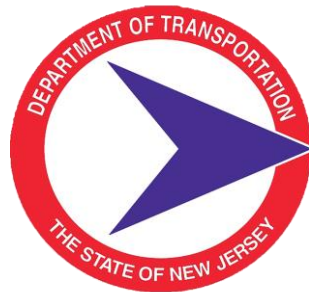


2023 NJ Safe Routes to School Academy

Held September 7 – September 28, 2023
Survey Results & Lessons Learned



RUTGERS

Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy

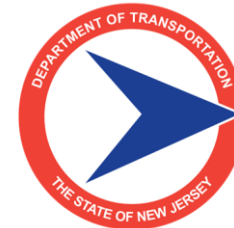
Acknowledgements

This report is supported by the New Jersey Department of Transportation with funding from the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. New Jersey and the United States Government assume no liability for its contents or its use thereof.

The Safe Routes Academy was hosted and organized by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC), which is housed at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy as part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Civic Eye Collaborative (CEC) provided support with technical assistance and visuals. Thank you to our sponsor, the NJ Department of Transportation, for supporting this effort.

Report Contributors

Shilpy Mehta
Leigh Ann Von Hagen
Sean Meehan
Jon Dugan



Safe Routes Academy - Overview



- The Safe Routes Academy for 2023 was hosted by the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center at Rutgers University with support from the NJ Department of Transportation.
- Four sessions were conducted online through Zoom Events, including registrations.
- Each session ran for a total of 90 minutes.
- In total there were 156 registrants.
- Civic Eye Collaborative (CEC) managed all back-end functionality of the Academy, including:
 - pre-session tech checks for presenters
 - session countdown
 - participant entry
 - ongoing participant and speaker technical assistance
 - recording and posting recordings to YouTube Channels
 - all technical troubleshooting, when needed

2022 NJ Safe Routes to School Academy Sessions

**Thursday,
September 7th**

Funding Your Bicycle &
Pedestrian Project: NJ
SRTS Infrastructure
Grant Training

**Thursday,
September 14th**

School Zone Safety
Strategies

**Thursday,
September 21st**

Safe Routes, Safe
Roads, Safe Systems

**Thursday,
September 28th**

School Routes to
High School

Session 1 - Funding Your Bicycle & Pedestrian Project : NJ SRTS Infrastructure Grant Training

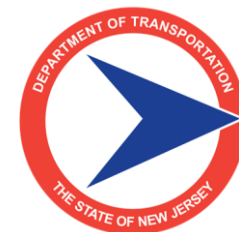
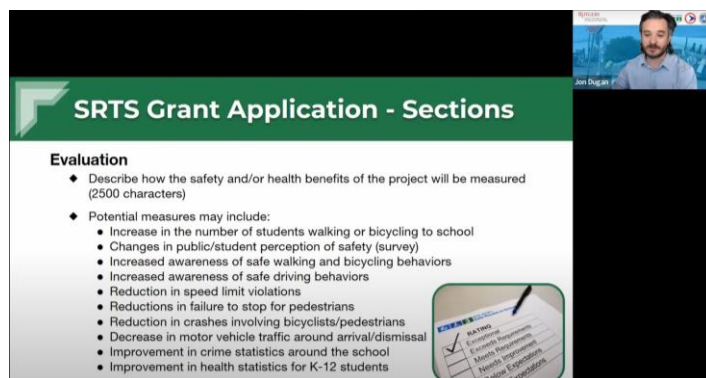
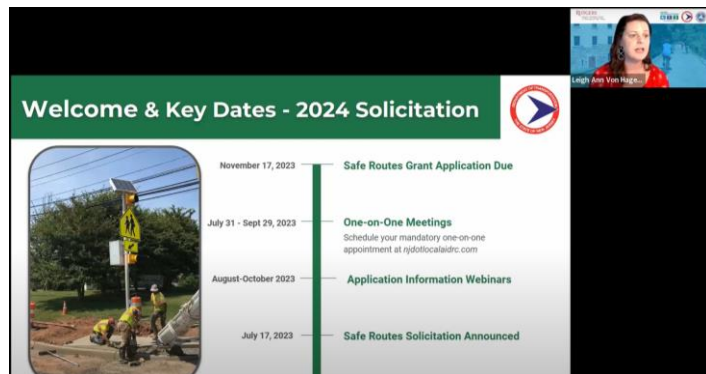


Session Description

This online session will provide participants with information about applying for Safe Routes to School grants, administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) in partnership with the State's Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Topics that will be covered include:

- Overview of Federal Aid programs and the Safe Routes to School Program
- Detailed Review of the Safe Routes to School Grant Application
- Grant Application Process
- Grant Resources, Tips & Strategies
- Q&A with NJDOT Local Aid Staff

The session is designed to assist you with making your grant application stronger to turn your project into a reality.



