



**EXPANDING THE
NEW JERSEY
SAFE ROUTES TO
SCHOOL PROGRAM TO
HIGH SCHOOLS**

JUNE 2023

Acknowledgments

The New Jersey Safe Routes Program, supported by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, is a statewide initiative with a mission to partner with schools and communities to prioritize and implement opportunities for people to walk, bike, or travel by other wheeled devices. By focusing on improvements to support active travel by youth, we can create safe, healthy, equitable, and appealing conditions for all.

The New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center assists public officials, transportation and health professionals, and the general public in creating safer and more accessible walking and bicycling environments for children in New Jersey through education, training, and research.

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Executive Summary

Programming Overview:

- Non-infrastructure SRTS activities include three types of programs: safety education, pedestrian and/or bicycle encouragement events, and planning and policy activities.
- Educational lessons for high school students must be written to focus much more strongly on law, policy, and real-life experience and developed to fit a variety of opportunities and time constraints.

Funding Overview and Issues:

- Expanding to high schools will increase the number of students served by the statewide SRTS program by over 400,000 additional students.
- Additional TMA staff will be needed to serve the increased demand.

Infrastructure Needs and SRTS Grants Overview:

- Reimbursement grants may need to expand from within 2 miles of a K-8 school to within 2.5 miles of an eligible high school.
- Decisions will have to be made on how grant applications from high schools will be rated compared to those from elementary and middle schools and whether applications should prioritize serving certain age groups or improving locations with safety challenges.

Policy Overview:

- Current model policies are already directed to the entire school district; however, there is an opportunity to update and be more specific toward the needs of high school students.
- Considerations need to be explored for providing or improving facilities for high school students traveling by foot, bike, or other wheeled devices.

School Travel Plans Overview:

- More active inclusion of older students must be a part of the School Travel Plan process.
- Development of School Travel Plans should be prioritized in equity emphasis areas.
- District-wide School Travel Plans are an option to include more schools.

New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program Overview:

- The NJ Safe Routes Recognition program will need to be updated to include new accomplishments that focus on high school students.

Data Collection Overview:

- With the discontinuation of the National Data System, new options for data collection methods that are inclusive for high schools need to be investigated



- The current Student Arrival and Departure Tally data collection system does not work for high schools.

Opportunities for Expanding SRTS programming to High Schools:

- TMA Experience
 - * TMAs already have many contacts and can leverage existing partners to create new relationships with high school communities.
 - * Some NJ TMAs already have experience working with high schools and high school students.
- Existing Programs that Scale Up
 - * Bicycle Education - TMAs are already capable of teaching more higher-level bicycle education programs as they are all already required to have a League of American Bicyclist Certified Instructor (LCI) on staff.
 - * School Travel Plans - High school students will be able to take a much more active role in School Travel Plan development and can lead activities.

New Avenues for Exploration or Expansion:

- Drivers Education
 - * NJ Safe Routes Resource Center staff has continued to work with partners at both the NJ Bikes and Walks Coalition and SHAPE NJ to positively influence Driver Education curriculum.

- Transit Integration
 - * To help encourage more sustainable transportation state-wide, public transit training presentations that work with and are part of bicycle and pedestrian safety presentations or lessons can be created.
- Micromobility
 - * Lessons on micromobility safety could help to ensure that students have the proper knowledge related to laws, skills, and experience that will allow them to operate these devices effectively.
- Extracurricular Clubs
 - * Many extracurricular clubs offer opportunities for educational lessons, work on School Travel Plans, or work with students on other innovative Safe Routes to School projects.
- Youth Councils
 - * Students in leadership roles within their community are well positioned work on expanding and institutionalizing a local SRTS program.
- Career Exploration
 - * Career exploration programs also offer an opportunity for Safe Routes to School Coordinators to gain access to high schools and to work directly with high school students.



Introduction

The federally funded Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program began with the implementation of the federal SAFETEA-LU transportation bill in 2005. Until the passing of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), in late 2021, national guidance focused on implementing projects and programs to benefit children in grades K-8. If high school students or other community members benefited from the projects or programs, it was an added benefit but not the priority. With the passing of the BIL, the needs of high schools and high school students are being explicitly considered in SRTS projects, programs, and infrastructure funding. With this broadened mission, many of the core aspects of the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Program should be modified or updated to ensure continued excellence.

