is located in southwest Morris County and has an area of 9.4 square miles. Chatham High School is located on Lafayette Avenue that has a 35 MPH posted speed limit west of the school, and a 30 MPH posted speed limit east of the school. During morning and afternoon school hours, the speed limit is reduced in the school zone to 25 MPH. Most of the township does not have sidewalks, however many of the streets with posted speed limits over 30 MPH have them on one side or the other. On the streets with no sidewalks, traffic volume and speed are perceived to be low, but motorist awareness is a concern, especially during morning and afternoon rush hours.

Objectives of the Travel Plan:

1. To make travel to and from Chatham High School safer and more efficient.
2. To reduce traffic congestion around the school zone.
3. To encourage travel to school by means other than the car, thus encouraging students to walk as a health option.
4. Increase motorist awareness within the community, making it a safer place to walk and cycle.
5. Educate younger students on the safety elements of walking and bicycling, especially to and from school.

Community Profile: Chatham Township
Population: 10,452 (2010 Census)
Area: 9.4 SQ. Mi. (9.3 Land, 0.1 Water)
Police: Chatham Township Police Department

Working Members:

Ms. Lydia Chambers – SRTS
Representative and PTO Environmental Subcommittee Member

Ms. Theresa Burns – SRTS
Representative and PTO Environmental Subcommittee Member

Ms. Sarah Fechtner – SRTS
Representative and PTO Environmental Subcommittee Member

Ms. Kathy Abbott – Chatham Township Committeewoman and PTO Environmental Subcommittee

Mr. Christopher Duvall – Faculty advisor to Student Environmental Club

Mr. Darren Groh – Principal

Ms. Lori Gironda – Vice Principal

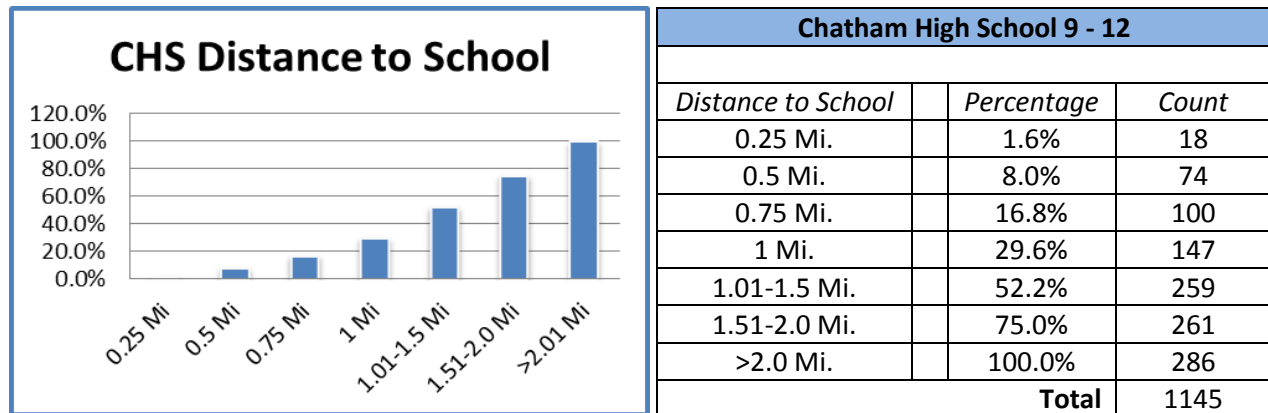
Current School Policy:

Walking and bicycling are greatly encouraged, not only within Chatham High School, but throughout the entire school district. There are bicycle racks present at each of the schools for the students and faculty to use, and there is a crossing guard present at the main entrance of the school to assist children crossing Lafayette Avenue. Currently, students whom reside more than 2 miles from their school are eligible for bus transportation. High School Seniors are eligible for a parking pass on the school's campus, and overflow parking necessitates that remaining seniors and juniors park at the Colony Pool parking lot.

Efforts to Date: Education and Encouragement

Proximity Analysis:

The School District of the Chathams provided TransOptions with redacted students addresses for the 2011-2012 academic year. TransOptions used the student locations to assess the feasibility of students walking or biking to and from school, solely regarding distance that they live from their respective school.