Session 1 - Funding Your Bicycle & Pedestrian Project: NJ SRTS Infrastructure Grant Training



Leigh Ann Von Hagen
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University



Jon Dugan
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University

Adam Lervolino
New Jersey Department of Transportation

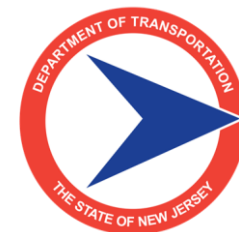
Paul Miranda
New Jersey Department of Transportation

Miriana Ghaly
New Jersey Department of Transportation


Deval Desai
New Jersey Department of Transportation

Alka Shah
New Jersey Department of Transportation

Aimee Jefferson
North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority



Session 2 - School Zone Safety Strategies



Data

Over 31,000 pedestrian and bicyclist involved crashes between 2016 and 2020.


Crash data came from:

- Safety Voyager – NJDOT
- Numeric – NJDOTS



| Crash type | Number of Crashes | Number of Fatal Crashes | Percentage Fatal |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Total | 13,320,252 | 2,954 | 0.2% |
| Pedestrian | 22,463 | 905 | 4.0% |
| Cyclist | 9,413 | 72 | 0.8% |
| Pedestrian and/or cyclist | 31,598 | 976 | 3.1% |

Other data used:

- Sidewalk and crosswalk data – DVRPC
- Overburdened communities data – NJDEP
- Population density – Smart Location Database (EPA)
- High income communities – US Census Bureau




Data: Consolidated Safety Voyager, Bridge Analyst, Pedestrian Involved Crashes from 2016-2020



Improving Safety in School Zones on State Highways

Sean Meehan
New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center




Satellite Drop-Off

Utilize off-site drop-off locations for arrival and departure

► Benefits:

- Encourages walking
- Redistributes congestion & pollution
- Involves entire school community
- Focuses on a low-cost solution

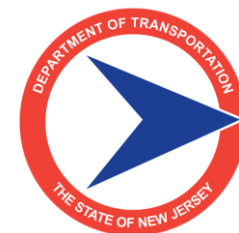


Students walk longer up-right on the sidewalk to more easily identify drop-off location.
Source: Wireless Transportation Center

Avenues in Motion

Session Description

Are you looking for ways to reduce the number of motor vehicles in school zones, slow driving speeds, and minimize potential conflicts and crashes in your community? Join us to discover cost-effective and adaptable strategies to create safer school zones and prioritize the wellbeing of pedestrians, cyclists, children, seniors, and people traveling on foot or bike. The session will focus on real examples of how these strategies have been designed and successfully employed in school zones throughout New Jersey.



Session 2 – School Zone Safety Strategies



Leigh Ann Von Hagen
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University



Sean Meehan
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University



Jeremy Szeluga
Avenues in Motion



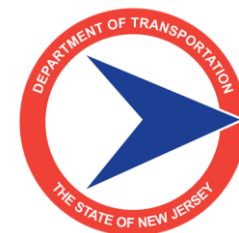
Liza Lee
EZ Ride



Hannah Younes
Voorhees Transportation Centre,
Rutgers University



Caty Whalen
Ridewise Inc



Session 3 – Safe Routes, Safe Roads, Safe Systems



Session Description

Together, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, and Zero Deaths Initiatives create a roadmap for safe and sustainable transportation. This session will explore the intersection between Safe Routes to School, Zero Deaths Initiatives, and the Safe Systems Approach and how they are increasingly informing safety plans and street designs to improve conditions for walking and bicycling and ensuring safer streets for all.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

National Roadway Safety Strategy & the Safe System Approach

NJTPA Local Safety Plans Webinar
Virtual Webinar
Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm ET

NJDOT Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Management System Updates

The slide features two side-by-side images. The left image is an aerial map view of a suburban neighborhood with a highlighted route. The right image is a street-level photograph showing a pedestrian crossing a road with cars, with a cyclist also visible in the scene.