The SRTS program is a federal, state, and local effort that creates safer and more appealing conditions for walking, bicycling, and using other wheeled active transportation devices as a healthy part of everyday life, particularly on the trip to and from school. SRTS projects can involve physical infrastructure improvements to the environment as well as non-infrastructure encouragement and educational programs to promote more walking and wheeling in and around school communities.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) supports infrastructure and non-infrastructure SRTS projects and programs with funds provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). NJDOT provides direct funding to

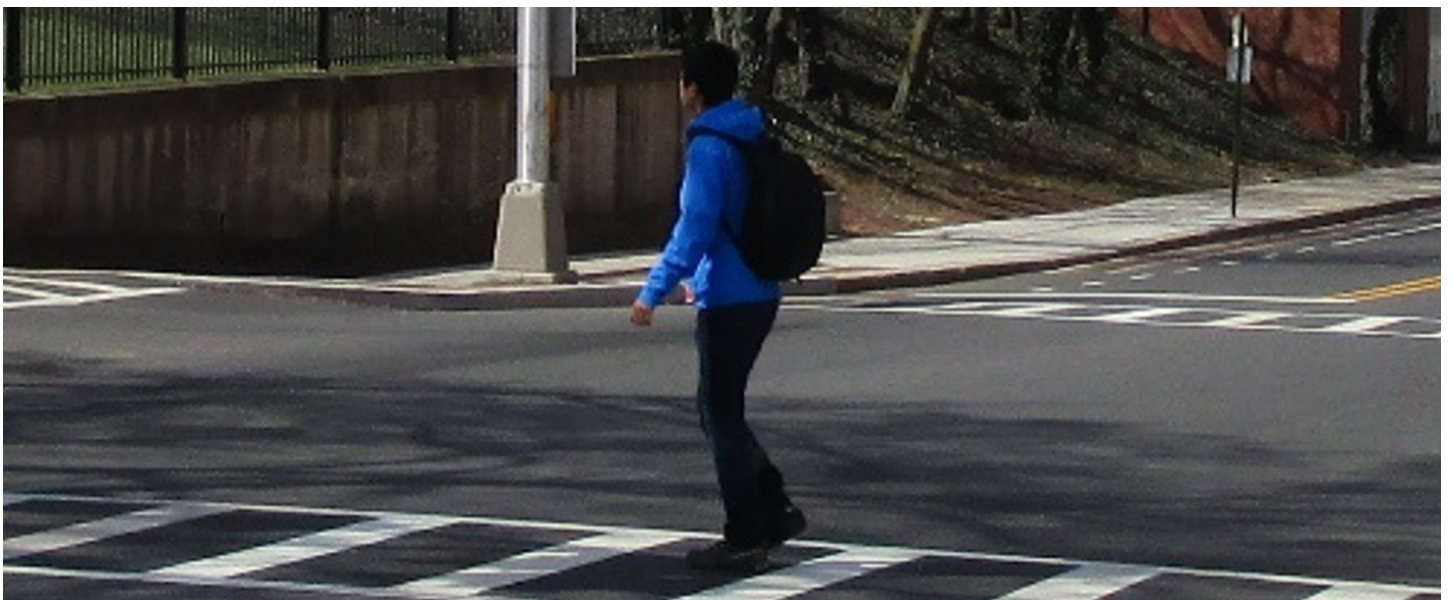
schools and communities to improve walking and bicycling conditions through the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant Program. NJDOT funds non-infrastructure SRTS program technical assistance through the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center (SRRC) and the state's eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs).

See Appendix A for more information on the history and background of the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Program.

National Policy Changes

In October 2021, Section 11119 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act updated the structure of the SRTS Program and amended it to extend the program through 12th grade, enabling and encouraging high school students to walk and bike to school safely. As a result, for the first time, funds for Safe Routes to School programs, both infrastructure and non-infrastructure, may be used to benefit high schools and high school students (Lambert, 2021).

The TA Set-Aside requirements within the IIJA took effect on October 1, 2021, and apply to all funding obligated on or after that date, whether carryover or new. The new March 30, 2022, Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Implementation Guidance as Revised by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act replaces the May 13, 2016, Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Implementation Guidance.



Challenges With Expanding SRTS Programming To High Schools

In preparation for this update to the SRTS program, NJ Safe Routes Resource Center staff held several meetings with New Jersey Transportation Management Association (TMA) SRTS Coordinators to get feedback on opportunities and discuss concerns about expanding SRTS programming to high schools. In addition, staff also participated in multiple national SRTS Coordinator meetings to discuss the topic and to identify other statewide approaches being pursued. The following is a synthesis of those conversations separated into themes.

Programming Overview:

- Non-infrastructure SRTS activities include three types of programs: safety education, pedestrian and/or bicycle encouragement events, and planning and policy activities.
- Educational lessons for high school students must be written to focus much more strongly on law, policy, and real-life experience and developed to fit a variety of opportunities and time constraints.

Programming Analysis:

Current SRTS programming is described within three categories: safety education, pedestrian and/or bicycle encouragement events, and planning and policy activities. While components from each category are expected to remain important when expanding SRTS programming to high schools, none of the current programming used for SRTS was developed for use with older students. High school students should be engaged as stakeholders and leaders throughout SRTS program processes. New lessons and activities will need to be developed for high school students. Genuine involvement in developing these projects, instead of passive inclusion, will provide a richer experience.

Educational lessons for high school students must have a much different focus but remain engaging. To be meaningful to high school students, lessons must focus much more strongly on law, policy, and real-life experience. Lessons must be developed to fit a variety of opportunities and time constraints. Lecture-style presentations are of less value for high school students while more immersive and hands-on experiences will be of greater value.

The hallmark of pedestrian and bicycle encouragement events is that they reinforce lessons by encouraging

students to actively practice and refine their skills in a controlled and fun environment. As students age, traditional encouragement events such as Walk to School Day may not be applicable or age appropriate. High school students will not be satisfied with a closed course. Pedestrian and bicycle encouragement events for older students must be updated and modified to include lessons similar to those used with adults, such as those focused on law, policy, and practicing road skills in real-life situations.

Funding Overview and Issues:

- Expanding to high schools will increase the number of students served by the statewide SRTS program by over 400,000 additional students.
- Additional TMA staff will be needed to serve the increased demand.

Funding Analysis:

Under current funding guidelines that limit SRTS services to students within grades K-8, SRTS programs have remained in high demand throughout the state. From the beginning of the program, NJDOT has been committed to ensuring that SRTS is a program for everyone by encouraging outreach to and participation of underserved or disadvantaged communities. When demand has exceeded program availability, TMA Coordinators have helped prioritize their efforts by focusing first on underserved communities where programs are most needed.

Balancing the current high demand for K-8 student-focused programming will become further complicated as over 400,000 additional public, private, and charter high school students are added to the statewide SRTS program. To effectively include high school students in SRTS programming statewide, many TMAs will need additional staff to help cover this increased demand. TMA staff will need additional time to make new contacts and form partnerships within high schools to launch these new programs. Current TMA SRTS staff are experienced with educating younger students, but working with elementary school-age students differs significantly from working with high school-aged students. There may also be a need for additional staff with experience working with older students. Regardless of future funding levels, demand for SRTS programming and services is expected to remain high.

TMA staff will continue to need guidance from NJDOT to determine the level of effort required and how to prioritize competing demands.

Infrastructure Needs and SRTS Grants Overview:

- Reimbursement grants may need to expand from within 2 miles of a K-8 school to within 2.5 miles of eligible high schools.
- Decisions will have to be made on how grant applications from high schools will be rated compared to those from elementary and middle schools and whether applications should prioritize serving certain age groups or improving locations with safety challenges.

Infrastructure Needs and SRTS Grants Analysis:

Under the current funding model, infrastructure grant funding for the SRTS Program is offered through the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program. NJDOT administers this federally funded program in partnership with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO). Reimbursement-based grants may be used for infrastructure (construction) projects within 2 miles of a K-8 school, which encourage and enable students to walk and bike to that school safely. Schools with grades extending beyond grade 8, but including any of grades K-8, are eligible to receive funding for infrastructure improvements. Schools benefiting from the program may be public, private, or charter, as long as the project is within the public right-of-way. Municipalities, counties, schools, and school districts are all eligible to apply. If the applicant is a municipality or county, the school district involved must demonstrate their support for the project through the submission of a letter signed by the executive of the school board.

In New Jersey, applications are given extra consideration if the proposed project is

- an element of a completed School Travel Plan,
- located within a Schools Development Authority (SDA) District,
- located within an Opportunity Zone or Targeted Urban Municipality (TUMS),

- in a community that has demonstrated a commitment to walking and bicycling by achieving Bronze level or higher ranking in the NJ Safe Routes Recognition Program,
- in a school district with a written policy supporting walking and bicycling to school,
- in a municipality with an adopted Complete Streets Policy,
- located near a railroad crossing or highway ramp crossing,
- connected to an existing local or regional bicycle or pedestrian network,
- or if the applicant has a demonstrated commitment to and a history of implementing projects to improve conditions for bicycling and walking.

Including high schools in the SRTS infrastructure grant program will require some changes. Some of these will be obvious but others will require consideration. While program language will need to be amended to include projects near high schools, adjustments should also be made to the 2-mile proximity regulation. For students in grades 9-12, New Jersey law stipulates that students living less than 2.5 miles from their school are not entitled to free transportation. Therefore, a project located within 2.5 miles of a high school would still be a location where students would be expected to walk. A decision would have to be made whether the 2.5-mile limit will be increased for all applications or just those for high schools.

The SRTS infrastructure grant program has been consistently popular, with demand for grants outpacing available funding during each funding round. Demand is expected to increase with expanded eligibility to projects serving high schools. An increase in available funding for future rounds of SRTS infrastructure grants may help alleviate some increased demand, but overall demand will likely continue to outpace available funding. Including high school-focused projects in the SRTS infrastructure grant funding program will require grant application scoring criteria changes. Decisions will have to be made on how to amplify equity and how applications from high schools will be rated. For example, grant application scoring could be modified to prioritize certain age groups or locations with safety challenges, especial within equity emphasis areas.

Policy Overview:

- Current model policies are already directed to the entire school district; however, there is an opportunity to update and be more specific toward the needs of high school students.
- Considerations need to be explored for providing or improving facilities for high school students traveling by foot, bike, or other wheeled devices.