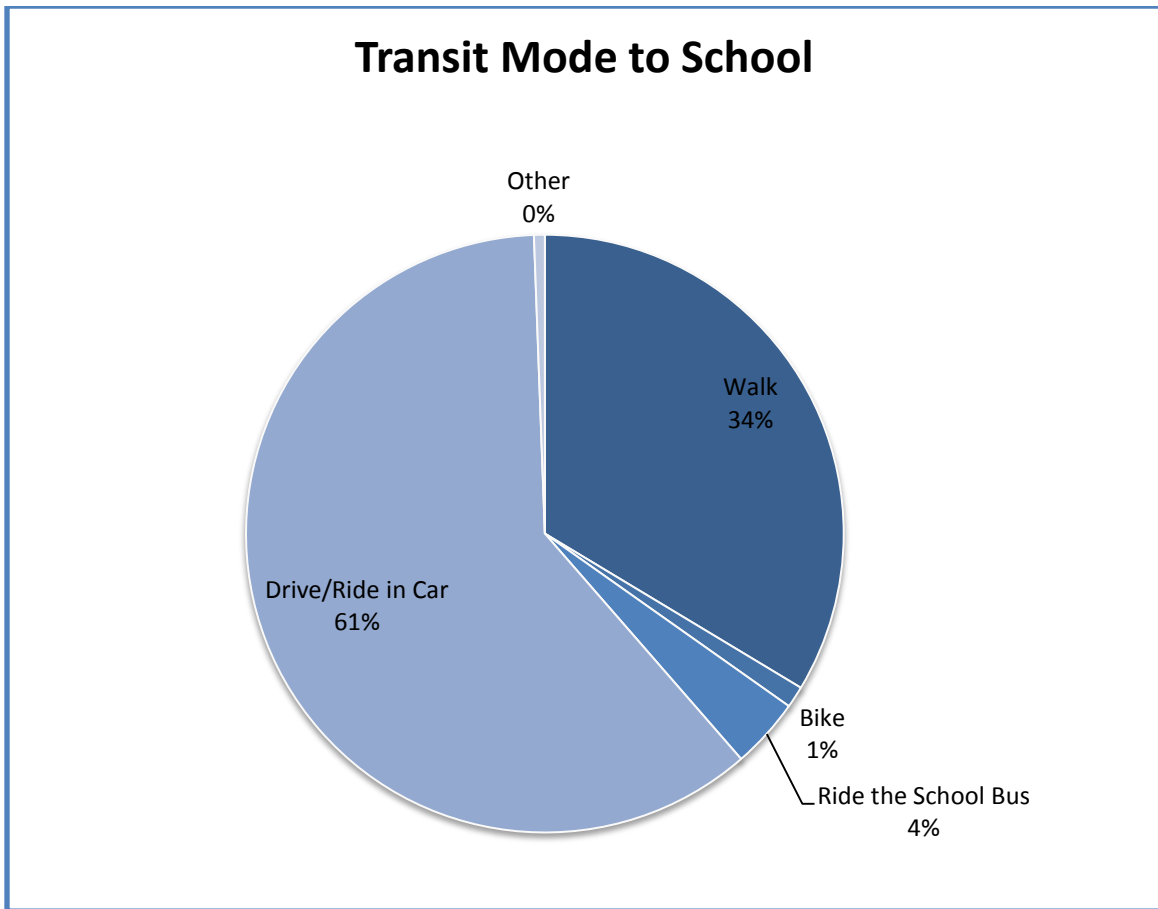


This data enabled the Chatham Safe Routes to School Team to estimate the number of students that would be able to walk or bike to school. This also assisted in creating walking routes, as well as identifying the target enforcement areas and locations where infrastructure improvements would be necessary. 29.6% or 339 of the students at Chatham High School reside within a 1 mile radius. However, given the age and the level of responsibility that high school students possess, it is important to consider a further travelling distance to school. High school students have a greater ability to travel further distances to and from school due to their level of motor skills and physical capabilities, therefore riding a bicycle to school is feasible. If one was to extend the proximity of the travel distance to school to 1.5 Mi., the percentage of the students where bicycling and walking is feasible almost doubles, increasing from 29.6% (339 students) to 52.2%, or 598 students.

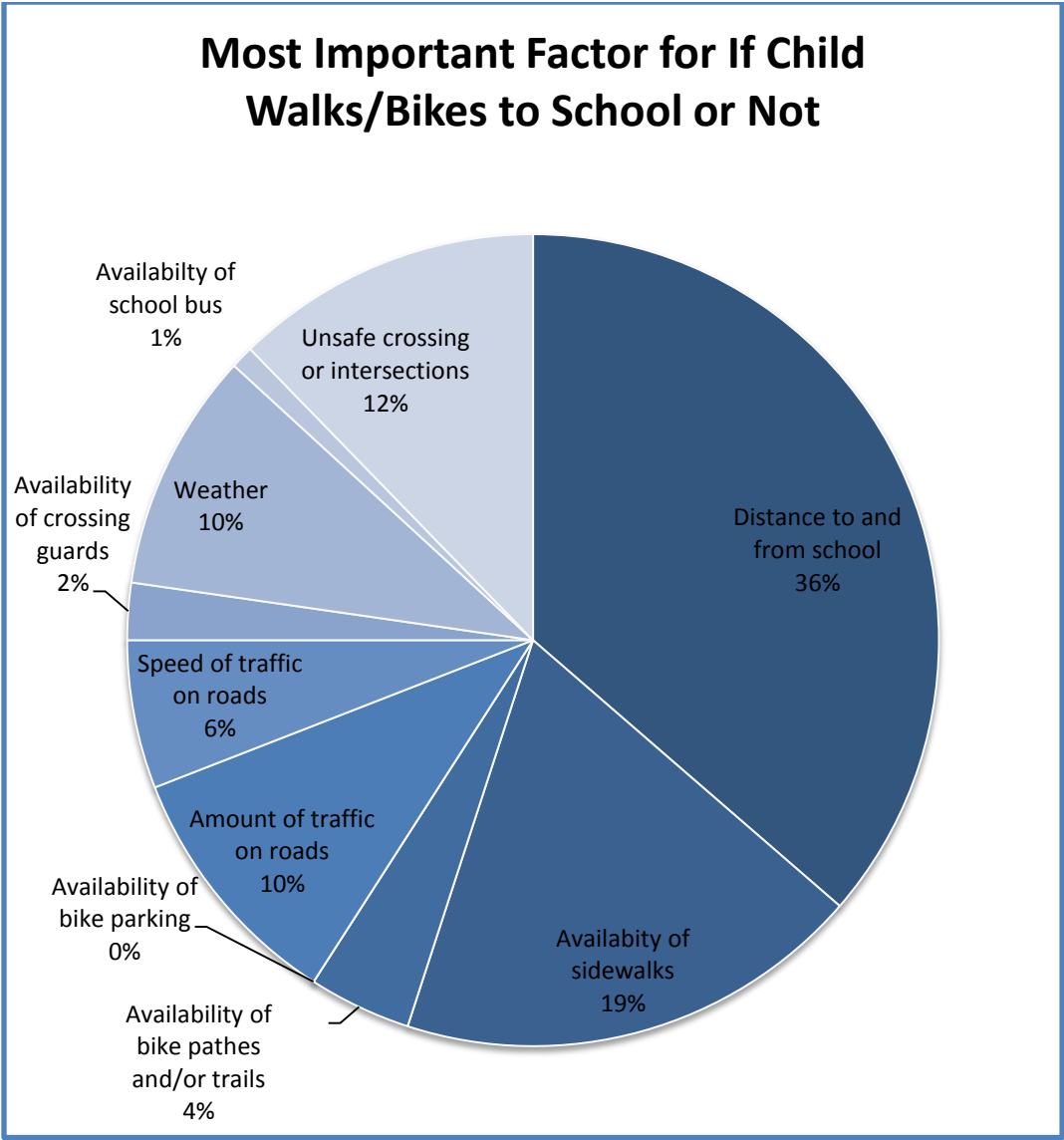
Parent Survey:

