

High School Safe Routes to School & School Travel Plan Guide



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List of Acronyms

Safe Routes to School Program	SRTS
School Travel Plan	STP
High School	HS
TMA	Transportation Management Associations
NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation

Purpose of the Guidebook

This document is designed to guide the development of high school-level Safe Routes to School Programs (SRTS) and School Travel Plans (STP). The first section of this guide focuses on planning and implementing high school-level SRTS programs and puts forth recommendations using a modified “Es” framework. The framework, often used in SRTS programs to identify needs and structure program activities, includes evaluation, education, encouragement, engineering, engagement, and ensuring impartiality.

The second section of this guide provides a comprehensive framework for developing a high school-level School Travel Plan. While it follows the general structure and guidelines of STPs designed for younger grades, it offers more detailed insights into areas that differ when addressing the specific needs of high schools and their students.

This guidebook addresses a significant gap in the current literature regarding high school engagement and involvement in SRTS and STP programming. While SRTS programs and STPs for high schools currently exist, their planning and implementation are hindered by the absence of a standardized system and adequate resources. This guidebook aims to support a more structured and systematic approach for high school SRTS programs and STPs moving forward.

Audience and Use

This document is intended to support SRTS practitioners in planning and implementing SRTS programs and STPs in high school settings. They can use this guide to help identify recommendations and case studies that schools and districts worldwide are successfully employing to engage high school students in safer and more sustainable transportation options.

Methodology

The conclusions and recommendations in this guidebook were derived through various methods. The program recommendations were drawn from interviews with 18 SRTS coordinators or program representatives. The interviews included 16 SRTS programs from different parts of the country and two non-traditional programs - one youth-led organization and one university affiliated Youth Transportation Safety program.

These interviews provided valuable perspectives on program execution that could not be captured through desktop research alone. The insights gained were instrumental in formulating well-informed recommendations tailored for the State of New Jersey.

In the second section of the guidebook, around 50 School Travel Plans (STPs) were reviewed and cataloged in a database. This review process enabled the project team to identify best practices, key considerations, and effective processes specific to high schools. These findings were then synthesized into the considerations and case studies featured in the guide.

High School SRTS Program

Importance of Engaging High School Students in SRTS Program

SRTS programs create safer and more appealing conditions for active transportation, encouraging youth, including those with disabilities, to travel to and from school by foot, bike, or other wheeled devices. Traditionally, SRTS programs have been intended for younger students, excluding high school-aged students from programming opportunities. Program expansion opens opportunity for the numerous benefits that can be realized by involving high school students in SRTS programs. As students transition to high school, the conditions for traveling to and from school change. Therefore, it is crucial to continue educating and engaging them on active transportation topics that adapt to their evolving needs. It also provides high school students with valuable professional development and skill-building opportunities that they can bring into the next chapter of their lives.

Recommendations for High School Level SRTS Program

Safe Routes to School Programs at the high school level require a different set of considerations to be effective in their implementation. The methods of engagement, education, encouragement and evaluation at this level differ from those used in programs for younger students.



HS SRTS Program Recommendations

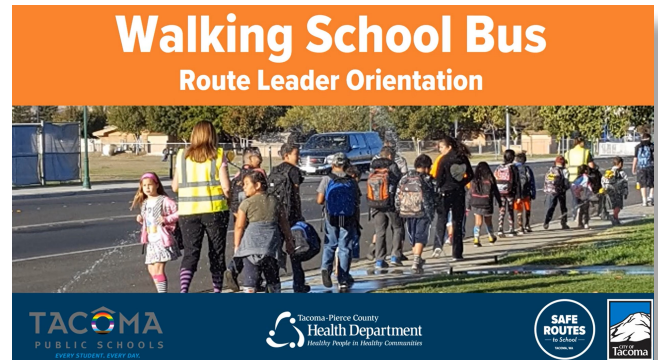


Engagement

Emphasize Youth-Led Engagement Initiatives

Engaging a wider student population through diverse youth specific and youth-led efforts can be particularly beneficial for high school students.

- *Example:* Programs can assign students key roles such as mentoring younger peers in developing leadership and organizational skills in active transportation related initiatives, leading bike buses for middle schools, or even holding paid jobs with the city or school related to active transportation. These jobs can be with city transportation planners or bicycle maintenance or active transportation advocacy organizations, and can offer students a financial stipend or school credit, and valuable training in community engagement.



— OPPORTUNITY FILLED - Walking School Bus Route Leader

OPPORTUNITY FILLED - Walking School Bus Route Leader

Are you 16 or older? Want to help mentor youth? Become a Walking School Bus leader with your local elementary or middle school!

As a Walking School Bus leader, you will help elementary and middle school students get to school on time by walking with them along a designated route to (or from) school and stopping at "Walking School Bus stops" to pick up more students.

You can receive a teen Mental Health First Aid certification - a respected certificate for your resume and helpful for your interactions with peers and youth.

Establish Youth Advisory Councils and Working Groups

Youth advisory councils, focused on transportation safety, provide students with a platform to discuss mobility issues related to commuting to and from school. Working groups can allow youth representatives to share the concerns of their peers with other stakeholders that can work together on finding solutions and leading initiatives.

- *Example:* SRTS programs can support the creation of youth advisory councils at the high school or district level and include youth representatives from the council into SRTS working groups. The Youth Advisory Council members can also gather concerns from their younger peers that they engage through the mentorship program and represent a wider student body. Members of the Council can potentially receive stipends for their participation with members rotating on an annual basis.

Tacoma, WA created positions for high schoolers to lead walking school buses for middle and elementary schools in the local area.

Utilize Existing or New School Club Infrastructures to Engage Youth

Environmental and bicycle-focused clubs are often already active in many schools and can be leveraged as an engagement tool for initiatives. Additionally, expanding engagement to other clubs can reach a broader audience and incorporate transportation safety themes into various activities.

- *Example:* SRTS programs can support clubs like theatre, drama, film, and technology to develop transportation safety-themed content, such as videos or websites, which can be both educational and entertaining, making the safety message more appealing to students. If there is an interest, programs can encourage the formation of School SRTS clubs dedicated to SRTS initiatives.

HS SRTS Program Recommendations

Establish Dedicated SRTS Social Media Accounts

Establish dedicated SRTS social media accounts targeting youth on platforms and through media where they are already active, creating focused hubs for program-related content to ensure messages stand out and aren't buried among broader agency posts. Individual schools can also set up their own accounts to share updates on school-specific SRTS initiatives, with students leading these efforts.

- *Example:* Programs can support youth in developing social media toolkits with templates, guidelines and strategies for platform-specific content. Students can use these resources to manage SRTS specific social media accounts. Social media can be utilized to advertise SRTS campaigns. Students can make posts or upload stories related to a SRTS related question or questions based on their travel experience to and from school using a hashtag. Their participation can get them entered into a raffle for an opportunity to win a gift or a benefit.



Eugene and Springfield, OR's SRTS's X (formerly Twitter) page features information about events and local news related to active transportation.

Leverage Existing School Communication Channels

Not all students have access to digital platforms, so using existing school communication channels ensures inclusivity in disseminating SRTS focused information.

- *Example:* Programs can collaborate with school newsletters, announcements, and parent-teacher organizations to reach a broader audience, ensuring all students and families stay informed. Posters of similar content from social media can be placed around different areas of schools, especially where students congregate.