Policy Analysis:

Policy templates and support materials have been developed to aid schools and school districts in creating and adopting school policies that encourage walking and bicycling to school. These model policies reflect the needs of K-8 schools and would need to be modified for use by high schools. High schools often pull students from an entire municipality or multiple municipalities in regional districts. High school students are also much more capable of, and often expected to, walk or ride longer distances than younger children. And unlike K-8 students, some high schoolers will drive to school if they have the financial means to do so. The needs of high schools and high school students will have to be explored and assessed before developing updated model transportation policies.

School Travel Plans Overview:

- More active inclusion of older students must be a part of the School Travel Plan process.
- Development of School Travel Plans should be prioritized in equity emphasis areas.
- District-wide School Travel Plans are an option to include more schools.

School Travel Plans Analysis:

Completing School Travel Plans for individual schools has been part of the NJ Safe Routes to School Program since the start of the statewide initiative. The primary output of a School Travel Plan is a report that outlines a community's short- and long-term goals for enabling students to engage in active transportation as they travel to and from school. The NJ Safe Routes Resource Center developed a successful and effective model for developing school travel plans for individual schools and for completing school travel plans that encompass all of the schools within larger school districts. District School Travel Plans may take longer to complete but result in a more comprehensive approach. High schools in regional school districts also serve students from multiple municipalities, greatly expanding the area served by one school district. Additionally, the transportation needs of



students in high schools may be quite different from those of the K-8 students that the current model policy was developed to reflect.

It is anticipated that high school students will be much more active in developing School Travel Plans than younger students. In addition to being participants in the process, high school students should be included in leadership roles related to performing background research, cataloging walk and bike issues and opportunities, and developing potential solutions and outcomes. Best practices for more active inclusion of older students must be explored, including opportunities to add urban planning and engineering lessons to college prep and/or other career exploration opportunities. A continuing emphasis should be placed on prioritizing the development of School Travel Plans in equity emphasis areas, as the students in these areas are less likely to walk, bike, or take public transportation.

New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program Overview:

- The NJ Safe Routes Recognition program will need to be updated to include new accomplishments that focus on high school students.

New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program Analysis:

The New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program will need to be updated to account for high schools. NJDOT recognizes municipalities and schools (public, private, and charter) through this program for their commitment to the Safe Routes to School program. Nominees are asked to apply for recognition at one of four levels: First Step, Bronze, Silver, or Gold. Moving through this tiered program, qualifications for achievement become increasingly challenging as applicants approach Gold, the highest tier. While the municipal achievements are less affected, school recognition achievements were developed based on typical activities associated with K-8 schools. Achievements are based upon completing various educational and encouragement programs, developing supportive policies, and undertaking planning efforts. While completing Walk and Bike to School Days or bicycle rodeos may be acceptable achievements for K-8 schools, it is unlikely that many high schools will participate in these events. Modifications must be made to ensure that high schools can achieve recognition through events that high school students will find both engaging and rewarding.



Data Collection Overview:

- With the discontinuation of the National Data System, new options for data collection methods that are inclusive for high schools need to be investigated.
- The current Student Arrival and Departure Tally data collection system does not work for high schools.

Data Collection Analysis:

With the program's expansion to high schools, evaluation will remain a critical component of the NJ Safe Routes to School program. The Student Arrival and Departure Tally has been an important tool since the program began. Working with the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center and the TMAs, schools and school districts typically ask teachers to complete the Arrival and Departure Tally during class to determine what mode of transportation students use. In addition, completion of these tallies was a requirement for the 2016 and 2018 grant rounds for schools applying for Safe Routes to School infrastructure grants through NJDOT.

From the beginning of its use, New Jersey has relied on the National Center for Safe Routes to School data system to implement Student Arrival and Departure tallies statewide. Through this system, schools and municipalities can implement a tally collection process using simple-to-use, standardized paper (PDF) forms. These standardized paper tally forms are then entered into the National Center data system, which stores the data and allows the instant generation of useful data reports as soon as the data has been fully entered into the system. To maintain data integrity and to ensure NJDOT has access to all New Jersey data, the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center receives all tallies completed by TMAs and their partners and oversees their tabulation and reporting.

However, the cooperative agreement that supported the National Center for Safe Routes to School data system's operation and user assistance ended on March 31, 2022, but was temporarily extended for another year through financial assistance from other State DOTs. While New Jersey currently retains access to the system, the future of the national data system is unknown. There is a possibility for further extensions, but it is unclear if the system will continue to operate nationally. Additionally, the standardized forms were developed to reflect the arrival and departure travel operations of students in grades K-8,

not high school students. The current system will not work for high school students who use different modes of travel and often lack a traditional homeroom structure that allows for daily data collection.

Finally, evidence suggests that relying on teenagers for self-reported tally data may not be a viable solution. According to one study, adolescents are much more likely to report extreme levels of intentional false responses, posing a serious challenge for the validity of research findings from students in the teenage cohort (Fan et al., 2006). So far, there has been no discussion of updating these forms to include forms of travel available to high school students, including micromobility and the use of personal motor vehicles. Even if access to the National Center data system remains available, it may not be effective for use with high school students. Moving forward, the NJ SRTS Program will need to explore new options for collecting and analyzing data that captures student pedestrian and bicycle safety issues and needs.