Session 3 – Safe Routes, Safe Roads, Safe Systems



Amy Kaminski
Federal Highway Administration,
New Jersey Division



Samuel Rosenthal
Voorhees Transportation Center,
Rutgers University



Elise Bremer-Nei
NJ Department of Transportation



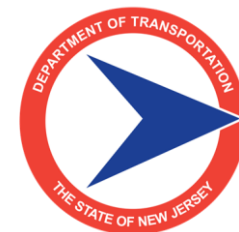
Sean Meehan
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University



Cheryl Kastrenakes
Greater Mercer TMA




Jon Dugan
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University




Session 4 – Safe Routes to High School

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law/ IIJA


- \$1.2 trillion for the nation's surface transportation and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure
- Additional \$550 billion in funding for new programs in transportation, energy transmission, resilience, and others, approximately half of which goes to the USDOT over the next five years



- Equity
- Sustainability
- Resilience
- Climate Change
- Safety



- Biking and walking
- Better transit systems
- Complete Streets
- Increased local control over transportation projects




- People-centric policies
- Focus transportation planning on what is best for people, not automobiles

NETWORKS






National Youth Bicycle Council (NYBC)

- Youth-Led Nonprofit
- Bike n' Bite
- Spring Back On Bikes
- Youth Bike Summit



National Youth Bicycle Council (NYBC)

Past Projects



Bloomfield Master Plan Youth Voice Component, 2023

- Engaged 300+ elementary, middle and high school students in visioning sessions.
- Created the first Youth Voice component in a NJ Master Plan
- Presented findings to the Mayor's Office

Session Description

With the passing of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act law (IIJA), for the first time the needs of high schools and high school students are being explicitly considered in safe Routes to School projects, programs, and infrastructure funding. With this broadened mission in mind, this session will explore issues, opportunities, and best practices for expanding SRTS program to include and meet the needs of high schools and high school students and providing new opportunities to promote healthy and sustainable transportation for all. This session will focus on best practices for interacting with and involving high school students in Safe Routes to School programs.



Session 4 – Safe Routes to High School

City Planning Institute Students



Isabella Bille



Marie Telusma



Ana O'Brion



Mughlobd Johnson



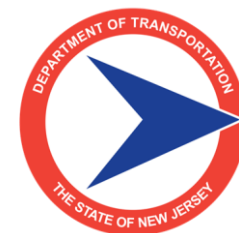
Charnelle Hicks
CHPlanning Ltd.



Sean Meehan
NJ Safe Routes Resource Center,
Rutgers University

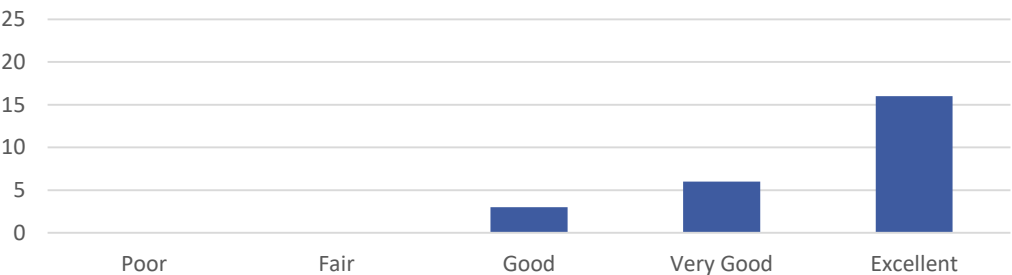


Deborah Schulze
Center for Community Planning



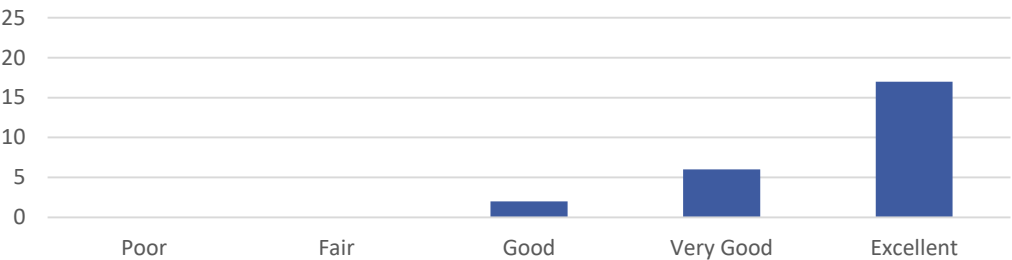
Feedback on the 2023 NJ Safe Routes to School Academy Sessions

Overall, how would you rate the sessions?