Develop a Community Assets List Early on in the SRTS Program Development

Identifying potential partners and community assets early on can be crucial for program success and development of outreach strategies. Planned and structured outreach efforts allow for smoother implementation as programs progress.

- *Example:* Participants, alongside coordinators, can work to identify potential program partners, such as local businesses and organizations that align with their interests to provide incentive, mentorship or other forms of support for SRTS programs.

Establish Working Relationships with Local Higher Educational Institutions

Higher education institutions are often well-resourced and equipped to assist SRTS programs through data collection, student mentoring, and resource sharing. Partnering with them can enhance the reach and effectiveness of the program.

- *Example:* Collaborate with local universities or community colleges for data collection efforts, support in program evaluation, or mentoring high school students involved in SRTS leadership roles.

HS SRTS Program Recommendations



Ensuring Impartiality

Provide Proactive Translation to Program Materials

Ensure a consistent and proactive translation of all program materials into the dominant non-English language in the area.

- **Example:** Instead of offering translations on an “as-needed” basis, programs should ensure that SRTS initiatives are automatically translated into at least the top non-English language spoken by the school’s student population.

Sonoma County’s SRTS Program materials are translated into Spanish.

SEGURIDAD PARA CICLISTAS

USA el CASCO

Protege tu cerebro—¡Usa un casco! Es la ley. Asegúrate que te quede ajustado y que esté abrochado bajo tu barbilla.

SIGUE las REGLAS

Maneja a la derecha, en la dirección del tráfico. Obedece las reglas viales y las señales de tráfico, igual que un carro. Al salir de un garage o intersección, PARA, mira a la IZQUIERDA, a la derecha y a la IZQUIERDA otra vez para asegurarte que no vengan carros. Solo sigue cuando sea seguro. CAMINA con tu bicicleta en el paso de peatones.

SE PREDECIBLE

Haz lo que los conductores esperan de ti. Señaliza con las manos y dale el paso a los peatones. Maneja en una fila simple para permitir que los carros pasen. Pasa el tráfico más lento a la izquierda, sonando la campana. Ve en línea recta y no en zig zag a tres pies de las puertas de los carros. Mira y escucha lo que te rodea.



MANEJO

Sidewalk laws so check with it's permitted, are careful of family or group the sidewalk.

Flasque

Ponte ropa de visible. Usa al bicicleta por la bicicleta teng

ASEGUR

Cuando llegas en el portabici

ronda del fre

Adición

Cuando y dónde debes hablar t

En el momento situación del t

con ella sobre la aceras con acera.



Temas de andar en bicicleta/caminar y consejos de seguridad para todo el año

Para artículos del periódico escolar

Year-Round Walk/Bike Themes and Safety Tips — For school newsletter articles

End of August or September: Comience bien el año escolar

Al empezar el año escolar nuevo y las hojas comienzan a cambiar de color, también pueden comenzar bien el año al intentar usar un modo de transporte activo a la escuela. Si viven en radio de entre ¼ y 1 milla de distancia de la escuela, ¿por qué no caminar o llegar en bicicleta menos una vez por semana? Es divertido y pueden reunirse con sus vecinos y hacer nuevas amistades. Además, es una gran forma de comenzar el día con un poco de ejercicio y aire fresco. Cuando sus hijos lleguen a la escuela, estarán más despiertos y alertas, listos para comenzar el nuevo día. Los estudios han demostrado una relación significativa entre la buena condición física y el desempeño académico. Si usted vive muy lejos de la escuela para caminar todo el trayecto, localice un punto que esté de 5 a 10 minutos caminado, estacione su auto camine el resto del camino a la escuela.

Incorporate Accommodations from the Start to Support Students with Disabilities and Neurodivergence

Working with disability-focused organizations or consultants during the planning phase helps ensure accessibility is integrated into all aspects of SRTS programs. This includes providing adaptive equipment, organizing accessible events, and training staff to meet participants’ needs.

- **Example:** SRTS programs can partner with available local disability organizations to incorporate planning or to build structured accessibility procedures into the program.

Remove Financial Barriers to Participation for Students

Programs should eliminate financial barriers by ensuring all events are free or offer a sliding scale fee structure, making activities accessible to students from all economic backgrounds.

- **Example:** Programs can collaborate with local businesses, such as bike shops, to

offer giveaways or loan programs for bicycles and bicycle accessories. Additionally, these local businesses can financially support through donations or sponsor programs for events, camps, or workshops, so they are free to students or have flexible fee structure, which minimizes the burden on students and families.

Develop Targeted Outreach Strategies to Engage Opportunity-Limited Communities

Identifying and developing targeted outreach strategies ensures that students in these communities have access to SRTS programs.

- **Example:** Partner with community organizations that have existing relationships with opportunity-limited populations to co-host SRTS events in neighborhoods with lower access to transportation infrastructure. Programs can partner with local bike shops to host learn to ride events.

HS SRTS Program Recommendations

Engineering

Advocate and Prioritize Infrastructure Improvements that Benefit Students with Disabilities

Prioritizing access for students with disabilities not only ensures their inclusion but also improves infrastructure for everyone. Features like smooth sidewalks, curb cuts, and accessible crossings benefit students with permanent and temporary disabilities, younger siblings/children, parents with strollers, and the public, making the entire environment more user-friendly and safer for all.

- *Example:* Work with SRTS participants to prioritize infrastructure improvements that focus on universal design principles to ensure easy navigation for all users.

Include Participants in the Design and Implementation of Temporary Infrastructure Projects

Engaging students in the planning and implementation of pilot or pop-up traffic calming infrastructure projects offers an opportunity for youth to actively address safety concerns around their schools. By participating, students can gain hands-on experience in testing and refining solutions that directly impact their daily environment.

- *Example:* Students involved in a SRTS program can take part in the creation of a temporary safety infrastructure such as traffic calming projects. They might assist with on-site measurements and contribute to activating the space by adding street art, like chalk drawings.

Encouragement

Expand the Use of Contests to Engage Students

SRTS programs can involve students through art and video competitions with themes related to transportation safety.

- *Example:* Offer incentives for participation in these competitions, with diverse prizes provided by local partners. Prizes could include vouchers from local businesses, tickets to local events, or opportunities for students to showcase their work at school assemblies. Involving youth representatives in choosing the type of incentives offered can also increase overall engagement.

DON'T LET CARS STOP YOU
FROM SEEING
PEOPLE AS PEOPLE

SAFE STREETS / SMART TRIPS

massDOT

Strengthen Continuity of SRTS Programs from Middle to High School

SRTS programs can encourage program continuity by fostering collaboration between middle and high school participants.

- *Example:* High school students can mentor middle schoolers or lead walk-to-school and bike-to-school initiatives at the middle school level. This collaboration can inspire middle schoolers to remain engaged with SRTS programs as they enter high school, eventually taking on the same leadership and mentorship roles that encouraged their ongoing participation.

HS SRTS Program Recommendations



Education

Tailor Education Content to the SRTS Program Context

Educational content should reflect the diverse transportation realities of high school students, including walking, biking, driving, and using public transit. Lessons should cover safety tips for each mode, recognizing that students' transportation needs vary widely.