A Parent/Caregiver Survey was developed by the NJ SRTS Resource Center at the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center as a tool to gather information regarding a student's travel behavior as seen by the parent/caregiver. The goal of this survey is to learn how students travel to and from school and to better understand any issues or concerns that parents have with allowing their child to walk or bike to school. Below is a highlight from the parent survey responses that were collected during the winter of 2011:

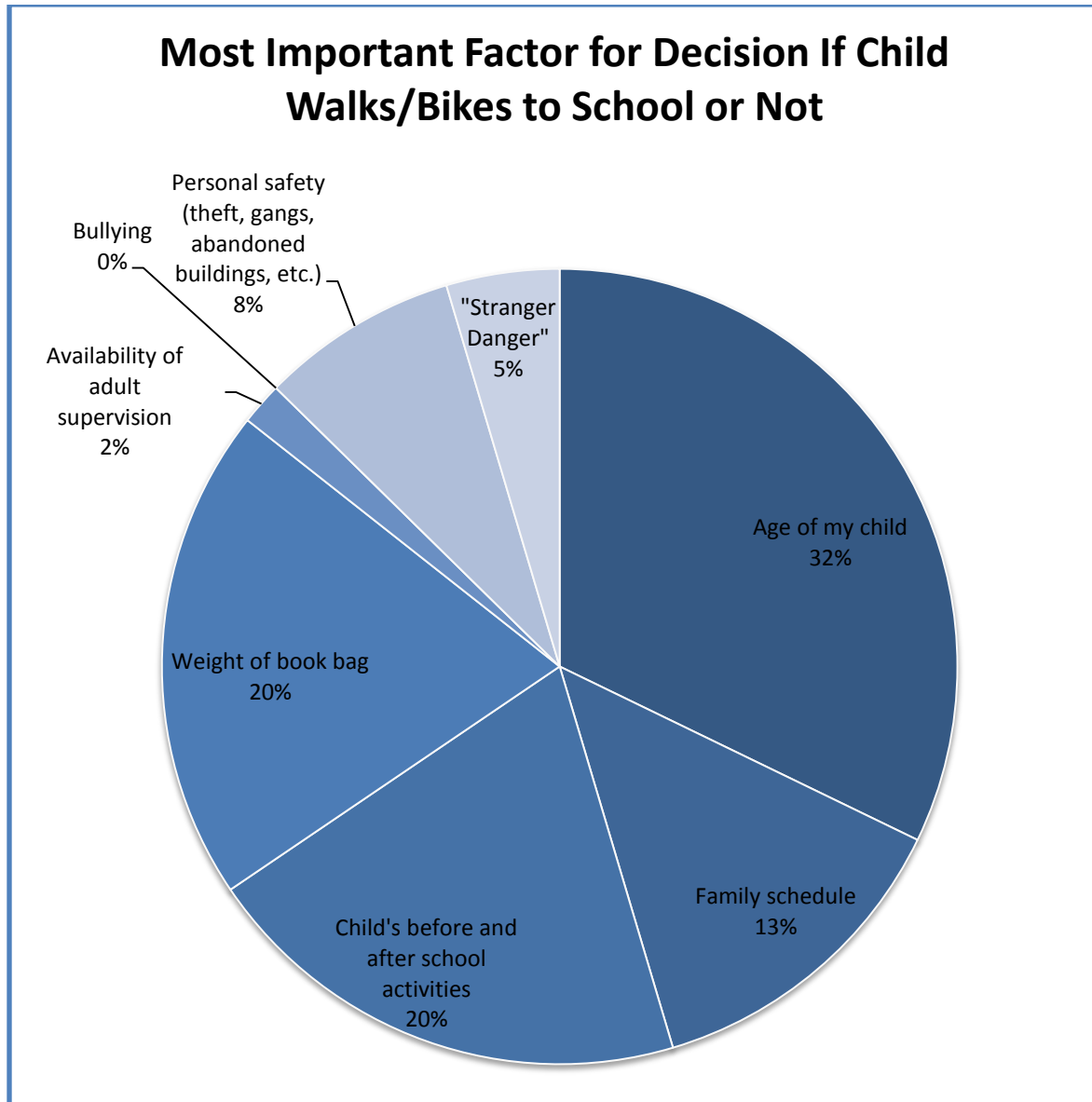
Question 10: (A) How does your child usually get to and from school?