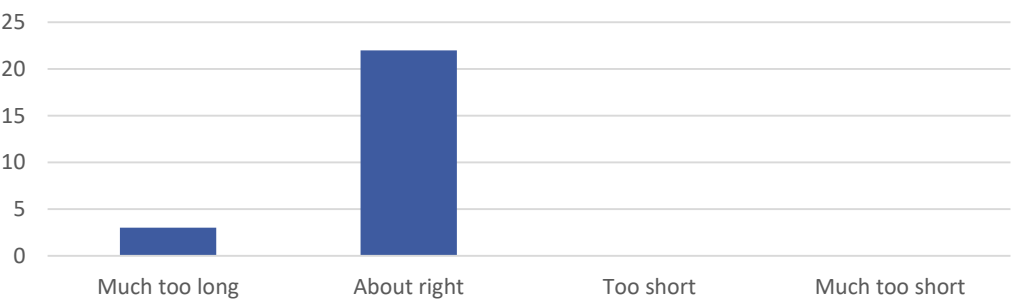
“Overall, I enjoyed all of the sessions. Small take-aways from each!”

What was the quality of the information provided?



“I enjoyed the high school student's participation as well as their tips for engagement.”

Were the session's length too long, too short, or about right?



“Great session. Thanks!”

Future NJ SRTS Academy Summits



Suggested Topics



Preferred Time of Day



Resources to Address SRTS in the Community



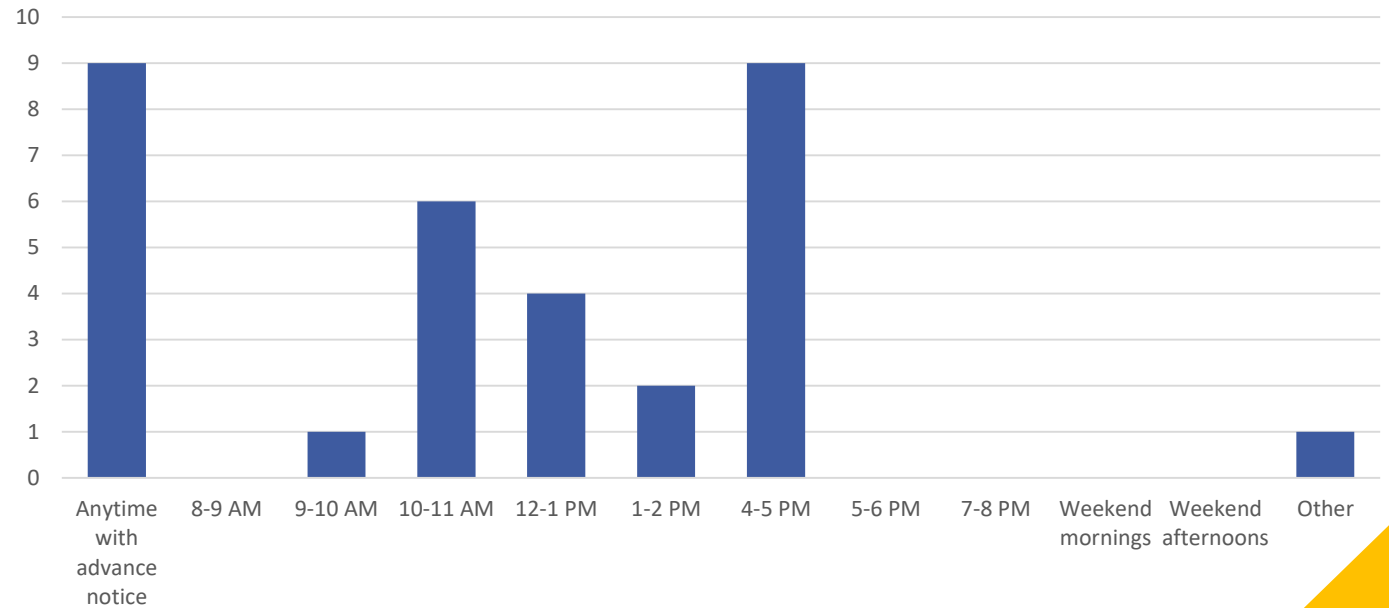
Preferred
topics/speakers to
see at future NJ
SRTS Academy
sessions or in a
webinar series

- I would like to hear from engineers and planners and why they are hesitant to make some changes.
- Hands-on experience with the actual application process.
- Success stories and tips for engaging your own community and situations where trails were merged with school walking routes for rural areas.
- Understanding laws and regulations in road design, why they prioritize vehicle speed over safety, and how we can change that.
- Topic clarifying the role of the schools and municipalities and how they are expected to work together.