- *Example:* In car-dependent communities, SRTS programs can still emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety, even where infrastructure is lacking, ensuring students are prepared for any mode of transportation. Similarly, in areas with adequate multimodal infrastructure, the curriculum can be expanded to include safe driving lessons, ensuring comprehensive transportation safety education for all modes of travel.

Offer Workshops for Teachers, Parents/Guardians and Other In-School Champions

Building relationships with in-school champions and parents/guardians is key to successful SRTS initiatives. Even if they have some knowledge, workshops can streamline efforts and improve outcomes. These sessions also provide a platform for gathering feedback to refine initiatives.

- *Example:* SRTS programs can train school staff on transportation safety, youth engagement, and event logistics, ensuring smooth and inclusive program execution. Similar workshops or presentations can be offered at PTA meetings for parents.

Explore Opportunities for Curriculum Integration of SRTS Education

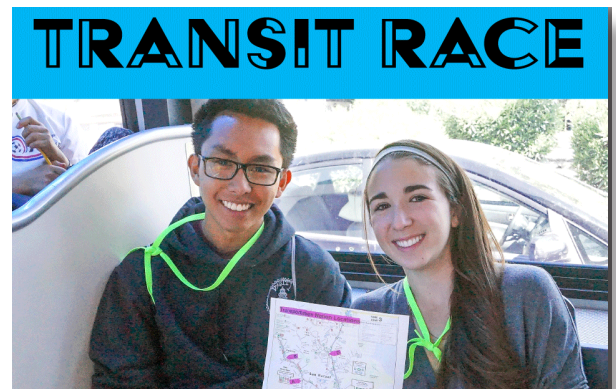
High school students often prioritize academic subjects over non-academic activities. Integrating SRTS topics into required courses ensures that all students receive essential transportation safety education. It also allows students who may not be available to attend after-school activities to participate in SRTS topics and activities.

- *Example:* SRTS programs can identify courses where SRTS topics fit well, such as integrating bicycle and pedestrian safety into Physical Education classes or transportation safety data analysis into computer or social studies classes. Projects could involve examining local crash data or map infrastructure issues, providing insights that aid the development of SRTS programs.

Offer Interactive Events for Different Education Topics

Organizing interactive events can engage high school students more effectively than traditional transportation safety lessons.

- *Example:* Programs can host scavenger hunts, safety drills, or biking competitions that combine education with hands-on experience. These events teach students how to navigate public transit, bike and walk safely to school, and practice safe driving. Students can also meet with local transportation agencies to learn about traffic calming, sidewalks, curb cuts, and the broader role of transportation planning in safety. This exposure not only reinforces the connection between transportation planning and SRTS but also introduces students to the field of Transportation Planning.



Marin County's SRTS hosts an annual Transit Race for high schoolers that helps students build confidence riding public transit in the local area.

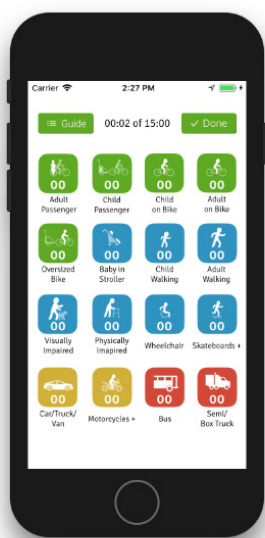
HS SRTS Program Recommendations

Evaluation

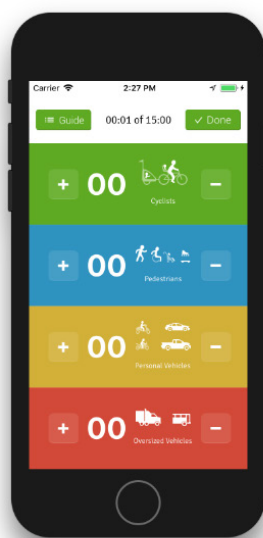
Establish Ongoing Assessment Methods to Evaluate SRTS Program

Develop ways to track SRTS program progress, including behavior changes, mode shifts, and infrastructure improvements. Define success measures to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives.

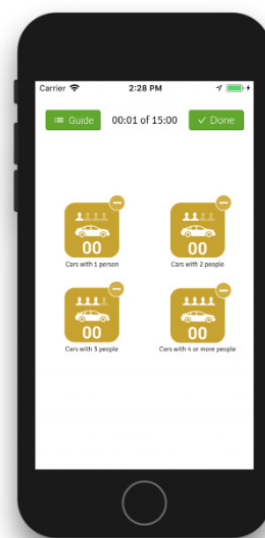
- *Example:* Students, with the help of SRTS coordinators, can conduct surveys, walk and bike audits, and create data dashboards to monitor outcomes. This not only measures success but also builds students' data collection and analysis skills.



Regular Traffic Count



Easy Traffic Count



Carpool/Car Occupancy Count

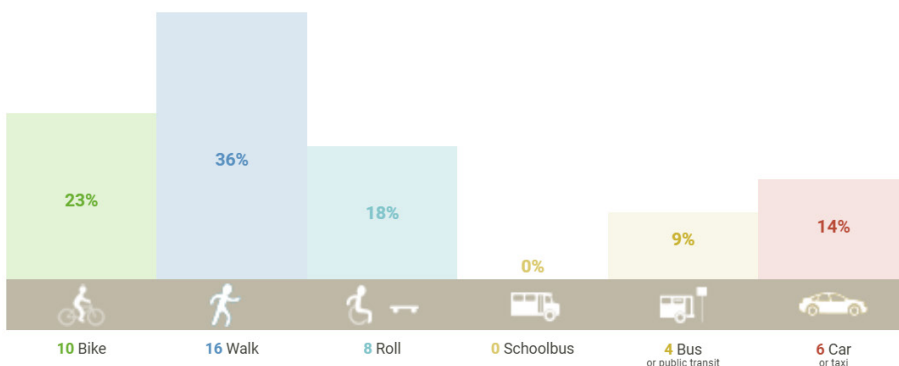
Apps like Counterpoint (above) and BikeWalkRoll (below) allow for students to engage in the evaluation process by conducting traffic counts and making dashboards that graph how students get to and from school.

Recent BWR Scores **78**

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Classes and Groups Surveyed

		73
		82



Funding and Support



Funding Sources

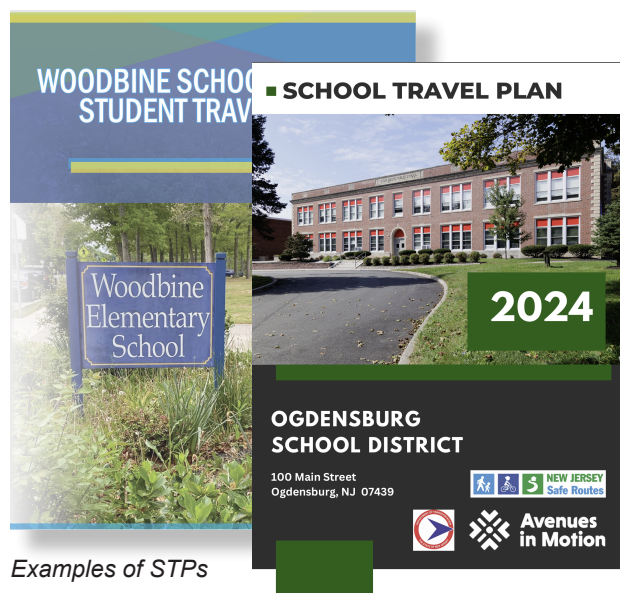
Several funding sources were identified during interviews with high school-level SRTS programs. Additional research was conducted to find similar funding options in New Jersey for TMAs interested in expanding their programs to the high school level or creating new high school SRTS programs. The table below highlights some of these potential funding source.

#	Potential Funding Sources	Additional Information
1	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	State Traffic Safety Commission could offer grants for non-infrastructure SRTS programs
2	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)	Grants focused on Commercial Motor Vehicle (safety) are available for colleges and universities, State governments, training providers, non-profit organizations, and more. Goals, criteria, and eligibility differ for each grant program.
3	Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program	For community-based “non-traditional” projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the nation’s intermodal transportation system.
4	Federal Highway Authority (FHA)	SRTS programs can be funded through the Federal Highway Administration’s Federal Aid Program which is administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).
5	Highway Safety Improvement Program from the Federal Highway Administration	Core Federal-aid program with the purpose to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned roads and roads on tribal land.
6	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety	Federal grant funding to agencies that wish to undertake programs designed to reduce motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities on the roads of New Jersey. Example: Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund Grant Program
7	Department of Education: Title IV, Part A funds	Supplemental funding to help provide students with a well-rounded education, improve school conditions and improve the use of technology. Safe and Healthy Students (SHS)
8	(City) General Fund	Part of the main operating budget for all city services/ programs could fund SRTS programming
9	Adopted Measures	Jurisdiction wide funds that allow the reallocation of different types of taxes to transportation projects including SRTS initiatives.

Understanding School Travel Plans

Definition and Purpose of a School Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document that contains plans and goals for creating a safer and healthier school environment. STPs are school-specific and require collaboration from students, families, school staff, and municipal officials to address travel issues. These plans include observations, ideas, and an action plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel. Completed STPs can help secure funding, whether a community is seeking SRTS infrastructure funding from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) or pursuing another funding source, by providing ready-to-use information for funding applications.



Examples of STPs

Differences Between Elementary, Middle, and High School

The move from middle school to high school marks a significant change. With it comes greater responsibilities, evolving norms, and a growing allure of independence. When creating a School Travel Plan for high schools, these changes must be considered, as they will affect the plan's content and structure.

High school students have more responsibilities than elementary or middle school students. These responsibilities include after-school jobs, caregiving roles, and extracurricular activities, all of which can result in busier schedules and less free time. As student engagement is a hallmark characteristic of a high school STP, it is important to recognize potential scheduling issues for students. After-school STP-related initiatives might result in lower participation rates, which skews data and serves as a barrier to entry for interested students.

These added responsibilities can also affect a student's travel patterns. The travel patterns for younger students are generally predictable due to their limited extracurricular activities and significant parental involvement. For high school students, however, travel patterns to and from school change based on their additional responsibilities. For example, high school students with younger siblings might be responsible for picking them up from the nearby elementary or middle

school, so identifying safe routes connecting different school campuses would be a helpful addition to a STP. High school students also often gain more independence because of their growing responsibilities and increasing social development. This independence is reflected in their travel behavior to and from school, as parents are less involved in these decisions. Specifically, for teenagers, owning and driving a car holds significant social importance and is a major steppingstone to increased freedom and independence. For this reason, high school STPs need to factor in student driving and parking to the plan, as that will play a large role in a high school setting. This might include collecting data on how many students drive and park to school, identifying any school policies that might incentive or disincentivize students from driving, and implementing safe driving campaigns as a countermeasure.

STPs should also account for the evolution of social norms as students progress through school levels. In high school, students may place greater importance on peer acceptance than in middle or elementary school. Consequently, like High School SRTS, STPs should incorporate peer-to-peer learning, allowing students to connect directly with their peers and fostering a supportive and collaborative environment that can reinforce safe and healthy transportation habits.

School Travel Plans

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Differences Between Elementary, Middle, and High School Cont.

The transition from middle school to high school brings about significant changes that must be carefully considered when developing a School Travel Plan (STP). High school students' increased responsibilities, evolving travel patterns, and growing independence necessitate a tailored approach that addresses their unique needs. By incorporating elements such as safe routes for students with caregiving duties, accommodating student driving and parking, and leveraging peer-to-peer learning to reinforce positive behaviors, an effective high school STP can be created. This plan will not only ensure the safety and convenience of students but also foster a supportive and collaborative environment that aligns with their social development and responsibilities.

Sample High School STP - Table of Contents

1. Section 1: Introduction
 - a. What is SRTS and STP?
 - b. Working Group
 - i. Transportation Management Associations
 - ii. Municipal/County Representatives
 - iii. School/School District Representatives
 - iv. Students
 - v. Parents
 - vi. Community Representatives
 - c. School Description/ Information
2. Section 2: Existing Conditions
 - a. Current School Travel Environment
 - i. Maps of the School Environment
 - ii. Walk and Bike Assessments
 - b. Existing Programs and Policies
 - c. Active Transportation Needs Analysis
3. Section 3: Community Engagement
 - a. Student Engagement
 - b. Staff Engagement
 - c. Parent/Guardian Engagement
 - d. Other Public Input
4. Section 4: Analysis and Results
 - a. Key Barriers and Opportunities
5. Section 5: Goals and Action Plan
 - a. Goals
 - b. Action Plan
 - i. Short-Term Countermeasure Recommendations
 - ii. Long-Term Countermeasure Recommendations
6. Section 6: Monitoring and Evaluating
 - a. Walk/Bike Assessments
 - b. Surveys
 - c. Data Dashboards

Section 1

Introduction

Section 1 provides context for the plan, including what it is, who is involved, which schools are evaluated, and why it is important.

Section 1: Introduction

a. What is SRTS and STP?

It is important to set the stage for the plan, introducing the reader to the main concepts being discussed and why they are important.

b. Working Group

The plan's working group should include a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure the plan considers various perspectives. The working group should include representatives from the following groups:

i. Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)

TMAs offer free advice and assistance in getting the development of STPs off the ground in schools and communities.

ii. Municipal/County Representatives

Municipal/County Representatives include elected officials, traffic engineers, or town planners, and they can support implementing infrastructure related decisions.

iii. School/School District Representatives

Representatives from the school and school district offer great insight into the travel patterns and needs of their students. Their participation will be vital to making any necessary school policy changes to implement the vision of the STP.

iv. Students

It is especially important in high school STPs that members of the student body have the opportunity to voice their opinions on how the project develops; this may include developing goals, sharing challenges, and prioritizing potential interventions.

v. Parents

Including parent representatives from the PTA or other similar groups can help to ensure that the parent perspective is represented.

vi. Community Representatives

There may be other organizations within the community that have goals that align with SRTS that could prove to be valuable partners in developing and implementing a STP. Potential partners may include community-focused local non-profit organizations, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, and local environmental organizations.

c. School Description

A description of the school or schools provides the scope of the plan. It should include the number of students enrolled, school hours, arrival and departure procedures, school neighborhood description, and the number of students. It should also detail the health and demographic information of the school. This information helps ensure the plan is contextually accurate to the specific school's values, priorities, and community culture.

Section 1: Introduction

Case Studies and Examples



Create Leadership Opportunities and Roles for Students in the Working Groups

Active involvement in the creation and development of the plan promotes a greater sense of investment in the plan's success from the students, the plan's primary stakeholders. Positions in the working group for student leaders would provide valuable professional development opportunities, benefiting students who are looking to develop skills for post-high school endeavors. Additionally, offering a stipend for participating in the working group would expand the pool of students who can join, as it would include those who might otherwise need to take an after-school job.

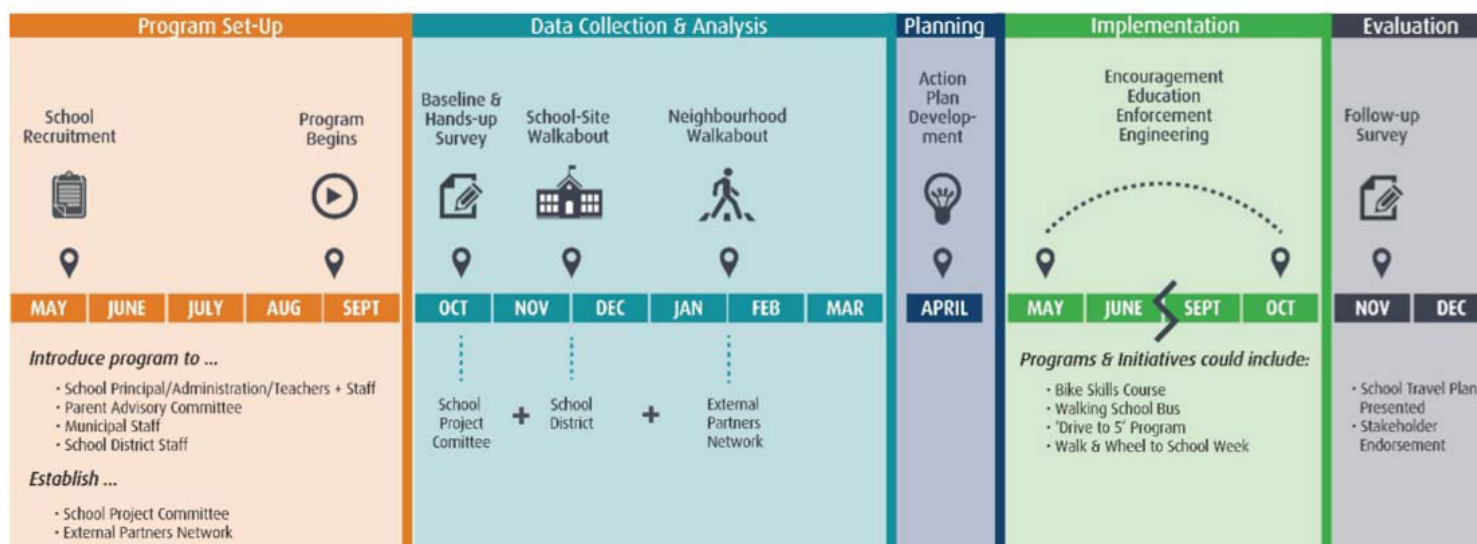
At the Eglinton High Schools in Toronto, Canada, students sat on the school's multidisciplinary STP Committee, attending meetings and sharing their work and ideas. Students also participated in sub-committees, which met once a week during lunch to learn about elements of the STP (i.e., complete streets), reflect on their own travel choices, and plan and implement action items related to the STP, like creating materials for information campaigns promoting STP.

By participating in their school's main STP committee or the sub-committees, students received community service hours, developed new skills, like analyzing the data from the student travel surveys using Excel, and enhanced their written and oral communication skills.

Provide a Timeline for the School Travel Planning Process

When defining a School Travel Plan, it's beneficial to include a timeline of the planning process. This provides context for the various stages the plan has undergone to reach completion.

The Royal Bay Secondary School STP in Royal Bay, Canada provides a school travel planning process graphic that depicts the five phases of the 18-month STP process.



School Travel Planning Process from Royal Bay Secondary School's STP

Section 2

Existing Conditions

Section 2 collects baseline data to understand existing conditions that promote or prevent active transportation at and around the school. This data is collected through maps of the school environment, walk and bike assessments, a review of the existing programs and policies, and an Active Transportation Needs Analysis.

Section 2: Existing Conditions

a. Current School Travel Environment

i. Maps of the School Environment

Maps of the school environment should include a map of the school neighborhood that shows a 2.5-mile radius around the school and a school site map that shows the school property.

ii. Walk and Bike Assessments

Walk and bike assessments evaluate the sidewalk, road, and neighborhood conditions around the school, and identify key safety improvements that can make walking and biking safer and easier.

b. Existing Programs and Policies

There might be some existing programs and policies at the school or in the community that promote or hinder active transportation. Examples include an active bike club that the STP can leverage to promote recommendations.

c. Active Transportation Needs Analysis.

This type of assessment uses demographic data, like income level, race/ethnicity, and disability status, to identify populations or geographic areas that have limited opportunities and resources for countermeasures

Considerations

- Account for student driving and parking, and determine how that impacts traffic flow, parking capacity, and safety.
- **Account for school-related athletics and extracurricular clubs that may alter students' arrival and departure times from school.**
- Identify any rules, regulations, or procedures related to students traveling to and from school by their own vehicle.
- Assess whether the school's surrounding area includes any significant traffic generators in the area that high schoolers would want to travel to, like shops, parks, community facilities, or transit stops.
- **Create opportunities for high school students to contribute directly to the data collection.**
- Assess students' likelihood of leaving campus during lunchtime and analyze its effect on student travel patterns. If the school allows students to leave campus during lunch, that can create a bottleneck of traffic at lunchtime and encourage students to drive to school rather than use alternative transportation options.
- **Perform an Active Transportation Needs Analysis to gauge where targeted outreach, engagement, and direct involvement should be prioritized.**
- Evaluate historic zoning ordinances, land uses, traffic patterns, streetscape design, and other built environment factors and how they have contributed to local challenges and how these challenges have impacted communities.

Section 2: Existing Conditions

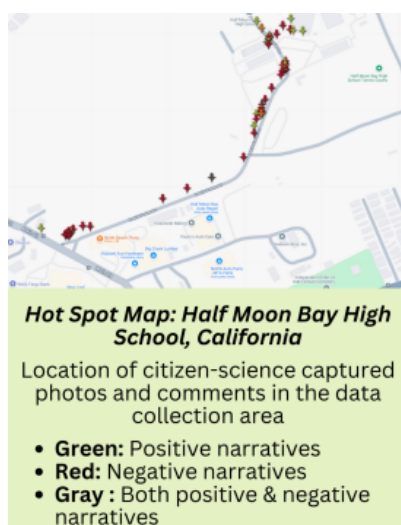
Case Studies and Examples



Identify School-Related Extracurricular Clubs

The Upper Shirley School's STP includes a list of after-school clubs and the day of the week the club meets. This detailed schedule highlights the weekly frequency of extended school days, which is crucial for planning and implementing future safety measures. For example, this information informs when entrances should be open and amenities should be accessible for students walking or biking to school before and after the main arrival and dismissal times.

Create Opportunities for High School Students to Contribute Directly to the Data Collection



The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program collaborates with Stanford University's Our Voice initiative, a mobile app that empowers individuals to become citizen scientists. Through this app, high school students conduct research, take photos, and create maps to identify factors that facilitate or hinder walking or biking to school.

Our Voice partnered with students in the AP Environmental Science class at Half Moon Bay High School, and conducted a 'citizen science scavenger hunt' to determine what makes a local path safe or unsafe for bicyclists and pedestrians. This effort led to several actionable ideas developed by the students, including expanding the drop-off area and repainting road markings.

← Results from citizen science activities conducted at Half Moon Bay High School

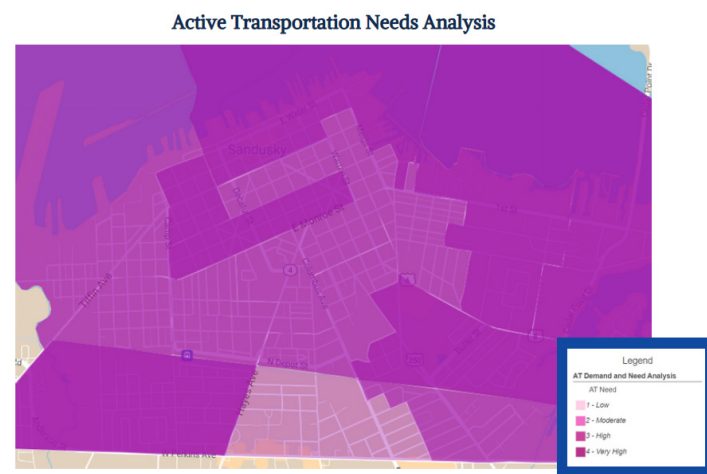
Resource:

[Stanford University's Our Voice Approach](#)

Perform an Active Transportation Needs

Ohio SRTS Guidelines offer a five-step process on how to conduct a custom transportation needs analysis. Using this process, the Sandusky City School District in Ohio created an Active Transportation Needs Analysis. This analysis identifies geographic concentrations of opportunity limited residents with unsafe, disconnected, or incomplete active transportation networks. The resulting map guides the selection and prioritization of the plan's countermeasures. The metrics used in the needs analysis include:

- Minority groups
- Youth and older adults
- Poverty
- Educational attainment
- Limited English proficiency
- No access to a motor vehicle



Active Transportation Needs Analysis for Sandusky, Ohio

Resource:

[Ohio Safe Routes to School Guidelines](#)

Section 3

Community Engagement

Section 3 outlines the different avenues of community engagement that support the completion of the plan beyond the working group's efforts.

Section 3: Community Engagement

a. Student Engagement

Student engagement should be the focus in this plan, as students are the plan's primary stakeholders. Engagement efforts include conducting student surveys and polls, collaborating with active and relevant clubs, and hosting campus-wide assemblies.

b. Staff Engagement

Input should be received from school staff, like teachers and administrators, on how they get to and from school, and what they would like to see changed.

c. Parent/Guardian Engagement

Even at the high school level, parents or guardians can still hold a key role in determining whether students walk or bike to school, so it is important to include the parent perspective. This can be gathered through surveys and meetings.

d. Other Public Input

This category should include input from community members and community representatives.

Considerations

- Identify extracurricular clubs that could serve as potential partners for student engagement.
- **Incorporate creative incentives and hands-on engagement to keep high school students engaged.**
- Explore collaboration opportunities with nearby middle and elementary schools.
- **Identify creative means to publicize information related to the STP, including through social media channels, school newsletters, and the school website.**
- Consider using more direct and straightforward language when communicating with high school students, as compared to younger students who may need a more gentle approach.
- Incorporate flexibility when engaging students, tailoring the approaches to align with their unique strengths and interests.
- Coordinate engagement sessions with students during their lunch period, as it will be the time that the largest number of students are available. After-school meetings might result in students missing their bus or ride home or be late for another after-school activity. Additionally, other after-school activities and responsibilities might result in a lower attendance rate.
- **Find innovative approaches to engage the broader community, such as hosting public input meetings, to present findings and receive feedback.**

Section 3: Community Engagement

Case Studies and Examples

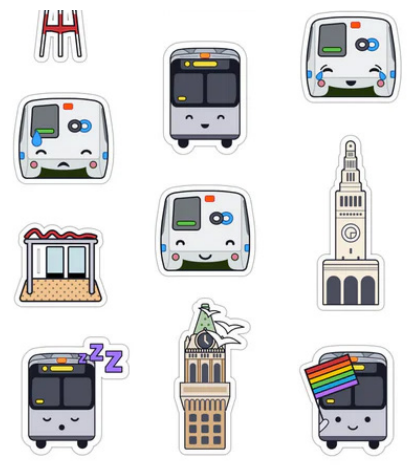


Incorporate Incentives and Activities in Engagement Efforts

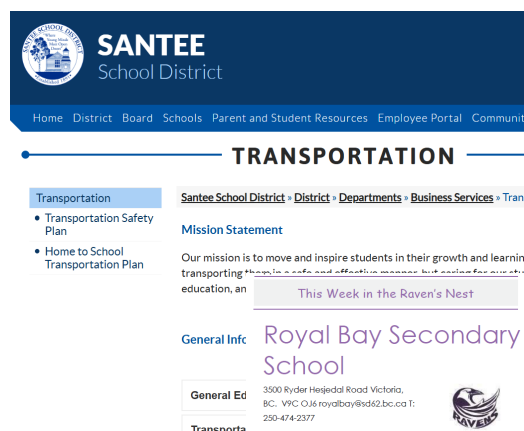
While younger students need more structured engagement, high schoolers are motivated by hands-on activities. Integrating technology or competition-style activities into engagement efforts can facilitate more interactive activities.

High schoolers are also incentivized through more sophisticated incentives than younger students, requiring a higher level of funding and commitment. For example, the South San Francisco SRTS provides younger students with pens for participation, but offers high school students highly popular custom transportation-themed stickers made by local designer Chris Arvin.

Sample stickers from Chris Arvin →



Identify Creative Means to Publicize Information Related to the STP

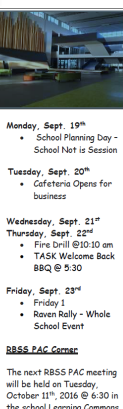


Santee School District's Transportation webpage

The Santee School District in California has a section on their website dedicated to Transportation. It features its draft School Transportation Plan, information on school bus safety rules and regulations, and a link to its Transportation Plan Survey so students, staff, and families can provide input for developing and finalizing the plan.

Royal Bay Secondary School's E-Newsletter

We are excited to announce that RBSS is participating in the Capital Regional District's **Active and Safe Routes to School** project. School Travel Planning is a process that involves students, parents and community partners to find new ways to encourage, motivate and support more children and their families to safely walk, bike or roll to and from school. Active transportation is a great way to support increased physical activity and contributes to our region's environmental, economic and social priorities. We will be looking for interested parents and students to work with decision makers, law enforcement agencies and community partners to explore barriers and generate solutions that can make it easier for families to choose active modes more often.

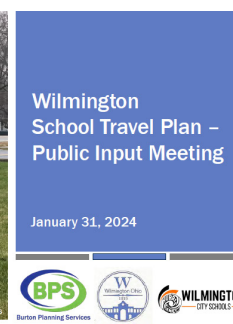


To engage interested students and parents, Royal Bay Secondary School posted an announcement in the school's weekly e-newsletter about the school's active transportation efforts and ways to participate.

Host Public Input Meetings to Report on Findings and Receive Feedback

The Wilmington STP working group in Delaware held a public input meeting to present the issues identified for each of the five schools in the STP. The goal of the meeting was to gather feedback on the most important recommended projects and to identify any overlooked issues.

Wilmington School Travel Plan - Public Input Meeting →



Section 4

Analysis and Results

Section 4 synthesizes the baseline data collection and community engagement efforts together to identify the main issues and barriers preventing active transportation within the neighborhood and school community. By identifying these factors, the STP working group can develop targeted recommendations to enhance safe walking and bicycling, and highlight potential areas for improvement.

Section 4: Analysis and Results

a. Key Barriers and Opportunities

Barriers are the main challenges preventing active transportation use at the school. Opportunities are the potential areas for improvement or growth.

Considerations

- Focus on issues that affect where students and parents/guardians would most likely walk or bike if the right facilities were available.
- **Identify any New Jersey laws that contribute to the identified barriers.**
- Conduct listening sessions with students and other stakeholders to allow them prioritize potential solutions, and to ensure that community priorities influence the chosen issues.
- Aim to address several barriers with each proposed recommendation.

Case Studies and Examples

Identify New Jersey Laws that Contribute to the Identified Barriers

- Does the School or School District have supportive walking and biking to school policies or do the policies discourage, prohibit, or otherwise present barriers to bicycling and walking to school?
- Students under the age of 17 must wear a helmet for all human-powered wheeled vehicles, including bikes, scooters, and skateboards. Is there adequate bicycle parking and a policy for storing helmets during the school day?
- Does the municipality have a comprehensive Complete Streets Policy to ensure streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities?

Section 5

Goals and Action Plan



Section 5 outlines the goals of the STP and presents an action plan with recommendations that encourages active transportation, utilizing both short-term and long-term solutions.

Section 5: Goals and Action Plan

a. Goals

The goals of the NJDOT Safe Routes to School program are to encourage more students to walk and bike to school where it is safe to do so and to improve the areas where it is not safe. The goals of an STP should be statements about what the school wants to achieve and should be tailored to the school's situation and needs. They should be informed by the results from Section 4.

b. Action Plan

The action plan links goals with actions and targets. Actions, or recommendations, are the necessary countermeasures to be undertaken, and targets are the milestones to help achieve the goals and accomplish the actions. Each recommendation should detail the action's responsible party, timeline, projects and programs already in progress, and resources.

i. Short-Term Countermeasure Recommendations

Projects defined as 'short term' are generally high priority, critical connections, or projects that do not require an intensive design effort. They are often low-cost projects that may include signing and striping or other low-impact construction activities.

ii. Long-Term Countermeasure Recommendations

'Long-term' projects are either lower priority or will require additional design efforts to prepare construction documents and bid the projects. A high cost project would generally be considered 'long term' and would include activities like roadway reconstruction, utility relocation, and projects that have right-of-way impacts.

Considerations

- **Create and follow a template for the action plan to ensure consistency and efficiency.**
- **Plan for end-of-trip facilities to make biking easier and more comfortable for students and staff.**
- Consider how non-bicycle wheeled micro transportation devices such as scooters or skateboards should be stored. These devices do not have frames that can be easily tethered, and so may have to come inside to a secure location regardless of available outdoor parking.
- **Identify creative ways for students to disseminate the action plan's message and recommendations, and general safety information.**
- Include leadership opportunities for students in the implementation phase of the STP, including planning and implementing events and engaging in advocacy around school travel issues.
- **Encourage observational learning, or social learning, characterized by peer-to-peer modeling and leading by example.**
- Partner with student clubs and organizations that encourage youth participation in transportation decision-making through a more direct tie to local Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero efforts. If these clubs do not exist yet, consider starting one, like an after-school cycling club.

Section 5: Goals and Action Plan Considerations

Considerations Cont.

- Ensure all STP materials are accessible to students and families.
- Incorporate elements of STP and active transportation into the school's academic curriculum.
- Maintain and foster partnerships between students and local community groups such as churches, recreation centers, and other municipal organizations.
- Create new or enhance existing school policies related to walking, bicycling, student transportation, and physical activity, like a Student Code of Conduct, and Wellness and Nutrition Policy.
- **Leverage national calendar days to enhance the celebratory nature of events and initiatives and to coordinate events with other efforts.**
- Implement recommendations alongside others of similar scope to achieve economies of scale and cost-efficiency when contracting external firms.

Case Studies and Examples

Create and Follow a Template for the Action Plan

The Upper Shirley School in the UK has a table for its action plan that identifies the following information:

- Aim
- Objective
- Target
- Measure/Initiative and Completion Date
- Priority of Measure
- Task/Action and Completion Date
- Responsibility
- Review Date Task/Action

Aim: To raise travel awareness amongst the whole school community and integrate sustainable school travel within the Curriculum and school ethos.

Objective: To promote the travel plan and sustainable travel options to students, parents and staff, and to communicate in a proactive manner with residents.

SMART Target	Measure / Initiative and Completion Date	Priority of Measure (High, Med or Low)	Task / Action and Completion Date	Responsibility (Specify role)	Review Date Task/Action
Ensure that 100% of students and parents are aware of the School Travel Plan and its objectives and their role in supporting them by September 2020 and onwards to keep all new parents and students informed and involved on an annual basis	Promote the travel plan to the whole school community by December 2020	Medium	Once the travel plan is approved include details of the plan on the school website on the travel to school page, add in a summary to the school brochure. September 2020	School Website Manager	December 2022
	Include in the curriculum work on sustainable travel linking in with the Healthy Schools September 2020		Discuss with teachers the ways in which sustainable travel can be included in the curriculum. Consider involvement in Air Quality Education, contact SCC School Travel Planner for advice on how to participate. January 2020	Headteacher and Leadership Team	
	Include the School Travel Plan as an aspect of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) (with regards to the building expansion). July 2021		Create and update SIP as appropriate as the school expands. April 2021 onwards		
Ensure that the local residents are kept informed on the school					

Extract from Upper Shirley School (UK) STP's Action Plan

Section 5: Goals and Action Plan

Case Studies and Examples



Identify Creative Ways for Students to Disseminate Information Related to the STP and its Contents

Students at Firrhill High School in Edinburgh, Scotland made a zine for their peers to educate them on cycling safety and resources.

Extract of the *Wheel Deal* Cycle Leaflet designed to be folded into a zine

The Wheel Deal

Cycling is fun

Get started sort your bike, clothes, routes and skills

Don't just sit there!

A low cost and practical way to get around!

Get the right size bike

A bike that's too big or too small is hard to control and puts you at risk.

A good bike doesn't have to be expensive. A more lightweight bike can help though!

Develop Your Skills

Bikeability Scotland covers:

- bike control skills
- on-road skills
- developing independent cycling skills and safety in traffic

Ask your school for training

Helmets must be worn correctly: squarely on the head, covering the forehead, with straps securely fastened.

Clothing and Carrying Things

You don't need special clothing to cycle. Make sure that nothing can catch in your wheels or chain.

A ruck sack can be fine but use panniers or a front basket to carry heavy stuff.

Stay cool - don't rush and you won't get hot and sweaty!

Have a water-proof jacket (and trousers) for wet days and gloves for cold ones

Get More People Cycling!

Cycle Friendly Schools www.cyclingscotland.org

Bike Week www.bikeweek.org.uk

Bike to School Week www.sustrans.org.uk has ideas of what you and your school could organise

How about having bike breakfasts, second hand bike sales or you could have bike to school weeks?

Get ideas from these web sites!

Encourage Observational Learning, Including Peer-To-Peer Modeling and Leading by Example

Observational learning, or social learning, is when individuals learn by observing other people do something, and then imitating their actions. Peer-to-peer modeling and leading by example can reinforce positive behaviors, like biking to school or wearing a helmet. The STP for the Upper Shirley School highlights several school field trips where students walk to the destination instead of taking a bus. For instance, students walk to the local sports center for the school's Sports Day.

Leverage National Calendar Days

The STP for the Vincent Massey Collegiate School in Winnipeg, Canada includes a schedule of national calendar days that they use to encourage children to walk and bike to school.

Leverage National Days

There are many National calendar days that can be leveraged to encourage children to walk or bike to school. This can range from a simple announcement in the morning to a more structured event like the Terry Fox Run or the Commuter Challenge.

Terry Fox Day	September 16, 2018
International Car Free Day	September 22, 2018
National Tree Day	September 26, 2018
International Walk to School Month	October
National Walk to School Day	October 10, 2018
World Health Day	April 7, 2018
Earth Day	April 22, 2018
Outdoor Classroom Day	May 17, 2018
National Health and Fitness Day	June 2, 2018
Commuter Challenge	June 3-9, 2018
Clean Air Day	June 21, 2018

← Schedule of relevant National Days



Section 6

Monitoring and Evaluating

Section 6 describes the various means of monitoring and evaluating the plan post-implementation. Monitoring efforts are crucial because student travel patterns, travel conditions, and perceptions of safety can vary annually. Regularly gathering fresh data is beneficial for understanding these changes. Additionally, it helps assess the effectiveness of Safe Routes to School interventions. These results can be compared to the data from the existing conditions section to determine the success of the plan's countermeasures and identify areas for future intervention.

Section 6: Monitoring and Evaluating

a. Walk/Bike Assessments

Walk and bike assessments conducted after the implementation of the plan will measure the extent of infrastructural changes in relation to the plan's recommendations.

b. Surveys

Surveys carried out post-implementation will evaluate behavioral changes, mode shifts, and engagement levels in comparison to the baseline survey results.

c. Data Dashboards

Dashboards allow for a visual representation of data that is accessible and easy to interpret. They can be used to identify trends, monitor goals, and inform decisions.

Considerations

- Create opportunities for high school students to contribute directly the data collection and analysis, including developing surveys, creating data dashboards, etc.
- Recognize that behavioral changes will not occur immediately after implementing the plan and infrastructure improvements can take a long time to get off the ground because of administrative and bureaucratic holds like budgeting and council approvals.
- **Compare the data from the existing conditions section to the results from the follow up data collection to determine where future interventions should be implemented.**
- Continue conducting STP Working Group meetings after implementation to keep the plan on track with its goals.
- **Recognize contributing factors that could result in lower response rates in the follow-up survey compared to the baseline survey.**
- Update the travel plan based on follow-up survey and assessment results, as well as with any needs arising with new construction, development, and/or transportation provision.
- Ensure the plan is integrated into long-term school and budget planning, and aligned with school strategies or plans.
- **Establish how the STP will be reviewed and include a timeline of the next planned review.**
- Report and celebrate achievements!

Section 6: Monitoring and Evaluating

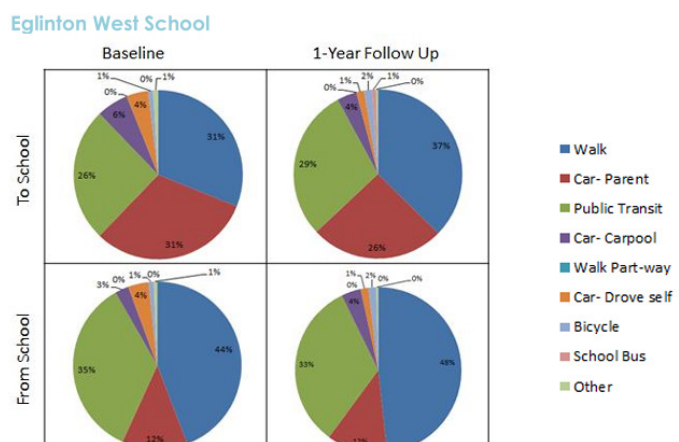
Case Studies and Examples



Compare Follow-Up Data to the Data Collected from Existing Conditions Section

By comparing data at different points in the STP process, the working group can identify which STP interventions are working, and which require modification, removal, or new initiatives to be successful.

The Eglinton West High School STP compared the baseline data to survey data collected one year after implementing the plan. It showed that the number of students walking to school increased, while the the number of students being driven to school decreased. These travel mode shifts indicate a positive response to the STP efforts.



Student Travel Mode: Before and After

Recognize Contributing Factors that Could Result in Lower Response Rates in the Follow-Up Survey Compared to the Baseline Survey

It is crucial to consider various factors that could skew results and introduce response bias among participants. Royal Bay Secondary School experienced a decline in response rates for their follow-up survey compared to the baseline survey. Per their STP, this decrease was likely due to a student turnover rate of approximately 16-33% between the two survey periods. Additionally, few of the infrastructural improvements had been implemented by the time the follow-up survey was conducted. The Royal Bay STP suggests re-assessing schools in three to five years to provide a stronger reflection of travel behavior change.

Establish How the STP Will Be Reviewed and Include a Timeline of the Next Planned Review

Creating and adhering to a schedule that monitors the planned timing for ongoing data collection methods ensures the school remains accountable and consistently progresses towards its objectives.

The STP for Jerrabomberra High School in Australia features a table detailing the proposed schedule for conducting data collection methods, like surveys, interviews, and traffic and parking surveys.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD	TIMING / TRIGGER
Travel Mode Questionnaire Survey	Three months from post-occupancy and then annually and undertaken at the commencement of each school year.
Transport Catchment Access (GIS)	Every two years.
Bus Patronage	Subject to discussion and approval with the internal school working group and/or transport working group. Three months following the provision of a new bus route to serve the school.
Targeted Interviews	Subject to discussion and approval with the internal school working group and/or transport working group. Six months after any substantial change to school operations or changes to STP strategy.
Traffic and Parking Surveys of Lexcen Avenue	Subject to discussion and approval with the internal school working group and/or transport working group. Three months after the school has reached full student occupation (all years). Six months after any substantial change to school operations or changes to STP strategy.

Data Collection Timing

Conclusion

This guide provides recommendations, considerations, and case studies that aim to help Safe Routes to School Regional Coordinators across the State of New Jersey expand Safe Routes to School programming and School Travel Plans to include high schools. The ideas presented in this guide are informed by a combination of desktop research, data analysis, and stakeholder interviews, and they offer suggestions that, while focused on high school programs, may also be applicable to other SRTS initiatives at lower levels. The success to any SRTS program or STP, however, is that its tailored to the school or school district's unique needs. Inherently, a high school has very distinct needs compared to elementary and middle schools, and it is critical to acknowledge, understand, and celebrate those differences when developing a SRTS program or STP.



Middlesex Greenway in Middlesex County, NJ