In the past, the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center developed and implemented the NJ Safe Routes Parent/Caregiver Survey in English and Spanish to identify the factors parents consider when determining whether or not to allow their child to walk or bike to school. Although response rates have significantly dropped over time, the SRRC has continued to make both the PDF version and the online survey available and tabulates and summarizes results for communities implementing the survey. With high school students generally having more autonomy over their transportation decisions, it is unlikely that the NJ Parent/Caregiver Survey will be useful in understanding the transportation barriers these students face. However, there may be a need and an opportunity to develop and administer, in coordination with the TMAs, a survey targeted directly to high school age students to better understand the transportation opportunities and barriers they face, as well as their opinions and concerns related to non-motorized travel.

Opportunities For Expanding Srts Programming to High Schools

Working with high schools can have positive, long-term impacts beyond enhancing the statewide Safe Routes to School program. If executed properly, TMAs and other local, county, and even state agencies can forge meaningful partnerships with schools, programs or student-led groups to engage in planning efforts. Involving students in the planning process can improve their critical thinking skills and increase their awareness of how different road users navigate space differently and why the elements of traffic safety matter beyond just doing things because it is the law. Meaningful engagement also does more than meet a minimum requirement or provide added items to a student's college application; it can help students become empathetic, involved citizens who could potentially continue to develop and lead similar projects as they become adults. This section outlines some of the opportunities that might be expanded upon to build authentic involvement as we broaden the outreach of the SRTS program to high schools and high school students.

TMA Experience

TMAs already have many contacts and can leverage existing partners to create new relationships with high school communities. Additionally, some NJ TMAs already have experience working with high schools and high school students on non-SRTS-related projects. Some examples include the following:

- EZ Ride uses Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) funds for outreach to high schools.
- Avenues in Motion offers a full-day presentation in high school driver's education classes to discuss pedestrian and bicycle safety laws and practices.
- KMM is working with New Brunswick High School as part of driver's education to have students complete fieldwork toward a Complete Streets-type audit of their community. The project aims for students to experience their communities at a different level and to understand how they can use that information to make better decisions and effect community change.



Existing Programs that Scale Up

Some of the projects and programs that Safe Routes to School Coordinators regularly undertake are well suited for “scaling up” to meet the needs of high school students. Some examples are discussed below.

Bicycle Education

Gaining cycling skills is essential for any rider. On-bike events are an effective teaching tool because they are a break from the classroom and involve physical activity. For high school students, bicycle instruction can be incorporated into course curriculums and become a permanent part of some classes, most likely health, safety, and physical education classes. However, depending on individual teachers’ pedagogies, there can be ways to incorporate the topic into other courses. Furthermore, TMAs are already capable of teaching higher-level adult bicycle education programs as they are all already required to have a League of American Bicyclist Certified Instructor (LCI) on staff. LCIs have access to bicycling instructional materials for all educational levels, the purpose of which is to educate riders on the rules of the road and to make them more confident riders. Among those most relevant to high school students are the following:

- a Smart Cycling course, which teaches the fundamentals of bike safety and riding in traffic,
- Bicycle Friendly Driver Training, which can be taught as part of a driver’s education course, as part of the regular TMA bike safety presentation, or as a standalone subject, and
- a group riding curriculum, which teaches how to safely ride in a group and could serve as a foundation for bike bus programs.

Even if in-class education time is limited at the high school level for TMA staff, these lessons can be modified for use in various situations, including with after-school clubs and at community events.

School Travel Plans

While they will still need guidance from TMA Safe Routes Coordinators and support from school administration and other adults, high school students will be able to take a more active role in School Travel Plan development by leading activities related to background research, cataloging

pedestrian and bicyclist issues and opportunities, and developing potential solutions and outcomes. The creation of a School Travel Plan also offers an excellent opportunity to involve students in the wider planning process, introducing them to municipal engagement and local government operations. Ample opportunities to work with high school students on School Travel Plans are presented through municipal youth engagement programs or extracurricular student groups, including environmental clubs, civic engagement groups, bike clubs, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) clubs, student councils, or Green Teams that are focused on developing plans and implement programs to make their school and local community more sustainable.

New Avenues for Exploration or Expansion

Driver’s Education

Introducing bicycle and pedestrian safety into the driver’s education curriculum can teach future drivers to be mindful of our most vulnerable road users. The New Jersey legislature unanimously passed A4165/S2894 in January 2018. The law requires the state’s driver’s education courses and brochures to emphasize the importance of operating a motor vehicle in a manner that safely shares the roadway with pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, riders of motorized scooters, and other non-motorized vehicles. The law further requires that the curriculum include, but not be limited to, topics such as passing a cyclist on the road, recognizing bicycle lanes, navigating intersections with pedestrians and cyclists, and exiting a vehicle without endangering pedestrians and cyclists. Additionally, the law requires the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to include bicycle and pedestrian safety as part of the written examination required to obtain both a permit and a basic driver’s license (New Jersey Office of Legislative Services, 2022).

Following the passage of A4165/S2894, staff from the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center has continued to work with partners at both the NJ Bikes and Walks Coalition and SHAPE NJ, the professional organization for health education, physical education, recreation, dance education, and athletics, to positively influence driver’s education curriculum. SHAPE NJ maintains a Driver Education Committee with which the Safe Routes Resource Center has developed a working

relationship. Goals should focus on providing resources to educate drivers on road infrastructure that is intended to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and the rules of the road for pedestrians, bicyclists, users of other wheeled devices, and motor vehicle drivers. Particular attention should also be placed on a thorough explanation of several laws that impact pedestrian and bicycle safety, including laws regarding distracted driving, safe passing, anti-idling, e-bikes, e-scooters, and “Stop and Stay Stopped” for pedestrians. These education efforts impact future drivers’ understanding of what they should do when encountering bicyclists and pedestrians.

Transit Integration

High school students are more independent than younger students and will likely have more transportation options. In addition to walking and bicycling more regularly, high school students often take public transit to school or other destinations, especially in urban areas. To help encourage less vehicle traffic and more sustainable transportation state-wide, TMAs can develop public transit training

presentations that work with and are part of bicycle and pedestrian safety presentations or lessons. TMA Coordinators can provide instruction on using the NJ Transit App, which hosts information for all its service lines. Information can be tailored depending on what transit options are locally available.

Micromobility

In general, “micromobility” refers to smaller, lighter, low-speed transportation devices, which can be motorized or human-powered, and can be either shared or privately owned. Examples include bicycles, e-bikes, electric scooters, electric skateboards, and shared bicycles. The rapid growth in popularity of electric cycles and scooters is not just limited to adults. Though increased use of micromobility devices has been documented among all youths, it is expected that with their increased independence, high school students will be much more likely to use these devices to travel to and from school and other locations. Lessons on micromobility safety would ensure that students have proper knowledge related to laws, skills, and experience that will allow them to operate these devices effectively.



Extracurricular Clubs

Working with high school students offers increased opportunities for interaction outside of regular classroom time but still within a school setting. Within high schools, many extracurricular clubs meet regularly and offer opportunities for Safe Routes Coordinators to offer educational lessons, assist with School Travel Plans, or work with students on other innovative Safe Routes to School projects. Examples of common student clubs or organizations that might have a synergy with SRTS include:

- Rotary/Interact clubs
- Political affiliation clubs
- Applied research clubs
- Environmental clubs
- Play 60 clubs
- Biking clubs
- Student councils
- STEM clubs
- Green Teams

Youth Councils

Governor Phil Murphy signed a law creating the state's first Youth Council in 2022, specifying that the state must appoint a 44-member council by January 8, 2023 (Donyea, 2022). The council will be made up of 40 students, ages 15 to 23, who will join four state lawmakers to help advise the government on issues relevant to young people in the state. The council will convene four times per year, and it is part of a more significant effort to get the youth involved in civic engagement and spur their interest in government and the democratic process. While the agenda-setting process for the items the council will be debating is not yet clear, there is a chance there may be an opportunity for students to discuss and advance transportation alternatives and transportation safety.

There are also multiple opportunities to work with youth councils at a much more local level throughout the state. A quick internet search returned immediate results for local youth councils in Atlantic City, East Brunswick, Newark, Paterson, Passaic, Franklin Township, Berkeley Heights Somerset County, Westfield, Trenton, and Montgomery Township. The students who have taken on these leadership roles within their community are well positioned to take on

a lead role in developing a school travel plan, working on an SRTS project, or expanding and institutionalizing a local SRTS program.

Career Exploration

Career exploration programs also offer an opportunity for Safe Routes to School Coordinators to gain access to high schools and to work directly with high school students. While school days are busy and class time is often limited, many schools welcome opportunities for students to meet and work with professionals as a form of career exploration. Safe Routes Coordinators can work with students, explaining how planners, engineers, and advocates work together to shape the communities in which we live. Even a short presentation could be an excellent way to get important feedback on local projects or concerns or to recruit students into broader projects or other standing local groups. Safe Routes to School Regional Coordinators could also work with municipal contacts to help make career exploration positions more formal. As an example, the City of Hampton, Virginia, created two part-time Youth Planner positions for teens, whose responsibility is to oversee the youth component of the city's Comprehensive Master Plan.

Conclusion

This report is a compilation of considerations related to expanding SRTS programming to high schools based upon discussions with NJ TMA SRTS Coordinators and national SRTS Coordinators facing similar tasks. This document is likely an incomplete list. As the SRTS program continues to move forward, there will be new considerations, new opportunities, and new partnerships to be explored.

Safe Routes to School has always been, and will continue to be, a program of inclusion, innovation, and growth. As the program continues to grow and expand, NJDOT, the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center, and the state's TMAs will continue to meet new challenges, whatever they may be, and work toward a safer future for not only bicyclists and pedestrians but all vulnerable roadway users.



Appendix A: Background

The New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center is funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and is currently housed at the Voorhees Transportation Center within the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The Center assists public officials, transportation and health professionals, and the general public with creating a safer and more accessible walking and bicycling environment through primary research, education, and dissemination of information about best practices in policy and design. The Safe Routes Resource Center supports the development of sound policies and procedures, provides education, outreach, technical assistance, and training to Safe Routes to School Regional Coordinators and local champions interested in implementing programs, and assists with program evaluation efforts. Safe Routes Regional Coordinators in each of the state's eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) offer free technical assistance for SRTS educational programs, events, guidance, and resources. TMAs cover the entire state, ensuring that students, parents and schools in communities from all 21 counties have access to a local expert who can assist them with developing or expanding a local SRTS program.

In 2011, NJDOT restructured the SRTS program to provide direct technical assistance from all eight NJ TMAs. Under this program, SRTS non-infrastructure funding is directed through the TMAs with oversight from the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center to provide free services to schools and municipalities, with a focus on outreach efforts in underserved and disadvantaged communities to ensure an equitable distribution of services, support, and guidance.

While infrastructure grants continue to be offered through NJDOT, the non-infrastructure technical assistance has allowed the education and encouragement side of the statewide SRTS program to prosper and grow significantly by removing the burden of managing smaller non-infrastructure grants from schools and municipalities, as well as from NJDOT.

Safe Routes to School Programming in New Jersey

Transportation Management Associations are funded to provide a range of advisory and technical services to schools and communities within their regions. While each TMA takes its own approach towards programming and innovation is encouraged, there are basic services outlined in their work programs. Through the Record of Contact System, the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center tracks TMA activities related to their SRTS work programs through three broad categories: pedestrian and/or bicycle educational events, encouragement events, and planning or policy activities.

Educational events:

Educational programs help ensure that students have the skills to safely and effectively navigate their communities on foot, on bike, or on a scooter. Educational events include many partners and occur at various locations, including in schools, after-school programs, summer camps, and community events. Depending upon the grade level and location of the event, presentations are tailored to ensure lessons are appropriate and can even be modified to account for specific local concerns, including railroad crossings, highway ramps, and busy intersections. Events and programs categorized under the "educational events" category include bike safety lessons, pedestrian safety lessons, community presentations, crossing guard appreciation events, or other educational events that do not fit neatly into these categories.

Encouragement events:

Pedestrian and bicycle encouragement events are similar to educational events in that they also focus on helping to provide students with critical walking and bicycling skills. However, pedestrian and bicycle encouragement events are distinguished because they always involve an "on-foot" or "on-bike" component. While these programs and events may also have a classroom component, each event in this category reinforces lessons by encouraging students to actively practice and refine their skills in a controlled and fun environment. These events can also serve as excellent community-building events that allow parents, teachers, police officers, public officials, and other community members to interact with students in a fun and

constructive way. Events and programs classified under the “encouragement events” category include Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, Walk to School Days, Bike to School Days, Bike Rodeos/Clinics, Mileage Clubs or Contests, or other pedestrian and/or bicycle events that do not fit neatly into these categories.

Planning or Policy Activities:

While education and encouragement are very important, making lasting change within communities often depends on making positive changes through planning and updated policy. In communities where walking and bicycling are limited by old or unfriendly policies, Safe Routes to School Coordinators can work with schools and municipalities to create supportive walking and bicycling policies or to

develop Complete Streets Resolutions that directly impact local infrastructure changes. Additionally, Safe Routes Coordinators work with local communities to develop School Travel Plans that “map out” how to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from school to increase the number of students who walk and bike and to improve safety. These plans identify short-term solutions for immediate action and implementation as well as long-term answers that may require further planning and can be used to complete grant funding applications. Events and programs classified under “Planning or Policy Activities” include Walkability Assessments, Bikability Assessments, School Travel Plans, Supportive Walk/Bike Policies, Complete Streets Resolutions and Policies, assistance with infrastructure funding applications, assistance with the Safe Routes to School Recognition Program, or other planning or policy activities that do not fit neatly into one of these categories.



Appendix B: Background

Organization	Information	Website
NJ Driver Ed. Classroom and Behind the Wheel Instruction Assessment Study	NJ Driver Education Committee Assessment	https://custom.cvent.com/678017DBDE6B447BAFF295249803FAC9/files/event/2133541e80ee40159446fa4bb4fadecb/bb88cdc1f3fd4fd6960e4ac24365d9d6.pdf
Driver's Education Supply Order Form	Driver's Education Supply Order Form	https://custom.cvent.com/678017DBDE6B447BAFF295249803FAC9/files/event/2133541e80ee40159446fa4bb4fadecb/c3d31060d2f34a38876f5fc1e6812717.pdf
Written Law Knowledge & Vision Guidelines	Driving School License Endorsement applications, supplies, & instructor certification	https://custom.cvent.com/678017DBDE6B447BAFF295249803FAC9/files/
AAA Keys2Drive	AAA simplifies the driving education process for parents of new and future teen drivers.	https://exchange.aaa.com/safety/teen-driver-safety/
Allstate Foundation	The Allstate Foundation's youth empowerment program helps give today's youth the knowledge, attitude and skills to achieve academic success and become leaders in their community.	https://allstatefoundation.org/
Allstate Auto Insurance for Teens	Teen Texting Pledge	https://www.allstate.com/resources/allstate/attachments/auto-insurance/teen/teen-text-pledge-1109.pdf
American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (ADSTEA)	Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards	https://www.adtsea.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/ntdetas-standards.pdf
American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (ADSTEA)	American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association Novice Driver Education Curriculum Standards	https://www.adtsea.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/adtsea-curriculum-standards.pdf
American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (ADSTEA)	Driving School Association of the Americas Beginner Driver Education and Training Curriculum Content Standards	https://www.adtsea.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/dsaa-curriculum-standards.pdf
Brain Injury Alliance of NJ-Champion Schools Program	Teen Driving Resources	https://jerseydrives.com/teens/
Center for Injury Prevention, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia	Through its multidisciplinary Teen Driving Safety Research program, the Center for Injury Research and Prevention (CIRP) at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute is working to reduce the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes involving teens behind the wheel.	https://injury.research.chop.edu/teen-driving-safety-research#.VAd7GOkG_RY
Centers for Disease Control	Teen Driver and Passenger Safety	https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/teen_drivers/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fmotorvehiclesafety%2Fteen_drivers%2Findex.html
Centers for Disease Control	Keeping Teen Drivers Safe	https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/teen-drivers/index.html
Centers for Disease Control	Parent-Teen Driving Agreement	https://www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey/pdf/PATK_2014_TeenParent_Agreement_AAP-a.pdf
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)	Teens Driving with ADD & ADHD	https://chadd.org/?s=driving
CHOP Teen Driver Resources	Interactive Skill Tests	https://www.teendriversource.org/learning-to-drive/pick-your-practice
ConsumerNotice.org Teen Driving Guide	Teen Driving Guide	https://www.consumernotice.org/personal-injury/traffic-safety/teen-driving-guide/

Organization	Information	Website
DCH Teen Safe Driving Foundation	Social Media content	https://dchtsdf.org/
Division of Highway Traffic Safety	GDL Laws & Resources from NJ	https://www.njoag.gov/about/divisions-and-offices/division-of-highway-traffic-safety-home/sticktoit/
It Can Wait	Distracted Driving School Presentation (free download)	https://about.att.com/csr/itcanwait
More Over Awareness Campaign	Short videos highlighting the Law	https://www.nj.gov/oag/hts/move-over-law/
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	Teen Driving Overview	https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	Teen Driving Resources	https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving#resources
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	Driver License Testing of Young Novice Drivers	https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/tt399.pdf
National Organization for Youth Safety	Seat Belts Save Challenge	https://www.noys.org/seat-belts-save-challenge
National Organization for Youth Safety	National Teen Driver Safety Week	https://www.noys.org/national-teen-driver-safety-week
National Safety Council	Resources for parents & teens. Lessons & Contract.	https://www.nsc.org/road/resources/dih/driveithome?
New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition	Protecting the rights and safety of NJ bicyclists & walkers.	https://njbwc.org/
NJ MADD	Advocates for stronger laws & safe future	https://madd.org/new-jersey/
NJ MVC	Share the Keys Resource Guide	https://www.state.nj.us/mvc/pdf/license/STKResourceGuide.pdf
NJ Transit Driver Education Safety Program	Free educational program for High School Teachers	https://www.njtransit.com/driver-education-safety
NJM Teen Driver Safety Program	Free teen driver safety programs	https://www.njm.com/teen-driver-safety
Nikhil Badlani Foundation	Youth Advisory Board	https://nikhilbadlanifoundation.org/youth-advisory-board/
Nikhil Badlani Foundation	Drivers Ed Through Art program	https://nikhilbadlanifoundation.org/drivers-ed-through-art/
Safe Kids of NJ	Directory of NJ Safe Kids Coalitions	https://www.safekids.org/coalition/safe-kids-new-jersey
Share the Keys Online	NJM's Award-Winning Teen Driver Safety Programs Online	https://custom.cvent.com/678017DBDE6B447BAFF295249803FAC9/files/
Share the Keys	60-90 minute interactive orientation program	https://www.njm.com/share-the-keys/
Students Against Destructive Decisions	Resources & Youth Engagement	https://www.sadd.org/
Teens and Trucks	Cellphone & distracted driving curriculum	https://youth.gov/federal-links/%25E2%2580%259Cteens-and-trucks%25E2%2580%259D-curriculum-promoting-teen-driver-safety

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