Question 15 (B) Indicate the one factor that is most important in your decision.



Question 16: (B) Indicate the one factor that is most important in your decision. Are there any other important factors in your decision to let your child bike or walk to school?



Travel Tallies:

A Student Travel Tally was conducted in the fall of 2011 to form as a baseline snapshot of the student's travel mode to and from school. The tally was created by Mr. Christopher Duvall, Chatham High School teacher and faculty advisor to the Student Environmental Club, to be able to survey students from each grade-level in a particular classroom. The tally is a simple "show-of-hands" collection method where the teacher during the first period of school asked the students how they arrived at school that morning, giving the student the choices of Walk, Bike, Bus, and Carpool with other students, driven alone in a

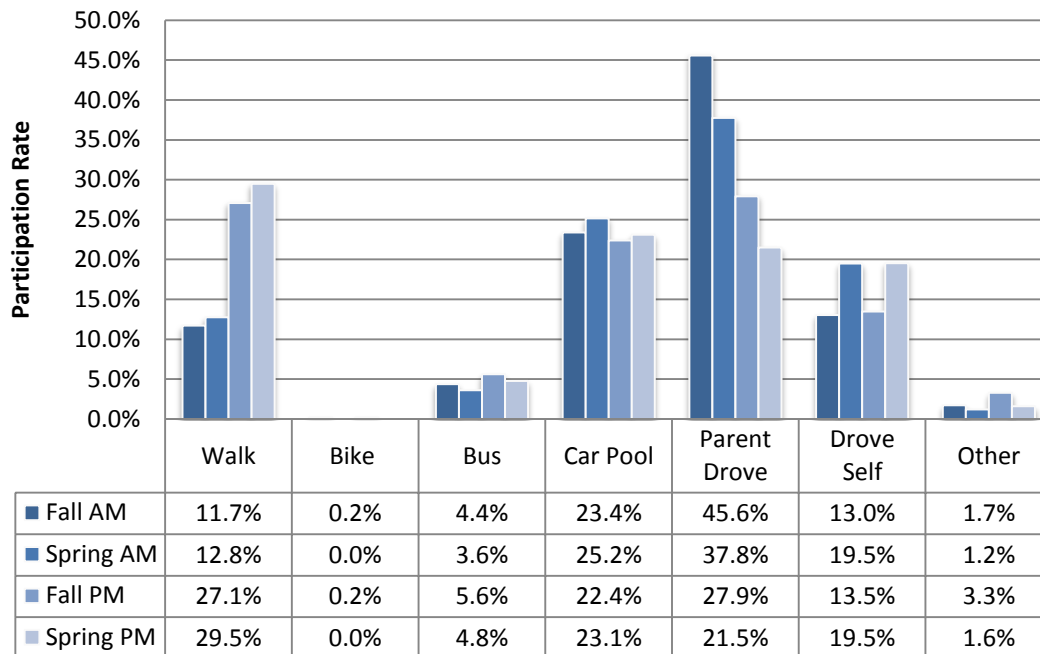
family vehicle, or other (scooter, skateboard, etc.). Some teachers chose to display the survey on the classroom SmartBoard, and asked the students to indicate their method of travel digitally.

The data collected in the tally was completed without the promotion of a walk or bike to school event. We hoped to gather information that would capture the true travel behavior of the school before any encouragement and education efforts were put forth. In the AM from October 24th, 2011 to October 28th, 2011, 11.7% of the students had walked to school, 0.2% had biked, 4.4% had taken the bus, 23.4% carpooled with other students, 45.6% were driven alone by a parent or guardian, 13.0% were student drivers and drove themselves, and 1.7% arrived to school via other means. In the PM, 27.1% of the students had walked home from school, 0.2% had biked, 5.6% had taken the bus, 22.4% carpooled with other students, 27.9% were driven alone by a parent or guardian, 13.5% were student drivers and drove themselves home, and 3.3% arrived home via other means.

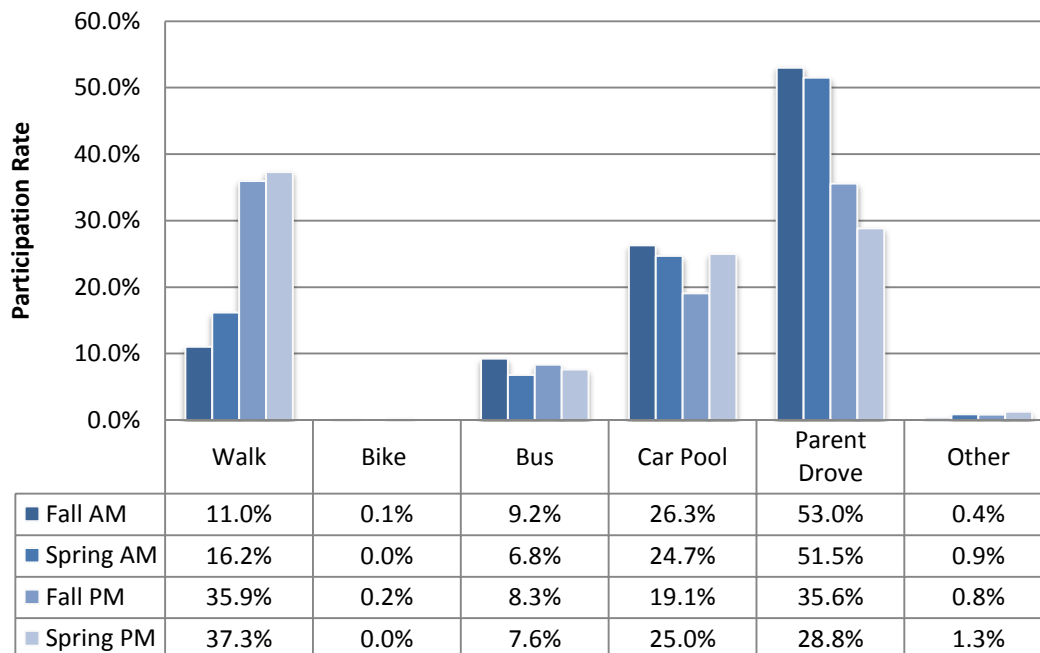
As the school year progressed, the students and their parents were encouraged to walk or bike to school, and where the service was available to them, to take the bus. Also, parents were educated on the New Jersey Pedestrian laws, and a Chatham SRTS Facebook page was created, gathering information from the residents of the community regarding opportunities or constraints their child may face on his or her trip to school. There were also a series of videos that were created in anticipation of Walk or Bike to School Week, which were posted on YouTube, and publicized throughout the school district.

The Student Travel Tally was conducted again during a marketed “Walk to School Week” sponsored by TransOptions. Parents and teachers were encouraged to promote the event to their children and students in the weeks prior to the event. In the AM, from April 23th, 2012 through April 27th, 2012, 12.8% of the students had walked to school (increased from 11.7%), 0.0% had biked (decreased from 0.2%), 3.6% had taken the bus (decreased from 4.4%), 25.2% carpooled with other students (increased from 23.4%), 37.8% were driven alone by a parent or guardian (decreased from 45.6%), 19.5% were student drivers and drove themselves (increased from 13.0%), and 1.2% arrived to school via other means (decreased from 1.7%). In the PM, 29.5% of the students had walked home from school (increased from 27.1%), 0.0% had biked (decreased from 0.2%), 4.8% had taken the bus (decreased from 5.6%), 23.1% carpooled with other students (increased from 22.4%), 21.5% were driven alone by a parent or guardian (decreased from 27.9%), 19.5% were student drivers and drove themselves home (increased from 13.5%), and 1.6% arrived home via other means (decreased from 3.3%). The findings of the travel tally are represented below:

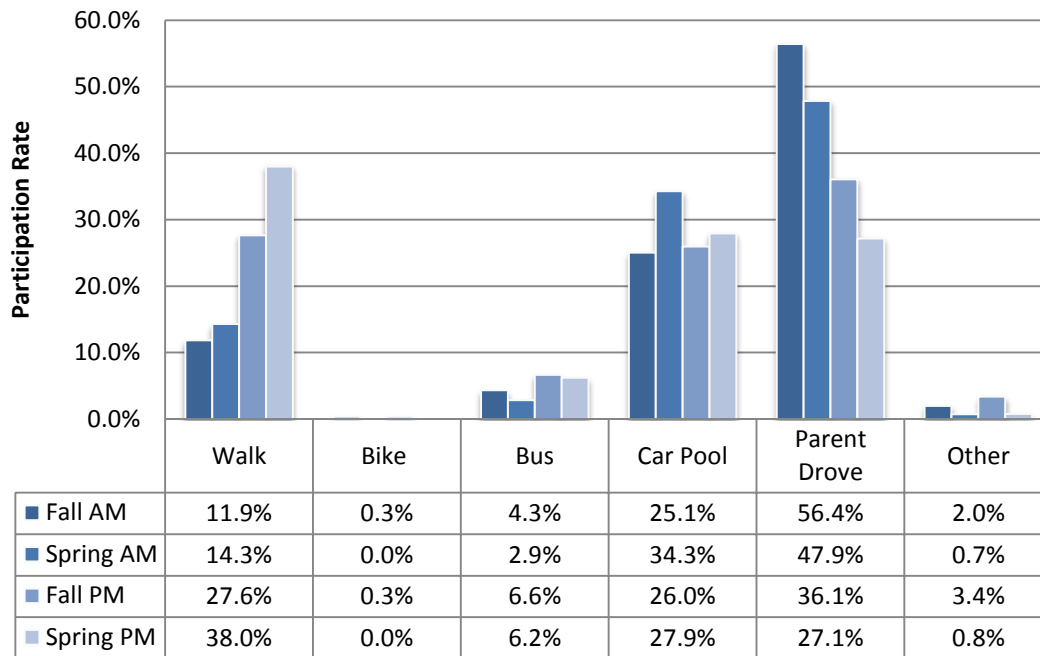
CHS Method of Travel 2011-2012



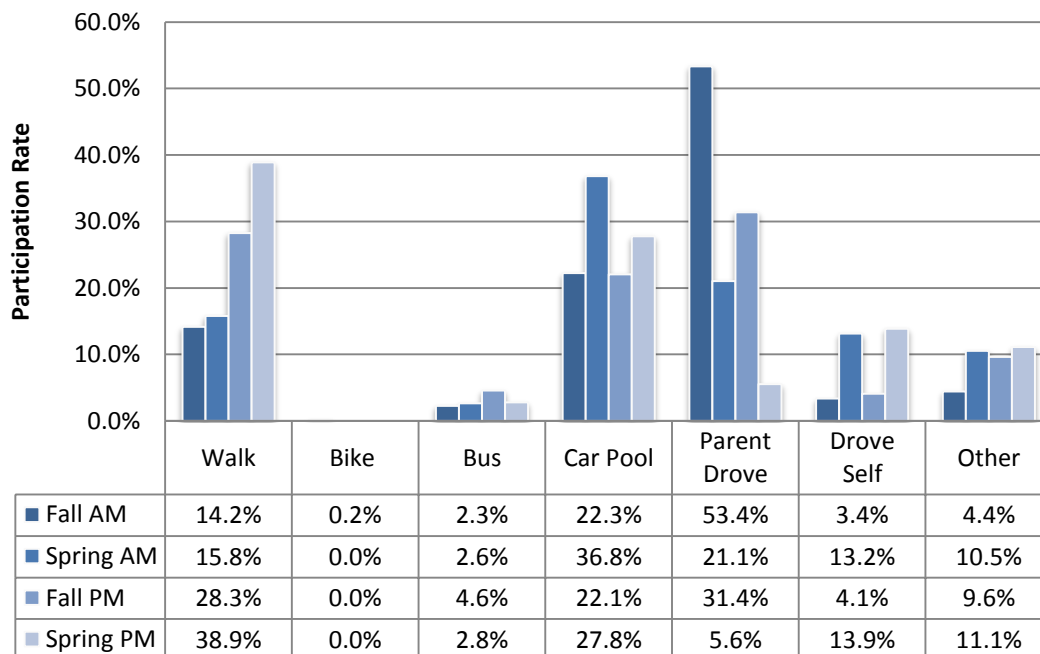
CHS Grade 9 Method of Travel 2011-2012

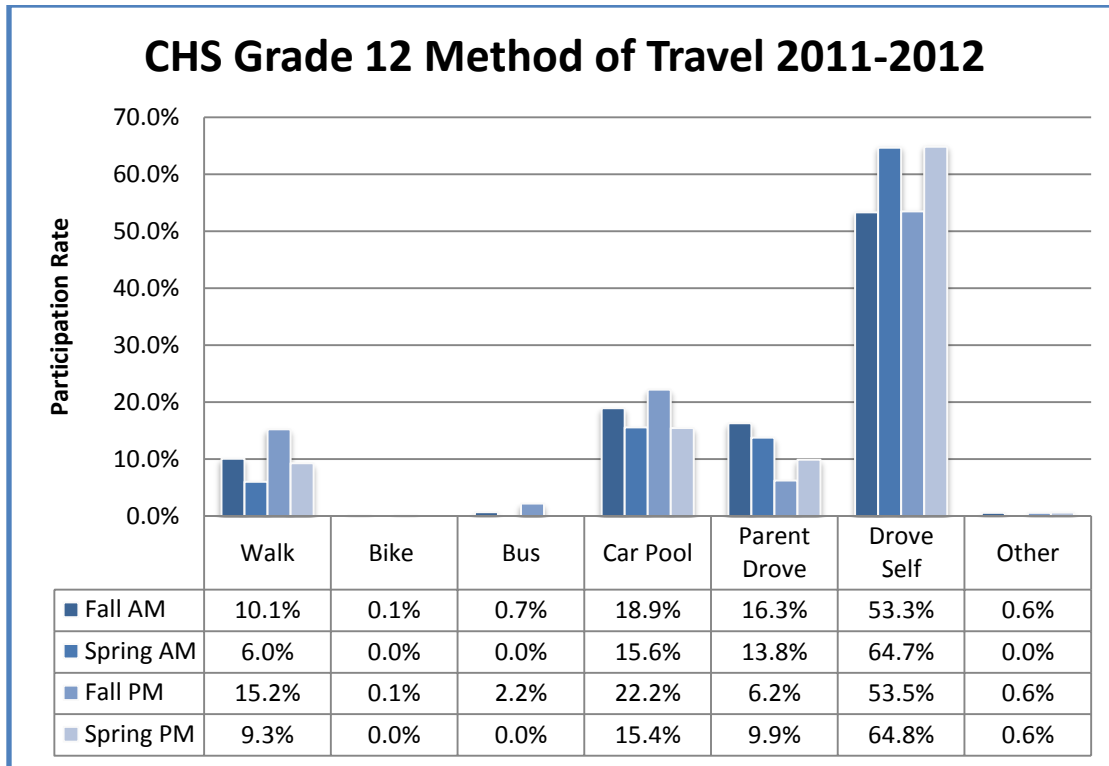


CHS Grade 10 Method of Travel 2011-2012



CHS Grade 11 Method of Travel 2011-2012





Bicycle Education Curriculum:

The Bike Safety Specialist of TransOptions developed an in-class off-bike bicycle education program to be taught throughout the School District of the Chathams. The curriculum has been developed to address the different age groups and their ability to comprehend the lesson plan. Because of the age level of high school students, the Bicycle Safety Specialist gave bicycle safety presentations in all of the 9th grade health classes. The presentation consisted of educating freshman on the role of a bicyclist on the road, and provided them insight on the perceptions of bicyclists from a driver's perspective. The lesson was to inform and educate soon-to-be drivers the role of pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers, and how they all have an effect on one another when being operated. It is understood that not every student at Chatham High School is able to ride his/her bicycle to school, however it is very important to teach new drivers what to look out for when sharing the road with cyclists.

Barriers and Constraints:

The Chatham SRTS Committee created a Safe Routes to School email account, as well as a Facebook profile, to solicit information from residents of the community. Both accounts generated a number of responses regarding crosswalks, sidewalks, crossing guards, signage, and maintenance issues that could pose as threats to pedestrians travelling to and from school. Below is a list of the areas of concern that were cited by residents in the community as suggestions to be considered moving forward:

Crosswalk Installation:

- Ramapo Trail and Fairmount Ave
- Fairmount Ave (Multiple locations)
- School Ave and Spring Street

Sidewalk Installation Requests:

- Spring Street
- Longwood Ave
- Lafayette Ave (east of LAS)

Crossing Guard:

- Longwood Ave and Lafayette Ave

Traffic Calming Measures:

- Pedestrian Warning Flashers approaching LAS and CHS
- Pedestrian Crossing signs on Dale Drive
- Reduce speeding and traffic volume on Longwood Ave, Dellwood Ave, Pine Street, and Fairview Ave

A paved path at the southern entrance to Chatham High School was completed in the spring of 2012, linking an off street path from a mid-block location on Longwood Avenue to the rear entrance to the high school.

Two members of the Chatham Safe Routes to School Team, Janet Roffina and Catherine Bruzzese, volunteered to walk around Lafayette Avenue School and take pictures and record observations that could potentially pose as threats to students walking or biking to/from school. Though the work completed addresses the barriers and constraints that LAS faces, it is important to note that LAS and CHS share the same campus. Most findings can be applied to both schools. Below are sample photographs from the report:



Photos: Corner of Fairview Ave and Lafayette Ave facing Watchung Ave (Left); Facing towards LAS at Fairview Ave and Lafayette Ave, well-worn footpath is noticeable on the left side of the street (Right).



Photos: A well-worn footpath facing LAS at the corner of Fairview Ave and Lafayette Ave. A sidewalk is located across the street from Southern Boulevard to Watchung Ave, there is an evident need for a sidewalk on the East side of the street (Left); A well-worn footpath at the intersection of Watchung Ave and Lafayette Ave (Right)



Photos: A well-worn footpath West of CHS and LAS on Lafayette Ave. (Left and Center); LAS and CHS students utilize Lafayette to walk and Bike to school, however there it only a sidewalk present on the West side of Lafayette Ave, and CHS and LAS are on the East side of Lafayette Ave (Right)

The SRTS Committee also conducted a survey of auto-related accidents that had occurred from 2009 – 2011, focusing on the active commuting times for schools (7:15AM – 8:55AM and 2:02PM – 3:25PM). The results showed that there were a total of 61 accidents that had occurred within a .75 Mi. radius of Chatham Township schools (Southern Boulevard, Chatham High School and Lafayette Avenue School). There was a subtotal of 46 accidents within the .75 Mi. radius of Chatham High School (CHS) and Lafayette School (LAS), where 9 of them occurred directly in front of the school(s). 12 more had

occurred on Lafayette Avenue, and there were 25 other accidents occurring on neighboring streets within .75 Mi. from CHS and LAS.

Next Steps:

This was the first year of having a successful Safe Routes to School program in Chatham Township. Chatham High School, as well as Chatham Township, will continue to promote and encourage students travelling to and from school to do so by means of active transportation. Those students that reside greater than 2 miles from the school are eligible for bus service, and are encouraged to utilize those services.

TransOptions hopes to host bicycle and pedestrian education classes at Chatham High School in the upcoming 2012-2013 school year. TransOptions also hopes to work with the Chatham SRTS Committee, Chatham High School and the Chatham Township Police to establish Walk and Bike to school days for the upcoming school year. Establishing dates for these events before the school year begins will facilitate in the encouragement and communication to parents and enable those to participate.

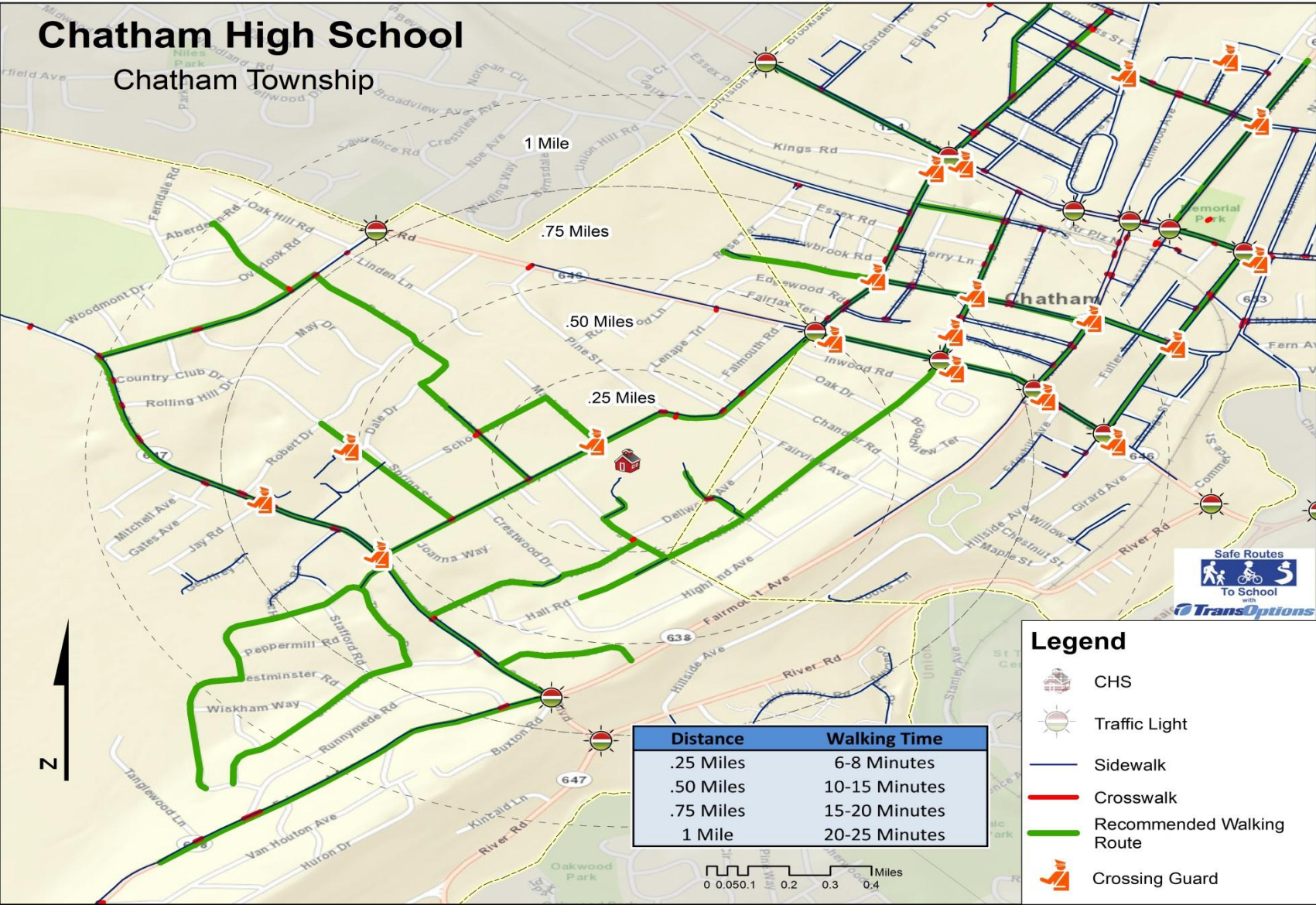
Chatham High School would like to acquire sources of funding for continued promotional items and other encouragement and educational materials to build on the success of the program to date.

Proposed Actions:

Education Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost
Pedestrian Safety Classes	TMA	Ongoing	Low
Bicycle Safety Classes	TMA	Ongoing	Low
Printing of Pedestrian Safety Documents for Parents	School/TMA	Ongoing	Low
Encouragement Actions			
Establish relationship with local sponsors	Chatham SRTS Committee	Ongoing	Low
Establish Walk and Bike to School dates for 2012-2013 School Year	School/Board of Education/Township Police/TMA	Fall 2012	Low
Register for International Walk to School Day	School/TMA	By October 3 rd	Low
Enforcement Actions			
Speed Enforcement	Chatham Township Police	Ongoing	Low
Yield to Pedestrians at crosswalks	Chatham Township Police	Ongoing	Low
Engineering Actions			
Installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signage	Municipality	?	High

Walkability/Bikeability Audit	School/TMA	2012-2013 School Year	Low
Evaluation Actions			
Student Travel Tally	School/TMA	Fall 2012	Low
Parent Survey	School/TMA	Fall 2012	Low

Map of School



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