Resources that could help address Safe Routes to School in communities

- More opportunities for funding projects.
- Allowing students to act themselves; their input is more valuable than we realize.
- Community engagement tips
- More practical/easy-to-understand guides for making roads safer/changing infrastructure.
- Methods to measure the quality of improvements done for safety instead of quantity.
- More involvement from school districts.
- Signage informing about the bike paths, bike share programs, and available bike racks.
- More direct outreach to the community and locally elected officials.
- Opportunities to work directly with teens.

Preferred time of day for sessions



Most of the participants are flexible if they are notified ahead of time.



Otherwise, 12 to 1 pm is the preferred time.

Comments and Feedback

- Break up sessions based on level of understanding: beginner, intermediate, expert.
- Partner with NJLM to spread the word about the academy and encourage more involvement by Counties and Municipalities.
- To share the attendance of elected officials and or municipality Reps. They need to be actively engaged in these types of conversations.
- Take things to the next level: focus on maintaining momentum and long-term infrastructure changes to improve safety and reduce speeds.

Social Media Toolkit

A “Social Media Toolkit” was created with registration announcements and weekly reminders.

The content was approved by NJDOT Communications and shared via email with a list of over 80 partner organizations, asking them to share the posts to their own social media accounts.

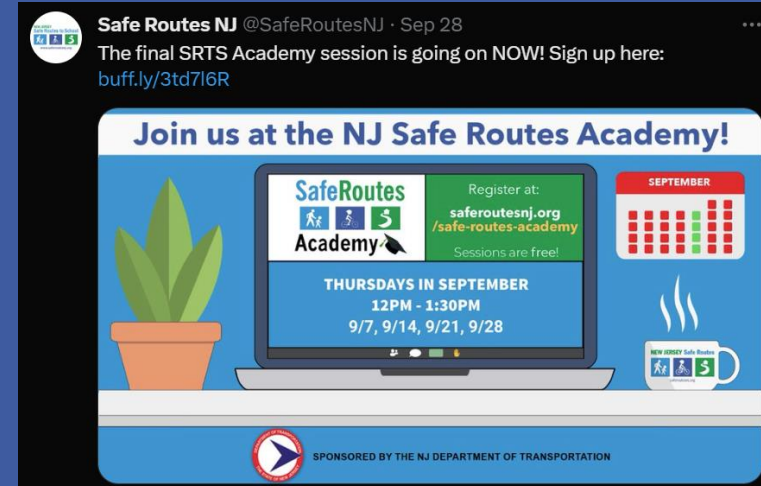
Engagement results (#SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT) on X (formerly Twitter)

16 tweets generated 3054 impressions and 64 engagement interactions, which included:

- 19 Retweets
- 24 Likes

Engagement results on Facebook

- No. of posts - 16
- Likes - 24
- Shares - 13



Social Media Posts

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

We're excited to announce the 2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy! Join us on Thursdays in Sept at 12 pm for FREE online sessions sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. Learn how to enhance walking and bicycling safety in your town. Register now at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT

- **FACEBOOK:**

We're excited to announce the 2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy! Join us every Thursday in September at 12pm for FREE online sessions sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. Discover valuable insights on enhancing walking and bicycling safety in your community. Don't miss out! 🚶🚲 Register now at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy . #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT



Social Media Posts

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

Mark your calendars for Sept. 7, 14, 21, and 28 to join our FREE virtual webinars at 12 pm sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT! Be inspired by Safe Routes projects in NJ and learn how to create walk- and bike-friendly communities for all. Register at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT

- **FACEBOOK:**

Mark your calendars for Sept. 7, 14, 21, and 28 to join our FREE virtual webinars at 12 pm sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT! Be inspired by Safe Routes to School projects and learn how to make communities more walk- and bike-friendly for all. Register now at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT



Social Media Posts

Session 1

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

Want to learn how to make your grant application stronger? Join us on 9/7 at 12pm to learn about applying for federal Safe Routes to School grants administered by @NewJerseyDOT & and NJ's Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT

- **FACEBOOK**

Mark your calendars for Thursday, 9/7, at 12 pm to learn about applying for federal Safe Routes to School grants administered by @NewJerseyDOT and NJ's Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The session is designed to assist you with making your grant application stronger to turn your project into a reality. Don't miss the opportunity to advance walking and bicycling in your community! Register now at

saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT



2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy
Session 1 - Funding Your Bicycle & Pedestrian Project
September 7th | 12:00 to 1:30 pm

SafeRoutes Academy

Register for free at:
saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy
Sponsored By The New Jersey Department Of Transportation

Social Media Posts

Session 2

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

Register now for our School Zone Safety Strategies webinar at 12 pm on 9/14 to learn cost-effective & adaptable strategies to create safer places for everyone traveling on foot or by bike. Sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. It's free, saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT

- **FACEBOOK:**

Join us for our free School Zone Safety Strategies webinar at 12 pm on 9/14, sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. Discover cost-effective and adaptable strategies to enhance safety in school zones. Register now at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy and secure your spot.
#SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT #SchoolZoneSafety #PedestrianSafety #CyclingSafe



2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy
Session 2 - School Zone Safety Strategies
September 14th | 12:00 to 1:30 pm

SafeRoutes Academy

Register for free at:
saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy
Sponsored By The New Jersey Department Of Transportation

Social Media Posts

Session 3

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

Join us on 9/21 at 12 pm as we explore the powerful combination of Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, & Zero Deaths Initiatives & how they shape safety plans & streets. Webinar sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. Free registration, saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #CompleteStreets

- **FACEBOOK:**

Safe and sustainable transportation is within our reach, and we want you to be part of the journey! Join us for a free webinar on Thursday, 9/21 at 12 pm as we explore the powerful combination of Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, and Zero Deaths Initiatives and how these initiatives shape safety plans and street designs. Register now at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy and secure your spot in the free 2023 Safe Routes Academy sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT.. #SafeRoutesNJ #CompleteStreets



2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy
Session 3 - Safe Routes, Safe Roads, Safe Systems
September 21st | 12:00 to 1:30 pm

SafeRoutes Academy
Register for free at:
saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy
Sponsored By The New Jersey Department Of Transportation

Social Media Posts

Session 4

- **TWITTER (max 280 characters):**

Join us on 9/28 at 12 pm for a webinar exploring best practices for expanding Safe Routes to School programs to high schools & how to support HS students. Sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT. Free registration, saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy #SafeRoutesNJ #NJDOT

- **FACEBOOK:**

We're thrilled that the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act law now includes the needs of high schools and high school students in Safe Routes to School projects and funding. Join us on Thursday, 9/28 at 12 pm for a free webinar where we'll explore the best practices to expand Safe Routes to School programs to High Schools and involve HS students. To participate in the free 2023 Safe Routes Academy sponsored by @NewJerseyDOT, register at saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy

A promotional poster for the 2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy, Session 4. The background is a photograph of a city street with a crosswalk. Several people, including children and adults, are walking across the street. A white van and a red car are stopped at the crosswalk. A yellow diamond-shaped pedestrian crossing sign is visible on the left. The text "2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy" is in the top right. Below it, "Session 4 - Safe Routes to High School" and "September 28th | 12:00 to 1:30 pm" are written. In the bottom left, the "SafeRoutes Academy" logo is shown, featuring icons for a person walking, a person on a bicycle, and a car. To the right of the logo is the New Jersey Department of Transportation logo. In the bottom right, the text "Register for free at: saferoutesnj.org/safe-routes-academy" and "Sponsored By The New Jersey Department Of Transportation" is displayed.

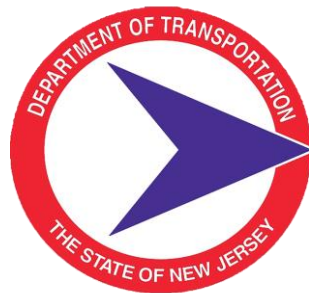
2023 New Jersey Safe Routes Academy

Session 4 - Safe Routes to High School
September 28th | 12:00 to 1:30 pm

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Sponsored By The New Jersey Department Of Transportation



RUTGERS

Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy