



2012

Safe Routes to School Travel Plan



Chatham Middle School

480 Main Street

Chatham, NJ 07928

Grades: 6 - 8

Contents

Intro:	3
Objectives of the Travel Plan:	3
Current School Policy:	3
Efforts to Date: Education and Encouragement	3
Proximity Analysis:	3
Parent Survey:	4
Travel Tallies:	6
Bicycle Education Curriculum:	10
Barriers and Constraints:	10
Next Steps:	11
Proposed Actions:	11
Map of School	13

Intro:

Chatham Borough is located in southwest Morris County and has an area of 2.4 square miles. Chatham Middle School is located on Main Street that has a 35 MPH posted speed limit. During morning and afternoon school hours, the speed limit is reduced in the school zone to 25 MPH. Main Street is a State road (NJ 124), and serves as a collector road that feeds traffic to NJ 24 and NJ 78. Most of the Borough has sidewalks present in the community, however traffic volume is high in many areas and the Borough has a vibrant economic center and transit station that are popular destinations for motorists. 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 Middle 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.

Current School Policy:

Walking and bicycling are greatly encouraged, not only within Chatham Middle 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 intersection of Main Street and Lafayette Avenue, to assist students crossing Main Street (NJ 124). Currently, students whom reside more than 2 miles from their school are eligible for bus transportation.

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

Community Profile: Chatham Borough
Population: 8,962 (2010 Census)
Area: 2.425 SQ. Mi. (2.373 Land, 0.052 Water)
Police: Chatham Borough Police Department

Working Members:

Ms. Carrie Malanga– SRTS Representative, CMS PTO Parent

Ms. Kathy Abbott – Chatham Township Committeewoman, CMS PTO Parent

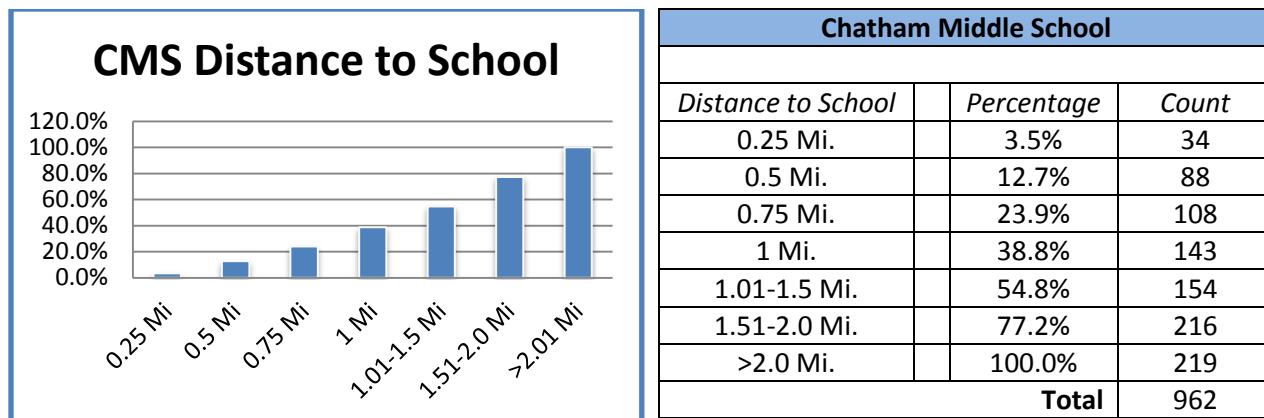
Ms. Carole Ethridge –CMS PTO President

Ms. Kelly Bray – PE Teacher and liaison to PTO

Ms. Denise Capuano – PTO Cafeteria Committee, Liaison to PE Teachers

Mr. Robert Accardi - Principal

walking or biking to and from school, solely regarding distance that they live from their respective school.

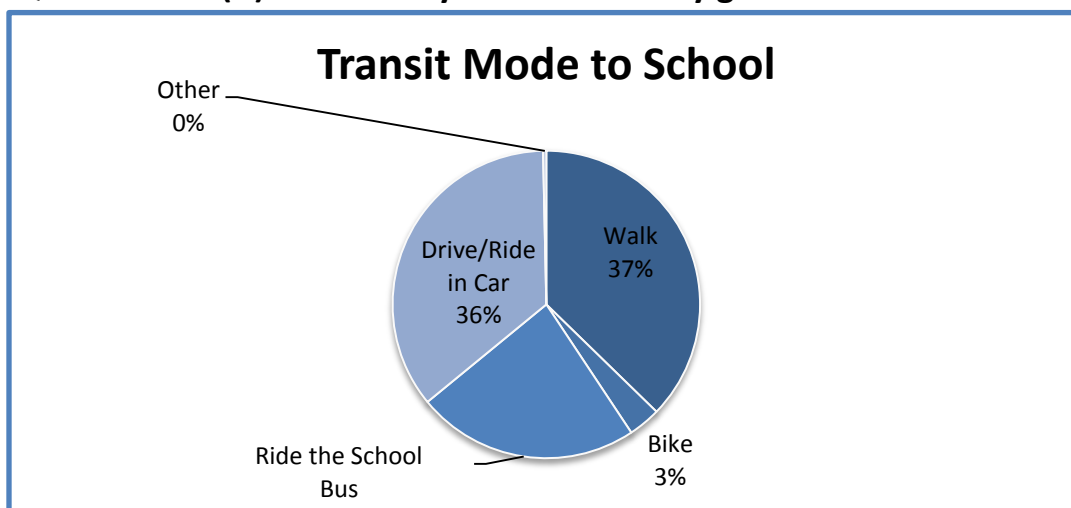


This data enabled the Chatham Safe Routes to School Team to estimate the number of students that would be able to walk or bike to school. This also assisted in creating walking routes, as well as identifying the target enforcement areas and locations where infrastructure improvements would be necessary. 38.8% or 373 of the students at Chatham Middle School reside within a 1 mile radius.

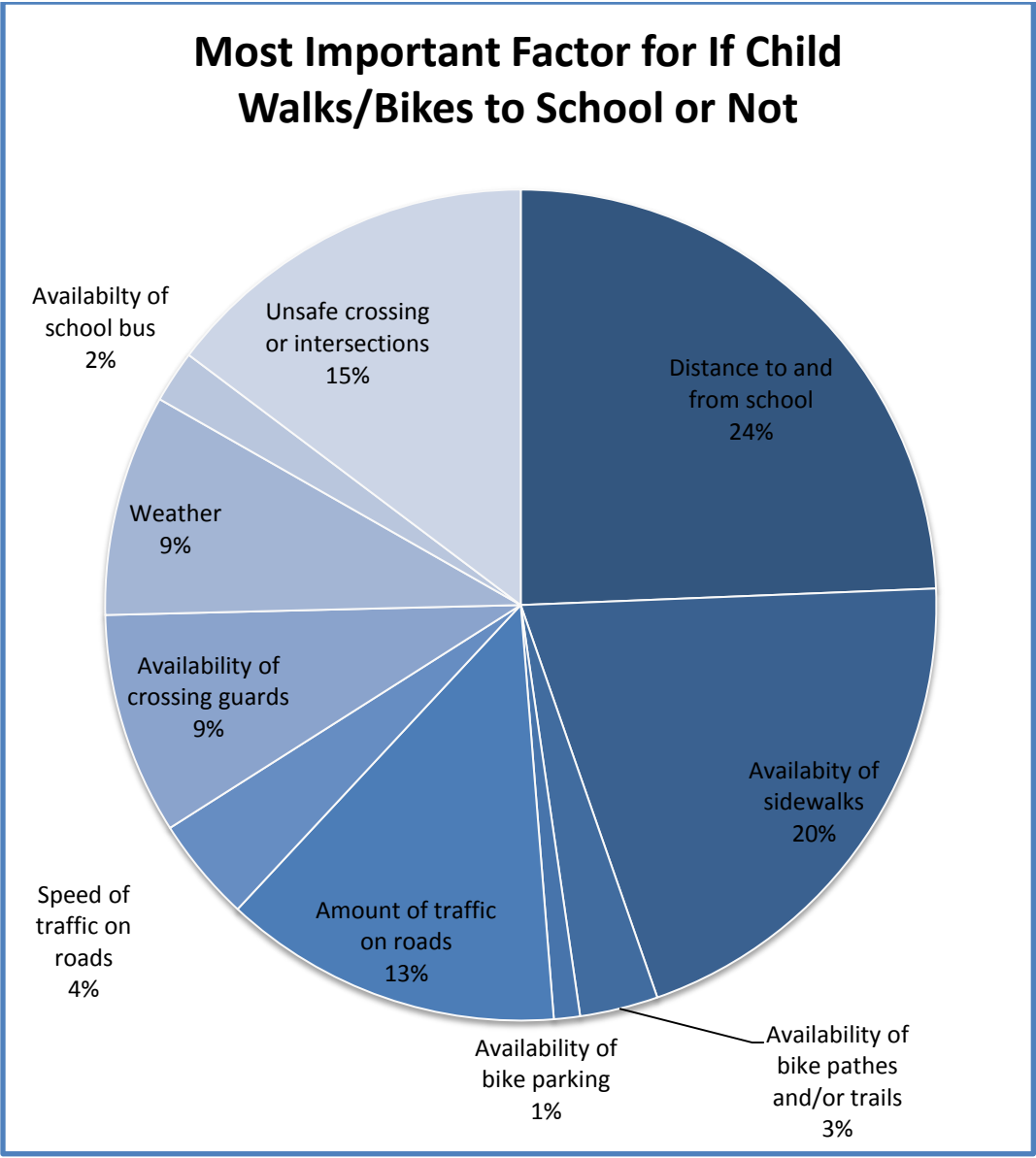
Parent Survey:

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:

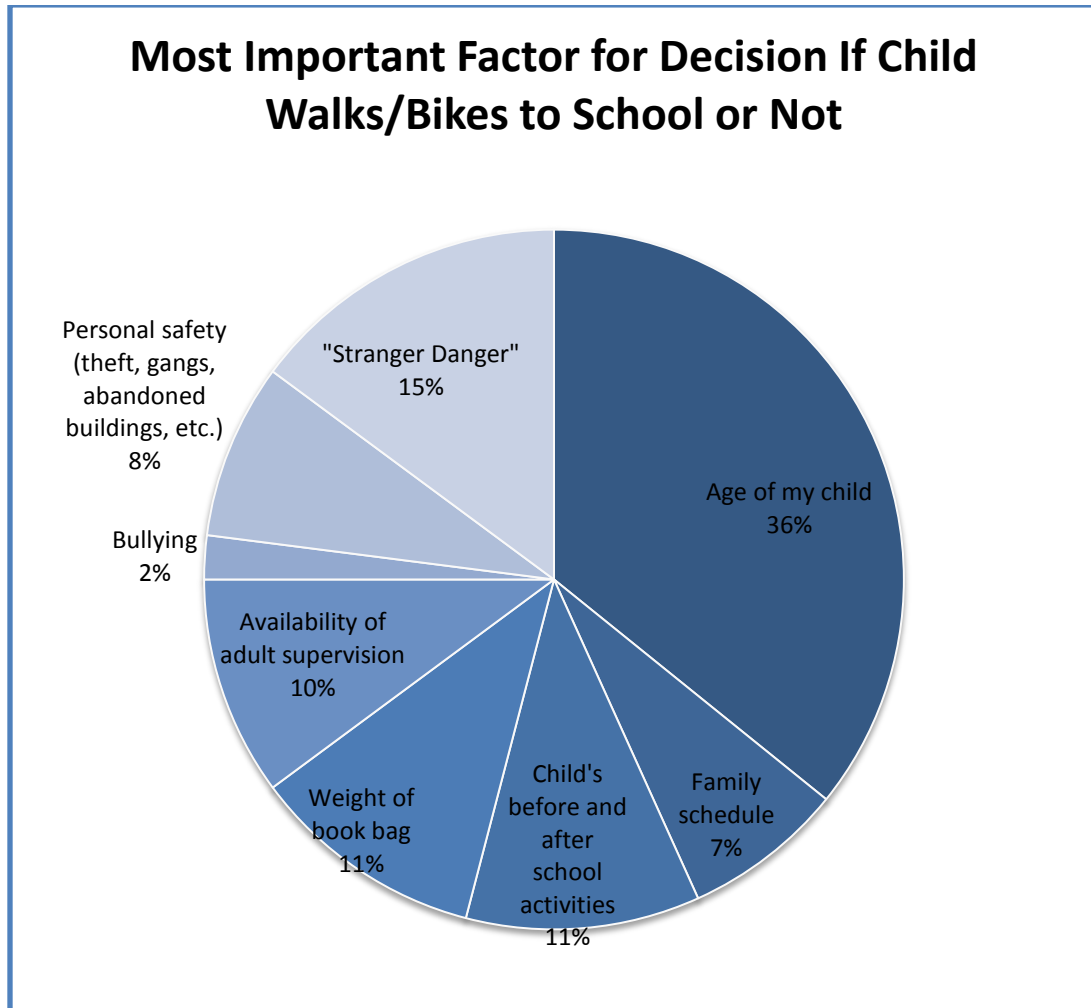
Question 10: (A) How does your child usually get to and from school?



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:

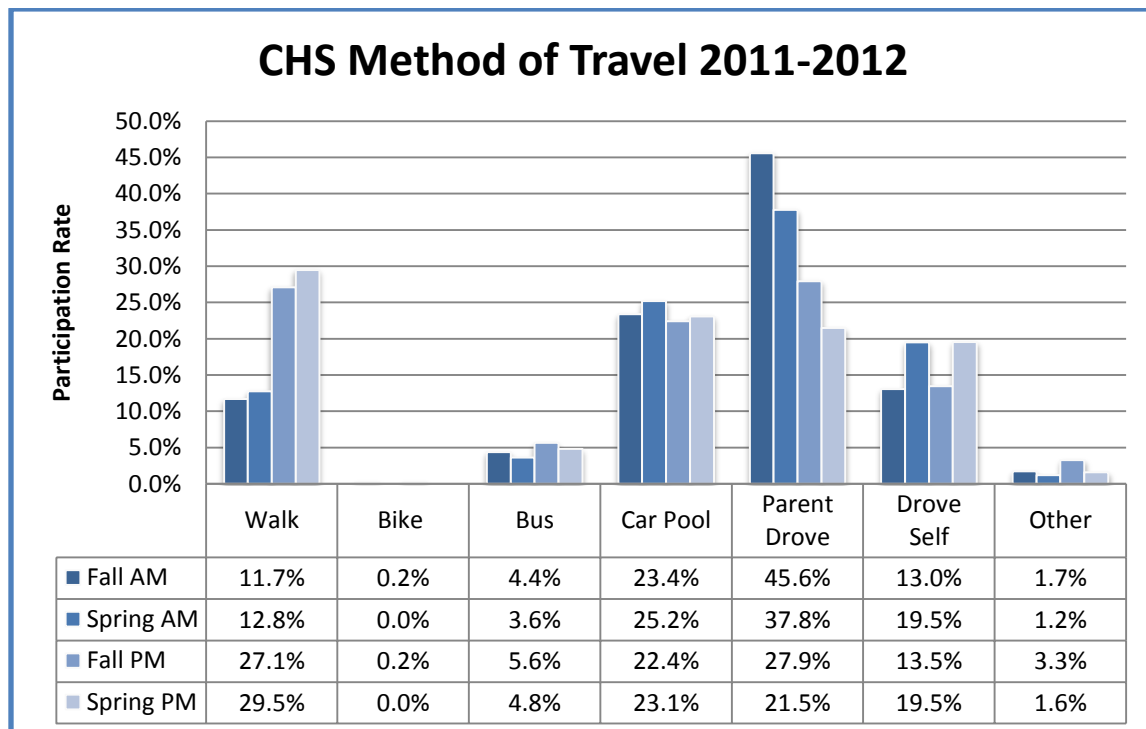
A Student Travel Tally was conducted in the fall of 2011 to form as a baseline snapshot of the student's travel mode to and from school. The tally was created by TransOptions based off of the SRTS National Partnership Tally. The tally is a simple "show-of-hands" collection method where the teacher during 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.).

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 November 15th, 2011 to November 17th, 2011, 526 students had walked to school (20.7%), 22 had biked (0.9%), 641 had taken

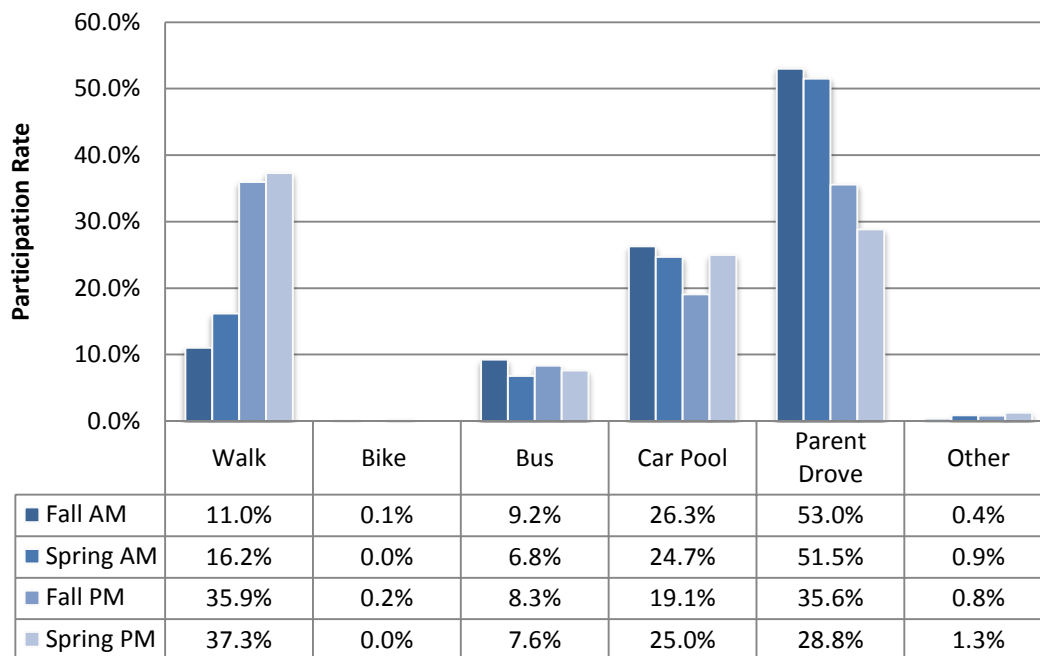
the bus (25.3%), 271 carpooled with other students (10.7%), 1076 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (42.4%), and 1 arrived to school via other means (0.001%). In the PM, 994 students had walked home from school (39.3%), 22 had biked (0.9%), 796 had taken the bus (31.5%), 172 carpooled with other students (6.8%), 540 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (21.3%), and 7 arrived home via other means (.03%).

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 and Bike to School Week, which were posted on YouTube, and publicized throughout the school district.

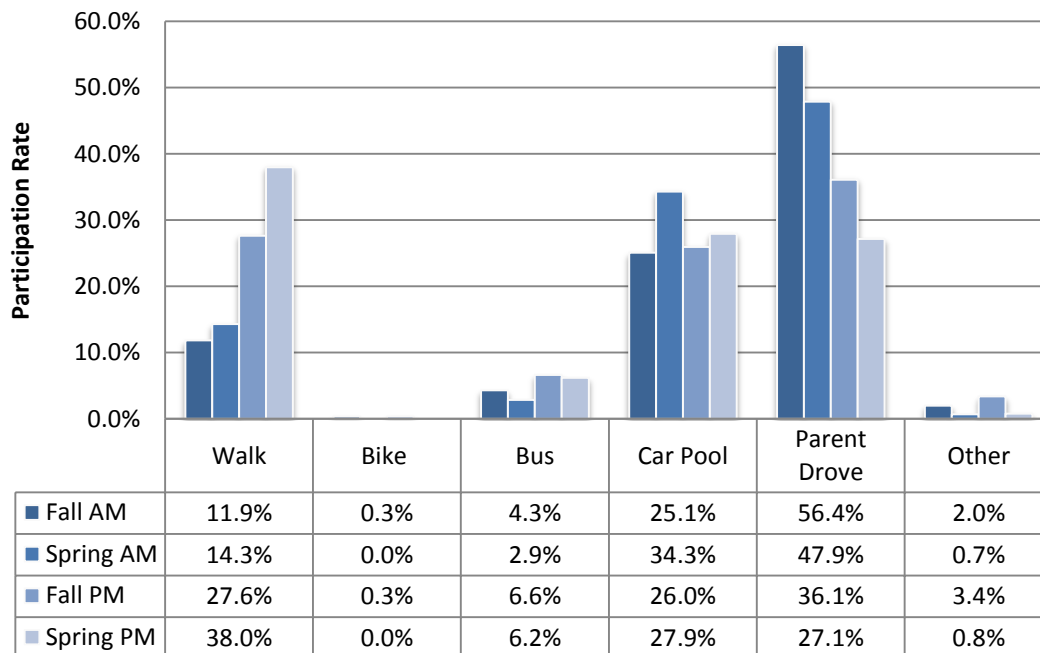
The Student Travel Tally was conducted again during a marketed “Walk to School Week” sponsored by TransOptions. Parents and teachers were encouraged to promote the event to their children and students in the weeks prior to the event. In the AM, from April 24th, 2012 through April 26th, 2012, 760 students had walked to school (32.6% or a 44.4% increase), 15 had biked (0.6% or a 31.8% decrease), 625 had taken the bus (26.8% or a 2.5% decrease), 194 carpooled with other students (8.3% or a 28.4% decrease), 732 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (31.4% or a 31.9% decrease), and 2 arrived to school via other means (0.1% or a 100% increase). In the PM, 969 students had walked home from school (43.5% or a 2.5% decrease), 15 had biked (0.7% or a 31.8% decrease), 640 had taken the bus (28.7% or a 19.6% decrease), 149 carpooled with other students (6.7% or a 13.4% decrease), 449 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (20.2% or a 16.9% decrease), and 5 arrived home via other means (0.2% or a 28.6% decrease). The findings of the travel tally are represented below:



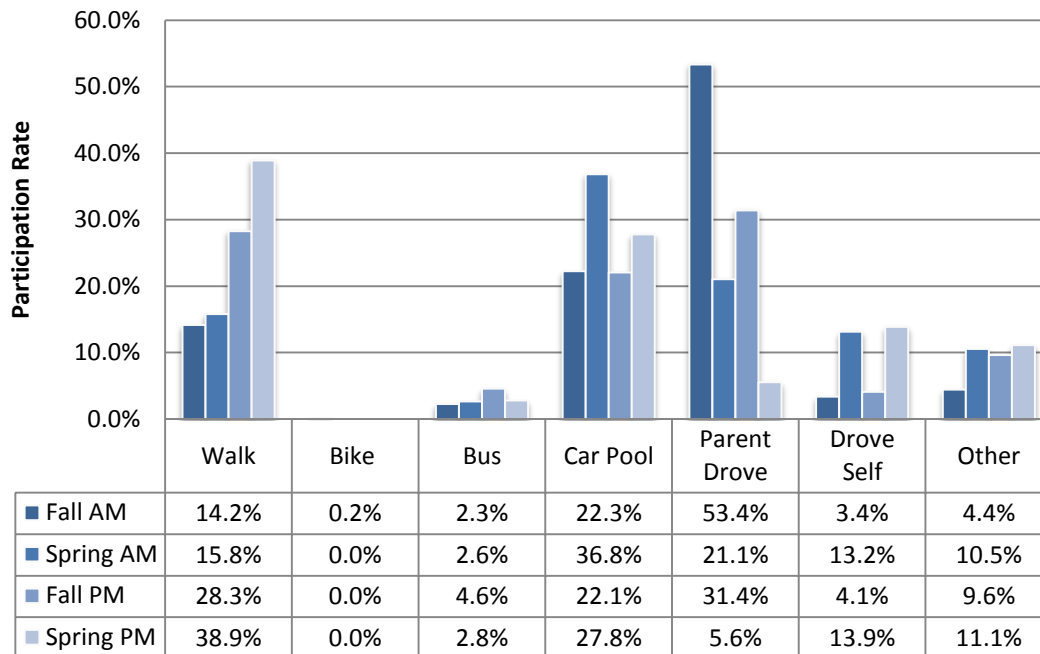
CHS Grade 9 Method of Travel 2011-2012



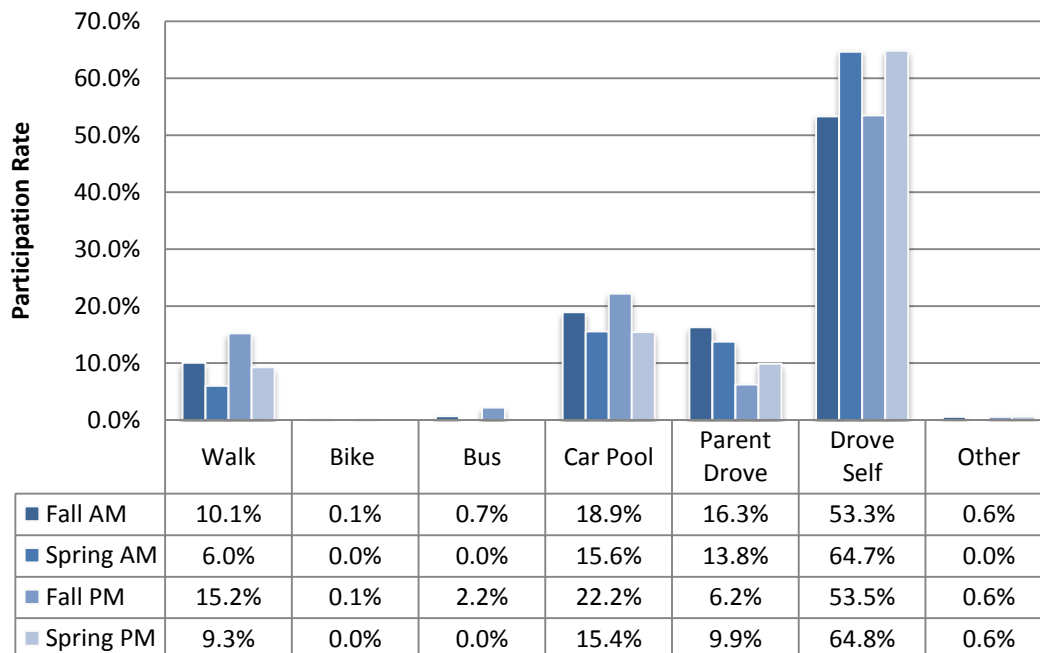
CHS Grade 10 Method of Travel 2011-2012



CHS Grade 11 Method of Travel 2011-2012



CHS Grade 12 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. The program is designed to provide the following educational lessons for the various grade levels:

- Grades 7-8 – One Classroom Lesson, One Gymnasium Lesson
 - Encourage students to want to bicycle more.
 - Importance of the helmet and take home material for parents to learn how to properly fit a helmet.
 - Educate the students about sharing the road and how to look out for cars and other hazards, as well as introducing the concept that a bicycle is considered a car and must follow all of the traffic laws.
 - Hands-on education on how to fix a flat tire, components of a bicycle, and how gearing works.

TransOptions worked with the Physical Education (PE) teachers at each of the six public schools in Chatham to train them in the bicycle curriculum. Training sessions were coordinated with each of the schools, and instructions were provided to the PE teachers on how to conduct the lesson. This was an educational experience for TransOptions, and provided insight on how to best deliver the message of bicycle safety to students in varying age groups.

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:

- South sidewalk to North sidewalk at Day's Brook Bridge
- From Day's Brook Bridge to bike racks on campus
- Fairmount Ave (Multiple locations)
- School Ave and Spring Street

Sidewalk Installation Requests:

- Kings Road
- Lafayette Ave (east of LAS)
- Bridge over stream for path from Weston Ave to Haas Field gate

Traffic Calming Measures:

- Pedestrian Warning Flashers approaching CMS on NJ 124
- Pedestrian Crossing signs on Lafayette at Watchung Ave and Kings Road
- Reduce speeding on NJ 124

Opportunities:

Chatham Middle School has a number of opportunities that can assist students walking to and from school. A list of opportunities is as follows:

- Crossing Guard present at Kings Road and Lafayette Ave (Added in 2012)
- Crossing Guard at Main Street (NJ 124) and Lafayette Ave
- Sidewalks on almost all of the streets in the Borough
- Dirt path from Weston Ave paper street to rear entrance to CMS
- Gate at Ellers Drive to rear entrance of CMS
- Garden Ave footpath to rear entrance of CMS
- Footpath in woods from Weston Ave paper street to Haas Field back gate



Photos:

Next Steps:

This was the first year of having a successful Safe Routes to School program in Chatham Borough. Chatham Middle School, as well as Chatham Borough, 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.

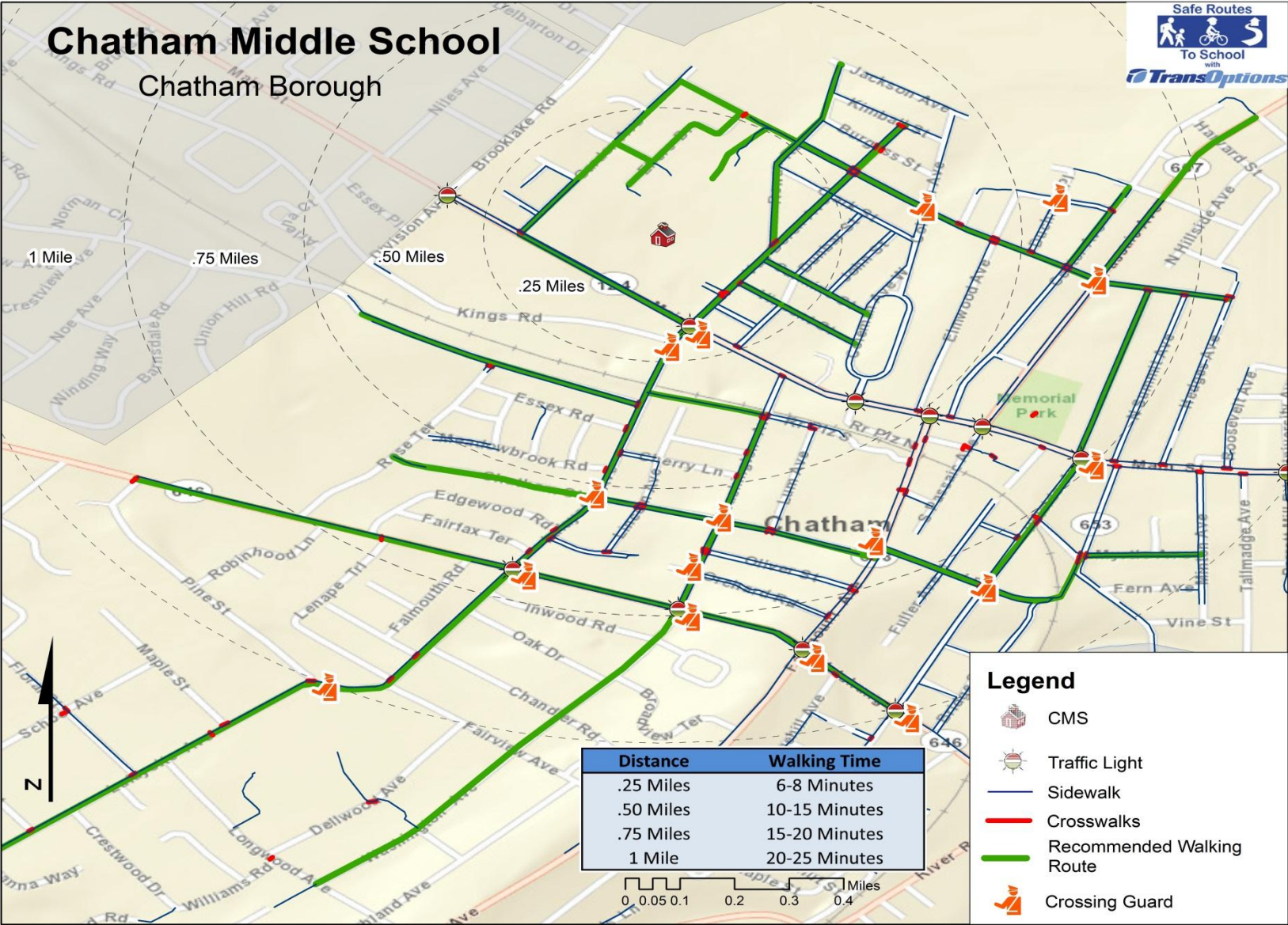
TransOptions hopes to host bicycle and pedestrian education classes at Chatham Middle School in the upcoming 2012-2013 school year. TransOptions also hopes to work with the Chatham SRTS Committee, Chatham Middle School and the Chatham Borough Police to establish Walk and Bike to school days for the upcoming 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 Middle 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/Borough Police/TMA	Fall 2012	Low
Register for International Walk to School Day	School/TMA	By October 3 rd	Low
Enforcement Actions			
Speed Enforcement	Chatham Borough Police	Ongoing	Low
Yield to Pedestrians at crosswalks	Chatham Borough 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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