

# HINSDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN



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## Acknowledgements

During the 2015/2016 school year, the Hinsdale School District (HSD) worked with Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) to develop Safe Routes to School Action Plan for the Hinsdale Elementary School (HES). The school principal, Ann Freitag, helped to provide SWRPC staff with locally relevant guidance and input for this Action Plan. In addition, a team of students from the Keene State College Geography Department provided assistance with data collection and analysis and developed a report of their findings. The Hinsdale School District and SWRPC are grateful for the contributions provided by members of this student team, who are listed below.

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Hinsdale Elementary School (HES) Safe Routes to School Action Plan was created to identify measures that will improve conditions for walking and biking to school for HES. It includes an evaluation of existing travel conditions, strategies to improve education, encouragement, and enforcement activities, and recommendations for physical improvements, educational programs and community efforts that will encourage walking and biking within a one-mile radius of HES.

There are far-reaching implications of an SRTS program. SRTS programs can improve safety for children and a community of pedestrians and bicyclists. They provide opportunities for children to become more physically active and to rely less on their cars. SRTS programs also benefit the environment and a community's quality of life by reducing traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions. The goal of this Action Plan is to identify potential physical improvements and operational measures and programs for HES and the surrounding area. This action plan will be available for use by the school team as a framework to guide actionable next steps, both in the short-term and long-term.

### Project Overview

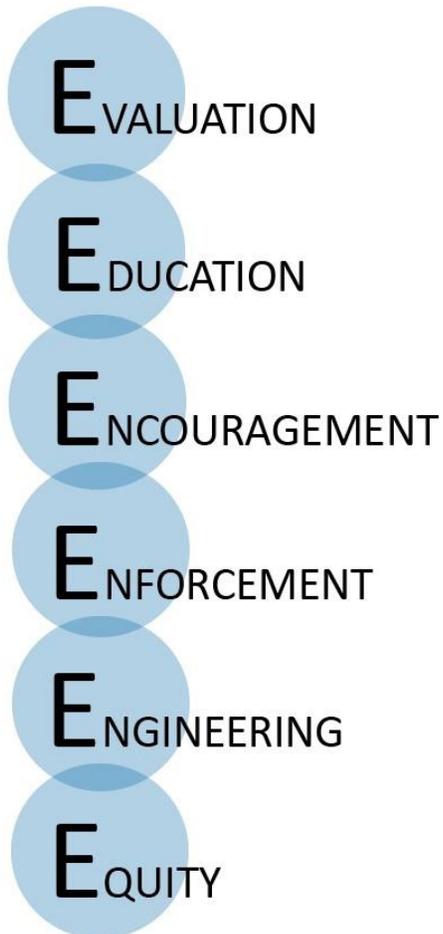
Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) is a national program established in 2005<sup>1</sup> by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that is focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children by creating safe opportunities to walk and bike to school. SRTS programs examine the conditions around schools and conduct activities to improve safety, accessibility, traffic, and air pollution near schools. Communities conducting these programs are encouraged to employ a combination of evaluation, education, encouragement, enforcement and engineering strategies to address the specific needs of their school(s).

Figure 1 - The Six E's of Safe Routes to Schools.



<sup>1</sup> "Safe Routes to School." Federal Highway Administration. Accessed April 21, 2016. [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe\\_routes\\_to\\_school/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/).

This comprehensive approach, called the **five (5) E's**, is centered on an understanding that the barriers to safe walking and bicycling are both behavioral and physical. In 2015, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership introduced a **sixth (6) E**, Equity. Although the focus of this Action Plan is evaluation, each of the six (6) E's (described below) is addressed.



**Evaluation** involves monitoring and documenting outcomes, attitudes, and trends through the collection of data before and after program activities or projects. These activities help track which strategies would be most or least successful and which should be modified for better results.

**Education** programs include teaching pedestrian/bicyclist/traffic safety and creating awareness about the benefits and goals of SRTS. Education programs often incorporate health and environmental considerations associated with walking and bicycling.

**Encouragement** activities generate excitement and interest in walking and bicycling. Special events, mileage clubs, contests, and ongoing activities all provide ways for parents, caregivers, and children to discover or re-discover that walking and bicycling are doable and fun.

**Enforcement** programs are focused on deterring unsafe behaviors of pedestrians, bicylists, and motorists and encouraging all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely.

**Engineering** is a broad concept used to describe the design, construction, and maintenance of traffic control devices or physical measures. These strategies create safer environments for walking and bicycling through improvements to the infrastructure surrounding the schools.

**Equity** means working to support safe, active, and healthy opportunities for children and adults in low-income communities, communities of color, children with disabilities, and beyond. This involves incorporating equity concerns throughout the other E's to understand and address obstacles, create access, and ensure safe and equitable outcomes.

## Benefits of Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs create a safer travel environment near schools and serve to reduce motor vehicle congestion at school drop-off and pick-up areas. One of the main goals of the SRTS program—along with increasing safety—is to increase the numbers of children who walk and bicycle to school. Students that choose to walk or bike to school are rewarded with the benefits of a more active lifestyle, as well as the responsibility and independence that comes from being in charge of the way they travel.

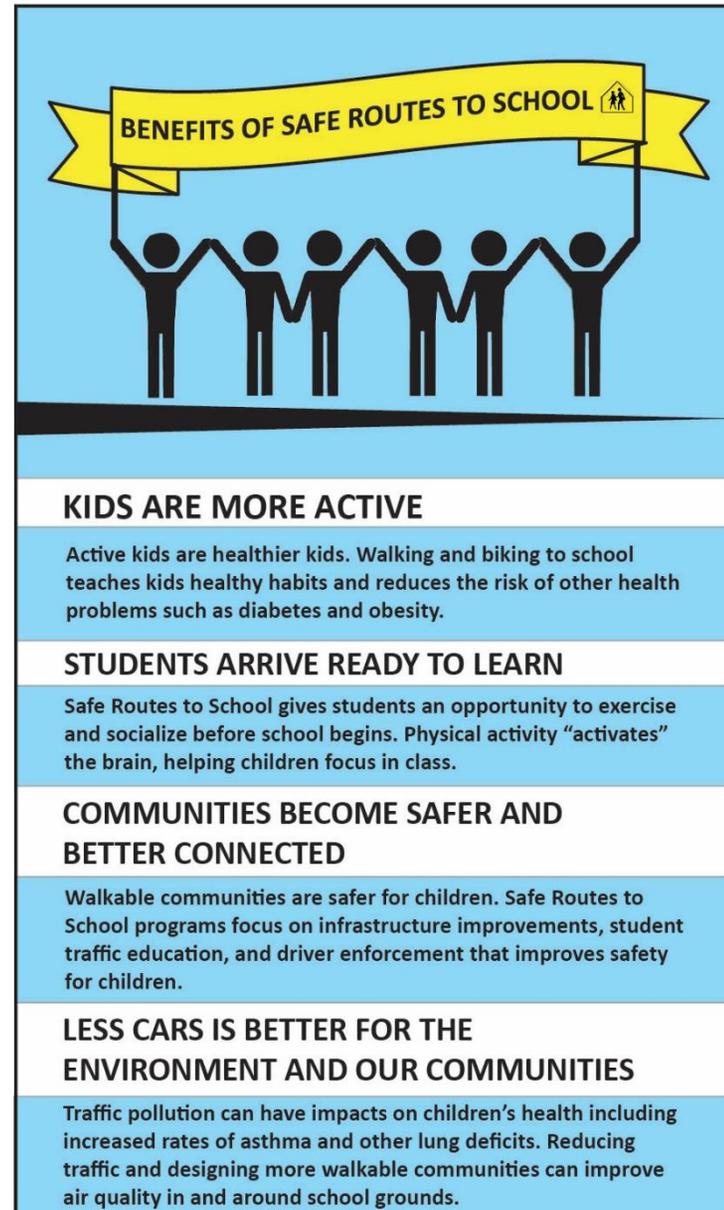
SRTS can improve communities by making walking- and bicycling-safe ways to get to school and by encouraging more children to do so. SRTS programs offer additional benefits to neighborhoods by helping to reduce school-related traffic and provide infrastructure improvements that facilitate walking and bicycling for everyone. Identifying and improving routes for students to safely walk and bicycle to school can also help reduce traffic speeds in neighborhoods, reduce traffic congestion on weekday mornings and afternoons at schools, and decrease auto-related pollution around school environments.

## Planning Process

### *Data Collection*

In the fall of 2015, staff from Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) met with the principals of the Hinsdale schools, SAU staff, and the Hinsdale School Board to discuss the development of SRTS Action Plans for the Hinsdale schools. Following these meetings, SWRPC staff began working with a team of students from the Keene State College geography department (KSC Team) to assess walking and bicycling conditions around the schools and collect baseline data about current walking bicycling trends among students.

Figure 2 - Benefits of Safe Routes to School.



In order to better understand the walking, bicycling and travel conditions of each study area, SWRPC and the KSC Team:

- Conducted field studies to review the behaviors and travel patterns of students, buses, and motorists at the Hinsdale schools during student arrival and departure times;
- Conducted an infrastructure assessment of sidewalks in the Town of Hinsdale;
- Distributed and analyzed parent surveys related to walking and biking behaviors;
- Distributed and analyzed student in-classroom travel tallies related to student arrival and departure travel modes;
- Conducted traffic volume and speed studies at four locations: Plain Road, Brattleboro Road, School Street, and Prospect Street; and,
- Gathered and analyzed accident data in a 1-mile radius of HES.

### *Community Input*

During the spring of 2016 SWRPC staff attended several school events to gather community input about Safe Routes to School activities. These included:

- The Hinsdale Elementary School Celebration of Learning event on April 12, 2016; and
- The Hinsdale Elementary School PTA meeting on April 27, 2016.

Figure 3 - SWRPC staff at a Celebration of Learning event at HES.



### Study Area

Hinsdale Elementary School (HES) is located on School Street near the Hinsdale Middle/High School and the SAU 92 offices. It is approximately one mile west of Town Hall on Main Street (NH 119) and can be accessed from Brattleboro Road (NH 119) to the north and Prospect Street to the south. Figure 5 shows the relationship of the school with the surrounding area. The school includes grades pre-kindergarten to fifth and had 284 students enrolled as of October 1, 2015. Approximately 32% of the student population, or 91 students, lived within one mile of the school in 2015. Figure 6 on the next page shows the approximate locations of students that live within a 1-mile, ½-mile, and ¼ mile radius of the school. Figure 7 on the following page shows the location of K-12 students within the Town of Hinsdale.

Figure 4 - October 1, 2015 Enrollment at Hinsdale Elementary School.

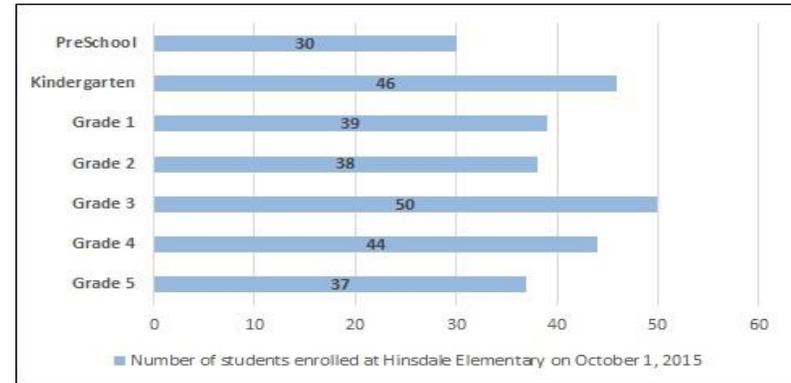


Figure 5 - Aerial view of Hinsdale Elementary School.



Figure 6 - Walking Distances from Hinsdale Elementary School.

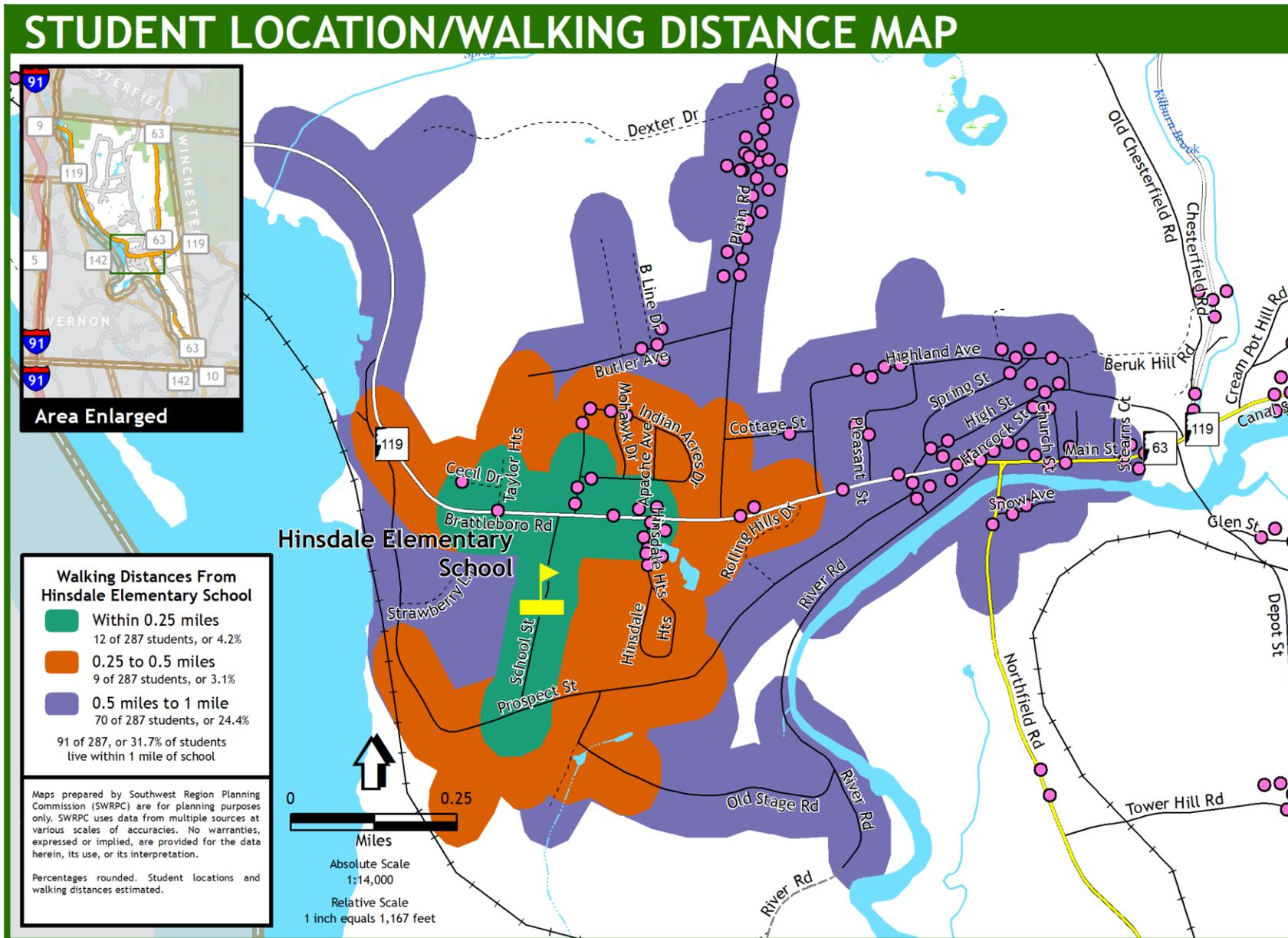
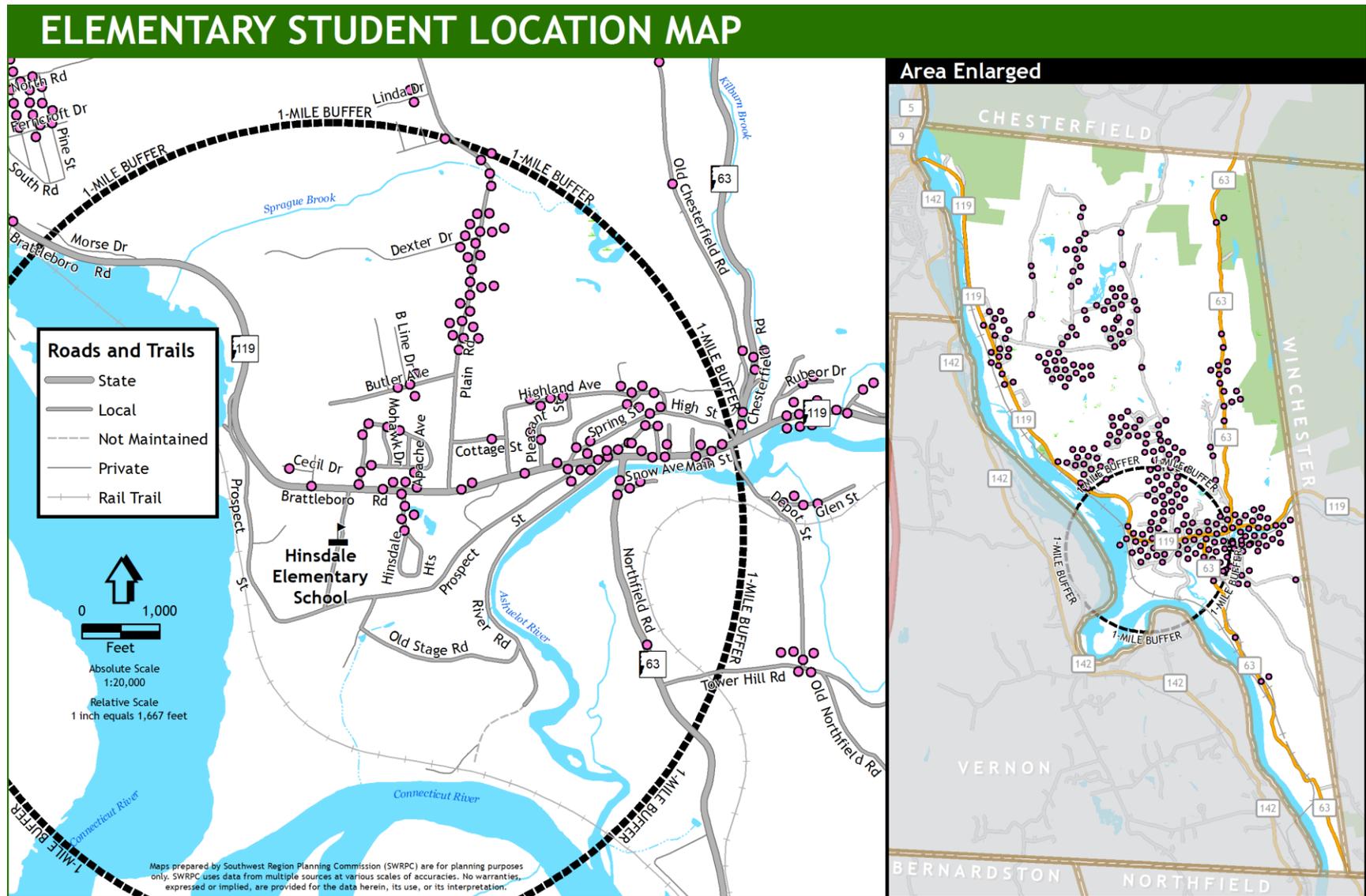


Figure 7 – Location of Hinsdale Elementary, Middle, and High School students within the Town of Hinsdale.



## EVALUATION OF EXISTING TRAVEL CONDITIONS

To better understand existing travel conditions within the study area, SWRPC staff worked with a team of students from the Keene State College Geography Department to conduct field studies to review the behaviors and travel patterns of students, buses, and motorists at HES during drop-off and pick-up hours. In addition, SWRPC staff collected and analyzed traffic speed and volume data at four locations within Hinsdale and distributed and analyzed data from a take-home parent survey and an in-class student tally related to student travel modes. A review of these observations and analysis is summarized in the sections below.

### School Arrivals and Departures

#### *Bus Drop-Off and Pick-Up*

School begins at 8:40 a.m. and lets out at 3:10 p.m. The bus loading and unloading zone is located directly in front of the school on School Street, as shown in red in Figure 9. A few parents were observed using the bus loading and unloading zone to drop off children, despite signs that prohibit use of the bus loading zone for this purpose. In the morning, the bus drop-off zone is marked with orange traffic cones to designate where the bus will be stopping to drop off children. Five staff people (including the principal) and one Hinsdale Police officer were present to help students exit the school bus.

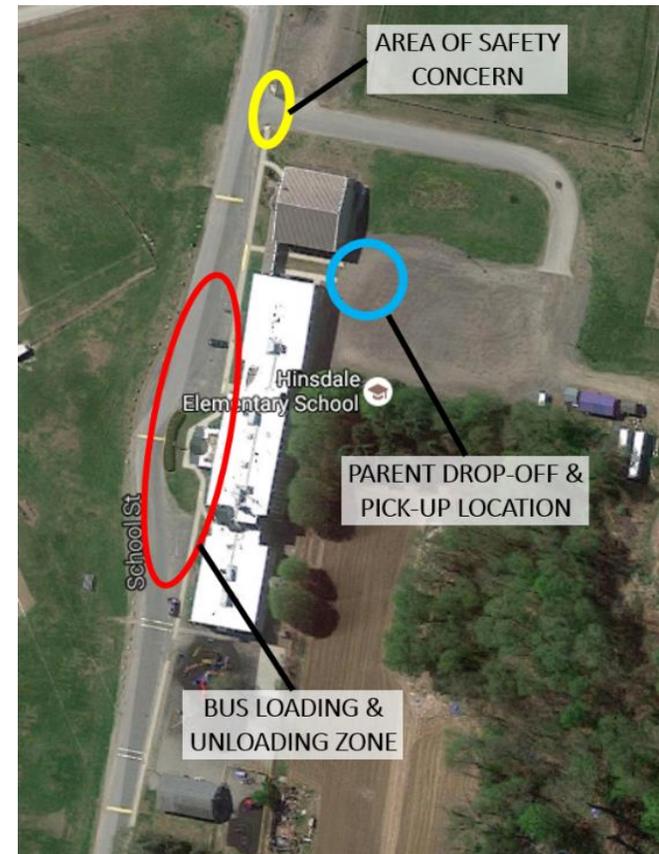
#### *Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up*

In the morning, parents start dropping off their children at about 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the school, at the location shown in blue in Figure 9. The average wait time for student drop-off ranged from one minute when traffic was calm to seven minutes when there was congestion. Parent drop-off and pick-up zones were not clearly marked, and some parents were observed dropping off students in the

Figure 8 – Parent vehicles lining up to pick up students.



Figure 9 - HES Bus Loading and Unloading Zone.



bus-loading and unloading zone. In the afternoon, parents line up to pick up their children in the parking lot behind the school. The average wait time to pick up students ranged from one to 15 minutes.

### *Other Observations*

- There is a potential safety concern at the entrance to the school parking lot, shown in yellow in Figure 9. At this location, there is a high volume of vehicles entering and exiting the parking lot, which creates a point of conflict between turning vehicles and pedestrians walking to school. There is no marked crosswalk at this location or pedestrian crossing signs.
- Many parent vehicles were observed idling in the drop-off/pick-up area before school started.
- Drivers within the bus loading zone were observed backing out quickly, and at times without looking.
- Speeding is not an issue directly in front of the school due to the presence of three speed bumps, however, speeding was detected on School Street further south near the HM/HS as described in the Traffic Conditions section on page 15.

Figure 10 - A 15 mph speed limit sign on School Street.



### Parent and In-Classroom Surveys

SWRPC staff worked with HES faculty and administration to conduct the National SRTS Parent and In-Classroom Surveys during the 2015-2016 school year. These surveys helped generate a baseline of the number of students currently biking and walking to school and identified some of the barriers that prevent parents from allowing their children to walk or bike to school.

#### Parent Survey

The parent survey collects information from parents about how their children arrive and depart from school and what concerns, issues, and barriers parents have about their child walking or biking to school. Survey results will help determine how to improve safety conditions and make walking and biking easier and more convenient for children and parents.

Ninety households responded to the Parent Survey, representing 138 students or 48% of the student body. The primary arrival mode, as indicated by the sample of parents, is family vehicle (52% of households) followed by school bus (37% of households). Of the students who arrive in a family vehicle, about 38% live less than 1 mile from school and 21% live between 1-2 miles from school. Of the students who arrive in a school bus, 29% live less than 1 mile from school and 32% live between 1-2 miles from school. The primary departure mode in the afternoon is family vehicle (46% of households) followed by school bus (44% of households).

Tables 1 and 2 show how many students arrive or depart from school via school bus, carpool, family vehicle, biking, or walking as indicated on the Parent Survey. They also show the distance the students live from home by mode of travel.

Parents cited a number of issues that influenced their decision to allow or not allow their child to walk or bike to and from school. The top factors that influence parents is the distance of their home from school (influences 45% of respondents)

Table 1 - Parent Survey responses to student morning mode of transportation, by distance from school.

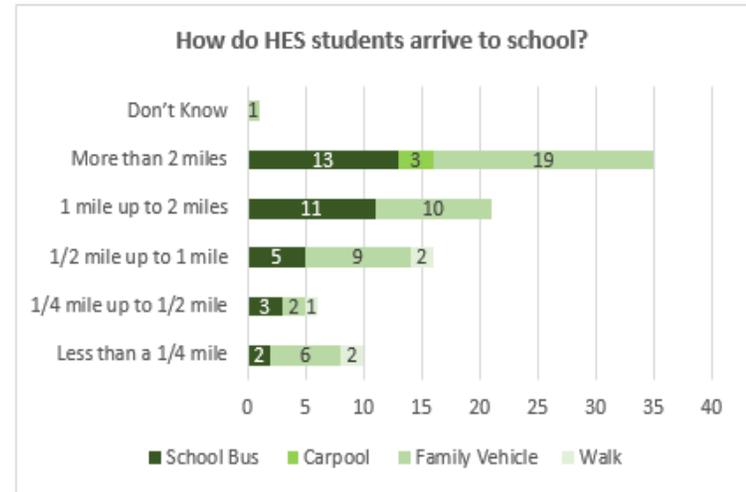
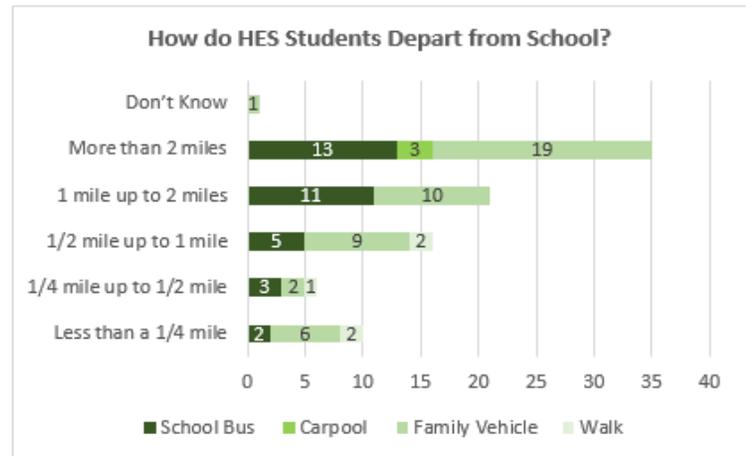


Table 2 - Parent Survey responses to student afternoon mode of transportation, by distance from school.



and the speed/amount of traffic along the travel route (also influences 45% of respondents). Other significant factors that influence parent’s decisions to allow their child to walk/bike to and from school include weather conditions (40%), sidewalk conditions (33%), safety of intersections and crossings (32%) and the time of year (29%).

Over half of all respondents (54%) indicated that they were not comfortable with their child walking and biking to/from school at any age. About 11% of respondents are comfortable with their child walking or biking to school starting in seventh grade, and 10% indicated ninth grade. Fifty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they walked or biked to school as a child, yet only 4% of respondents currently allow their child to walk or bike to school. Although none of the respondents indicated their child bicycled to/from school, 82% of respondents indicated that their child owned or had access to a bicycle. Only five respondents reported that their child walked to/from school. Seventy two percent of respondents indicated that HES neither encouraged nor discouraged their child to walk or bike to/from school.

A sample of comments shared by parents on this survey are included on the next page. Many of these comments emphasize that infrastructure, safety, and fear of violence/crime are factors that influence a parent’s decision to allow their child to walk and bike to school.

Figure 11 - Grade at which parents who live within 1 mile of school are comfortable allowing their child to walk or bike to/from school.

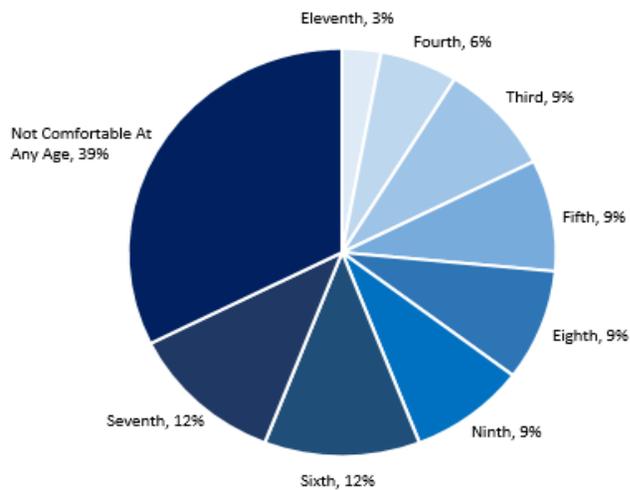


Table 3 - Factors influencing parents’ decision to allow child to walk/bike to school.

Factor	% Respondents
Distance	45%
Speed/Amount of Traffic Along Route	45%
Weather Conditions	40%
Sidewalk/Pathways/Trail Conditions	33%
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	32%
Time of Year (Fall, Winter, etc.)	29%
Time	24%
Violence or Crime	23%
Route Difficulty (Steepness, Flatness, etc.)	14%
Adults to walk or bike with	11%
Lighting Along Walkways	11%
Before/After School Activities	10%
Convenience of Driving	10%
Crossing Guards	3%

## Selected Comments from the Parent Survey

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- "The 'sidewalk' on the right side of the street heading west up the hill to the school is basically nonexistent. Having my child cross at the Plain Road intersection could have serious risk."
- "He doesn't walk because there is not a sidewalk on Plain Rd and cars fly along it."
- "[We] walk as a family if good weather and time, also would walk more if road had sidewalks"
- "Brattleboro St speed limit too fast."
- "Plain Rd is not safe to walk on period. I wouldn't even walk on it."

### CRIME

- "I won't feel comfortable letting my child walk to school as a young female. Also, I'm not home at the time she would arrive home and I wouldn't leave her alone."
- "Unfortunately in the world today, I feel there are people always looking to take advantage of a child walking/playing without supervision."
- "I like to physically see child arriving to school safely."

### DISTANCE

- "I live too far for children in my home to walk or bike to school."

### OTHER COMMENTS

- "If distance, route, traffic, and pathways were acceptable, my child would be allowed to walk home at a teenage level."
- "Children under 13 should not be allowed to walk."
- "I wish more activity breaks were provided for kids like when I was a child."

### In-Classroom Survey

An In-Classroom survey was administered by all classrooms at HES in late October 2015. Teachers surveyed students each morning and afternoon for three consecutive days (Tuesday – Thursday) on their mode of travel to and from school. There were 268 students that shared their arrival modes and 250 that shared their departure modes.

An average of 15 students arrive to school via walking and an average of 16 students depart school on foot, which is roughly 6% of total respondents. Approximately 111 students (41%) rode the bus to school, and 107 students (43%) rode the bus home in the afternoon. The average number of students taking a family vehicle to work dropped by four, from 129 respondents to 125 respondents. The largest change in arrival and departure of students occurred with respondents who carpooled. An average of 13 students carpooled to school, whereas an average of 16 carpooled when leaving school. No students were reported taking transit or other modes of travel to school.

### Pedestrian Infrastructure Conditions

Pedestrian infrastructure includes sidewalks, crosswalks, paved shoulders, off-road trails or paths, and amenities such as lighting and street furniture. The presence or lack of pedestrian infrastructure has a large impact on safety, both real and perceived. Studies have shown that for students living within 1 mile of school, implementation of effective pedestrian interventions can reduce the traffic dangers (real or perceived) that prevent children from walking to school.<sup>2,3</sup>

Table 4 - Mode of travel to and from HES based on in-classroom survey.

Mode of Travel	Morning/Arrival		Afternoon/Departure	
	Average # of Students	% of Total Respondents	Average # of Students	% of Total Respondents
Walking	15	6%	16	6%
Biking	0	0%	0	0%
Family Vehicle	129	48%	125	50%
Bus	111	41%	107	43%
Carpool	13	5%	16	6%
Transit	0	0%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%

Figure 12 - A section of sidewalk in poor structural condition on School Street (left) and in good structural condition on River Road (right).



<sup>2</sup> Beck, Laurie F. and Greenspan, Arlene I. "Why Don't More Children Walk to School?" Journal of Safety Research. 39.5 (2008): 449-52.

<sup>3</sup> Nasar, J.L. (2015). Creating places that promote physical activity: Perceiving is believing. [Research brief.] Active Living Research.

*Statewide Asset Data Exchange System (SADES) Data*

In order to better understand pedestrian infrastructure conditions near the school, SWRPC staff assessed the conditions of sidewalks and crosswalks in Hinsdale using the NH Statewide Asset Data Exchange System, or SADES. SADES provides a common set of collection and training standards, ensuring that data collected throughout the state is comparable and assessed uniformly. The sidewalk assessment includes data such as the width of the sidewalk, sidewalk condition (good, fair, or poor), curb condition (good, fair, or poor), and the presence of buffer strips, curb ramps and crosswalks.

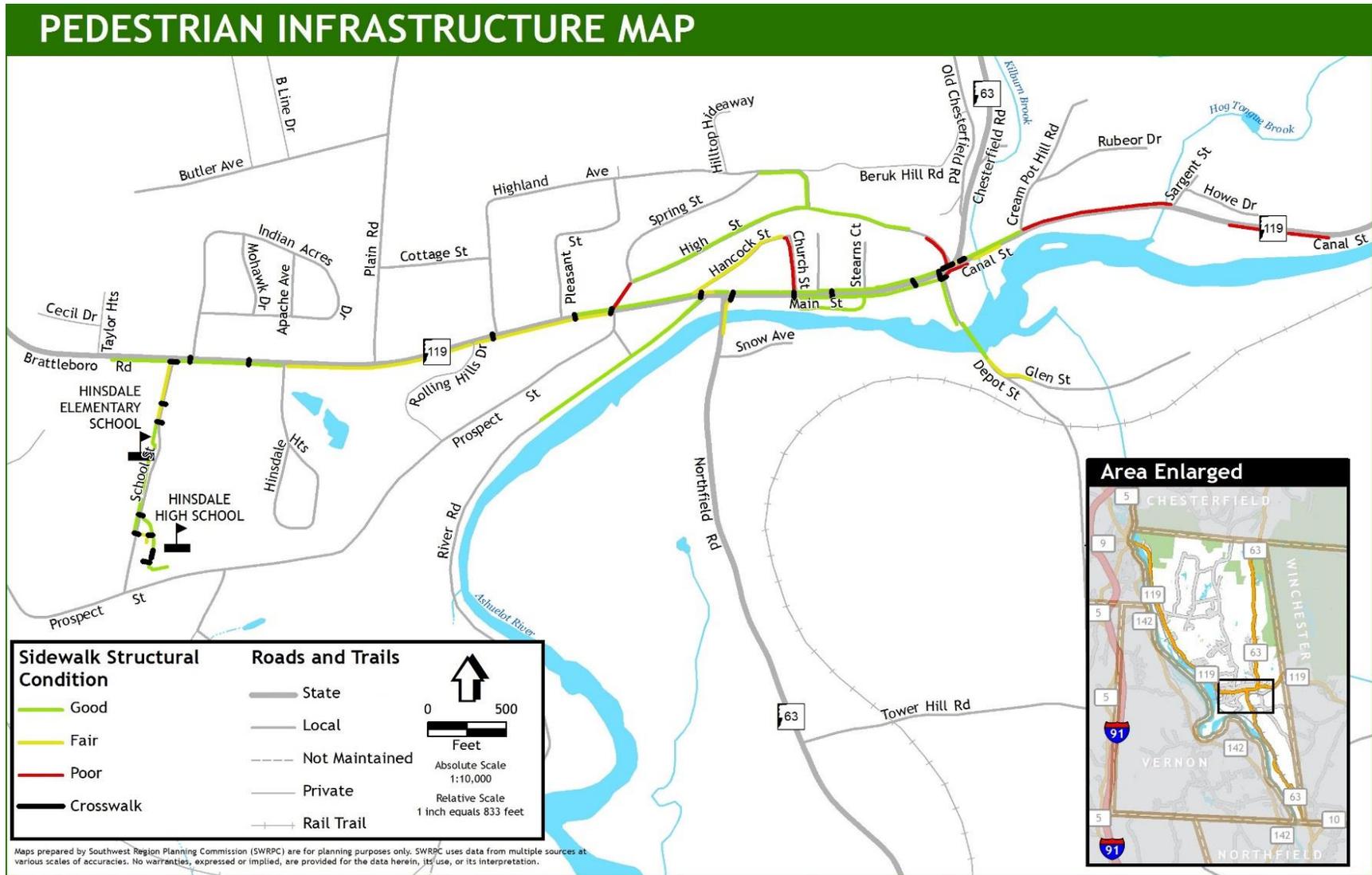
Figure 14 on the next page shows the extent of the sidewalk network in Hinsdale and sidewalk structural conditions. “Good condition” indicates little or no distress or vertical displacements on the sidewalk, “fair condition” indicates the presence of narrow cracks and/or sidewalk displacements less than ½ inch, and “poor condition” indicates sidewalk cracks and/or large vertical displacements greater than ½ inch.

As Figure 14 indicates, there are several locations where sidewalks are in fair or poor condition. In particular, the section of sidewalk along Brattleboro Road between High Street and Hinsdale Heights is problematic for students walking and bicycling to school. While this sidewalk is in fair structural condition, there are other factors that make this sidewalk unsafe for pedestrians. In some locations, there is no buffer between the sidewalk and traffic. Due to the high speeds and traffic volumes along this road, a buffer strip of at least 5 feet in width and a six inch curb would help improve safety by physically and visually separating walkers from traffic.

Figure 13 - Sidewalk along Brattleboro Road between the School and the Hinsdale Town Center.



Figure 14 - Sidewalk conditions near HES.



### Traffic Conditions

To better understand traffic conditions on routes near the school, SWRPC staff conducted traffic volume and speed counts at four locations in Hinsdale, including Brattleboro Road west of School Street (Site 1), School Street in front of the Middle/High School (Site 2), Prospect Street west of School Street (site 3), and Plain Road south of Cottage Street (Site 4). Figure 15 shows the locations of the traffic counters. Table 5, below, shows the minimum, maximum, average, and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed detected at each location in miles per hour (mph) during school arrival and departure times. Figure 16, on the next page, shows the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed for the morning and afternoon at each traffic counter site.

There was significant speeding detected at Site 4 on Plain Road. The posted speed limit at this location is 35 mph, however about 41% of drivers exceeded this speed limit. The maximum speed detected at this location during school arrival and departure times was 62.2 mph, or about 27 mph over the posted speed limit. Due to the lack of sidewalks and paved shoulders on this road, speeding may deter parents from allowing their children to walk or bike on this road. Speeding was detected at Site 1 (Brattleboro Road) as well. During school arrival and departure times, the speed limit is 20 mph due to the proximity of the school. However, the average speed at this location during these times was 31.8 mph in the morning and 30.5 mph in the afternoon. About 15% of drivers in this location were going over 37.2 mph and 35.8 mph in the morning and afternoon, respectively.

Figure 15 - Traffic counter locations in Hinsdale.



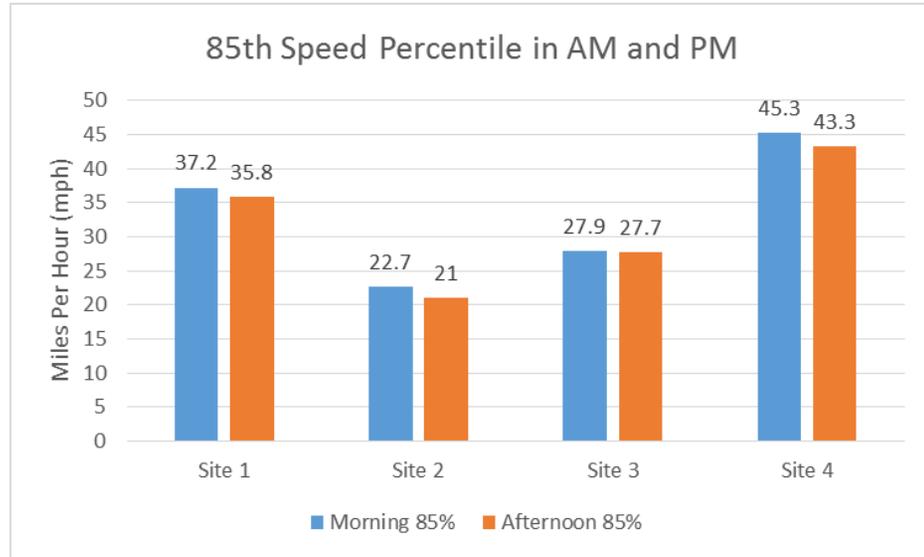
Table 5 - Speed data for Hinsdale traffic study locations.

Traffic Counter Location	Posted Speed Limit	Morning (8:00-9:00 a.m.)				Afternoon (3:00-4:00 p.m.)			
		Minimum	Maximum	Average	85%	Minimum	Maximum	Average	85%
Site 1	20 mph	10	46.8	31.8	<b>37.2</b>	9.9	48	30.5	<b>35.8</b>
Site 2	15 mph	6.5	33.3	19	<b>22.7</b>	6.9	28.2	17	<b>21</b>
Site 3	25 mph	10.2	34.8	24.8	<b>27.9</b>	8.1	37.8	23.8	<b>27.7</b>
Site 4	35 mph	16.5	62.2	38.7	<b>45.3</b>	7.5	55.1	37.1	<b>43.3</b>

On School Street (Site 2), the posted speed limit is 15 mph. The average observed speeds at this location were 19 mph and 17 mph during morning and afternoon arrival and departure times, respectively. Fifteen percent of drivers exceeded 22.7 mph in the morning and 21 mph in the afternoon.

At Site 3 (Prospect Street), the posted speed limit is 25 mph. Average speeds at this location are within the posted speed limit during school arrival and departure times. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds at this location are 27.9 mph in the morning and 27.7 mph in the afternoon. This data suggests that, during school hours, there is not a significant amount of speeding on this road. Overall, the average speed on this road is 25.1 mph, and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is 29.55 mph.

Figure 16 – 85th percentile speeds at traffic counter locations during morning (8-9 AM) and afternoon (3-4 PM) hours.



## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL STRATEGIES

The HES Safe Routes to School program works to create safe, active, and healthy opportunities for all children and seeks to engage families from all incomes, abilities, and walks of life. To achieve this, all of the strategies developed under the 5 “E’s” incorporate the sixth E- equity. The following strategies help HES work towards their goal of increasing the number of students who walk and bike to school and improve safety conditions.

### Education

Education is essential for improving safe walking and biking conditions. HES should consider using this Action Plan as an opportunity to educate the school community about the benefits of walking and biking to school and on safe travel behavior for students and parents. Recommendations for enhancing education and awareness of the importance of and need for safe walking and bicycling routes to school are described below.

#### 1. Schedule school-wide assemblies focused on pedestrian and/or bicycle safety.

All school assemblies provide a great opportunity to communicate key messages about walking and bicycling safety to the student body. Often, local law enforcement or local clubs such as Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary clubs can provide this service at low or no cost to schools. Another organization called the Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire offers bicycle education classes taught by certified instructors from the League of American Bicyclists. To learn more, visit <http://www.bwanh.org/education-2/learn-kids/>.

#### 2. Lead small group “Walkability Audits” for children and parents.

A “Walkability Audit” is an assessment/evaluation of the walking and bicycling environment for a particular route. The general purpose of an audit is to

Figure 17 - In 2012, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine organized a bike rodeo for local schools.



Figure 18 - Community members conduct a walkability audit in Highland Park, Randolph, WV.



identify concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists related to the safety, access, comfort, and convenience of the environment, and also to identify potential alternatives or solutions (such as engineering treatments, policy changes, or education and enforcement measures). The National Safe Routes to School Partnership has created a walkability checklist that parents and students can use to evaluate their walk to school and identify areas that need improvement (see Appendix D). Benefits of a Walkability Audit include:

- Alerts school and town officials to areas within the community that need attention;
- Gives children and parents a supervised, experiential-learning opportunity by teaching them pedestrian safety skills on actual sidewalks and crosswalks, and with real-life scenarios; and
- Raises awareness among parents and school staff about the safest walking and bicycling routes to school.

**3. Provide developmentally appropriate on-the-bicycle education via ‘bicycle rodeos.’**

Bicycle rodeos are a relatively low-cost way to provide vital safety information and practice opportunities for young riders as well as family members who may be supporting their children’s bicycling skill development and ongoing safety. Often, local police departments, fire departments, bicycle shops, bike advocacy groups, or volunteer/service organizations can help organize Bike rodeos.

**4. Start a “Hinsdale Elementary School Bike Club” to teach students bicycling skills in a safe and supervised environment.**

After School Bike Clubs teach students the skills necessary to become responsible cyclists and allow students to practice these skills in a safe and structured setting. Generally, bike clubs are led by at least one staff member or trained coach with help from parent volunteers. HES may want to require students to complete a bicycle safety training course (for example, a “bike rodeo”) before they are allowed to go out on rides. Family members can benefit from learning proper helmet fitting techniques, easy bicycle checks, tips for riding safely with children to school, and specific local laws about where and/or how to ride (e.g. sidewalk riding is allowed for children under age 10 in residential areas, etc.).

**5. Share information on student bicycle and pedestrian safety via the school website, newsletter, and/or other information outlets.**

HES should periodically remind parents and students about school rules for walking and bicycling and provide safety tips. For example, when the weather starts to get cold, the school could post information about the proper clothing to wear while walking or bicycling in cool weather.

**6. Include information about how families can walk, bike, take the bus, or carpool to school on the HES website.**

By posting information such as who is eligible to ride the bus, where parents can find information about bus routes and schedules, recommended walking/bicycling routes to school, etc., HES can help make it easier for parents to decide the best way for their child to get to and from school.

Also, the school may want to consider providing resources to help parents arrange carpools (see Strategy 2 under “Encouragement” for more information).

**7. Give presentations about Safe Routes to School at School Board meetings, parent group meetings, and other meetings as appropriate.**

A HES SRTS task force should consider giving at least one presentation to the Hinsdale School Board and Parent Teacher Association each year about the Hinsdale Safe Routes to School program. This presentation could include information such as an overview of the SRTS Action Plan, an overview of the benefits of Safe Routes to School, and/or an update on the Safe Routes to School activities that HES has undertaken or will undertake during the year. The SRTS task force may also want to consider giving presentations to other groups that may have an interest in Safe Routes to Schools, such as the school board and a Hinsdale wellness committee.

### Encouragement

Encouragement activities help generate excitement and interest in walking and bicycling to school. Coordinating special events, contests, mileage clubs, and ongoing activities all provide ways for students to discover, or re-discover, the benefits of walking and bicycling to school. Encouragement activities can also reward students for walking and bicycling to school and help the school community celebrate accomplishments made towards its SRTS goals. Encouragement activities can be done with little funding and can remind students that walking or bicycling can be fun. Several recommended encouragement activities are listed below:

**1. Organize Walk/Bike to School Day events to promote walking and bicycling to school.**

Walk and Bike to School Day events create opportunities for children to interact and socialize with their peers and encourage families and children to try walking or bicycling to school. National Walk to School Day occurs the first week of October, and National Bike to School day occurs the first week of May, but many schools choose to hold walk/bike to school day events throughout the year. For example, some schools designate the first Wednesday of every month as “Walking Wednesday”. For more information, guidance, and resources on how to plan a Walk to School Day event, see the [Walk to School Day Guide](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org), available at [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org)

Figure 19 - Symonds Elementary School students get their cards punched for the Symonds "Walk, Roll, and Ride" program.



2. Organize a walking school bus or bicycle train with parents and community members.

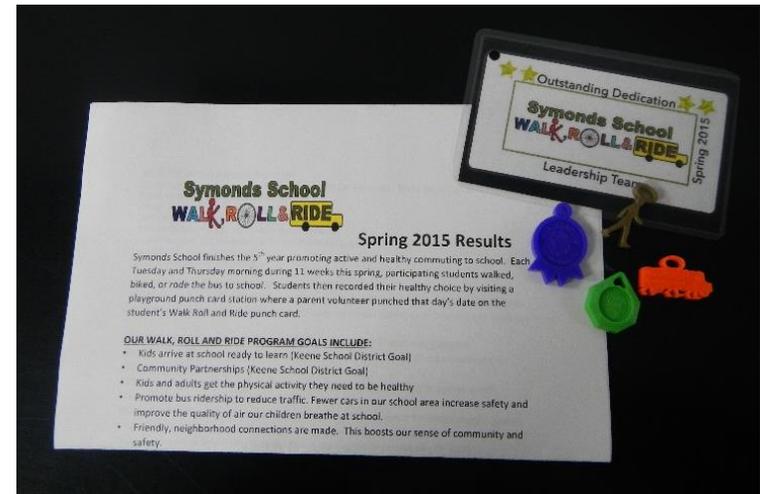
A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. It can be informal (usually organized by parents or neighborhoods) or a formal school program. A variation on the walking school bus is a bicycle train where a group of children and adult leaders ride bicycles together to school. Since many parents are hesitant to allow their child to walk or bike to school alone, a walking school bus or bicycle train can alleviate that concern by ensuring there is adult supervision. Because Hinsdale is a rural town, the walking school bus should begin at a central location, which may increase the amount of families who participate. Tips for organizing a Walking School Bus include:

- Decide whether a formal or informal walking school bus program is more appropriate for HES. If it is a formal school program, designate a staff member or teacher to coordinate with volunteers and families.
- Recruit parent volunteers to help supervise children as they walk to school.
- Have a clearly defined meeting location and a safe walking route to school.
- Keep lines of communication open with parents in case the walking school bus is canceled for any reason, such as inclement weather or 2-hour delay.
- For coordinating bicycle trains, teach children how to ride safely on the road as a group. Normally, more adult

Figure 20 - Salt Brook Elementary students and parents organized a walking school bus for Walk to School Day in in 2013.



Figure 21 - Symonds Elementary School tracks the number of trips students take using punch cards. At the end of the year, students who participate are recognized at an all-school assembly and receive prizes.



supervision is needed for bicycle trains than for walking school buses. One adult for every three to six children is recommended.

**3. Create a school-wide mileage club or contest to offer incentives to students who bike or walk to school.**

Mileage Clubs can provide quick reinforcement to students for walking and bicycling to school. Students track the number of times they walk or bike to school and are rewarded with recognition, prizes, or awards. Prizes can include stickers, wristbands, healthy treats, etc. Contests can be between individuals, classrooms, or between schools. Mileage Clubs are generally year-round programs, but schools can also choose to coordinate a “Mileage Contest” as an event. Tips for organizing a Mileage Club or Contest include:

- Bring in a local expert, such as Beth Corwin from Symond’s Elementary School in Keene, to share lessons learned from developing a successful “Walk, Roll, & Ride” program.
- Identify a program coordinator, such as a PE teacher or another staff member that is enthusiastic about the program.
- Decide where children can accrue mileage (on the way to school, at home, on the school campus).
- Create system for logging and tracking mileage or number of times walked/bicycled. Utilize free physical activity tracking tools provided by Safe Route’s to School’s “Fire up Your Feet” initiative to log and track mileage or number of times students walked/bicycled.
- Decide on incentives (recognition at school assembly, trophy or other type of award).
- Seek funding to support the program—materials, awards, prizes, etc.
- Recognize and reward participation.
- Track participation.
- Make changes as needed—the program will change over time to fit the unique needs of your school community.

Figure 22 - Tips for organizing a walk/bike to school day event.

- Designate an **event organizer**. This could be a parent, PE teacher, school principal, or local non-profit organization.
- Try to include all students, including those who live too far to walk, by designating a **remote drop-off location**. To ensure students of all abilities can be involved, seek input from your Special Education staff and confirm that Walk to School Day routes are accessible.
- Recruit **partners and volunteers**, such as the police department, parent volunteers, teachers, and school administrators.
- Promote the event ahead of time with **flyers, newsletters, PA announcements, and letters to parents**.
- Contact **local media** and invite **community leaders/local celebrities**, such as the mayor or a team mascot, to your event. Take pictures of the event, and celebrate!

## Enforcement

Enforcement strategies help reduce unsafe behaviors by drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists and encourage all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely. Law enforcement, school personnel, and community members can work together to create and sustain a safe environment for walking and biking to school. Enforcement strategies should be implemented in combination with education, encouragement, and engineering strategies to have a maximum impact. Used on its own, enforcement does not usually result in long-term, lasting changes in driver behavior. Recommended enforcement strategies are listed below.

**1. Install active speed monitors or radar speed trailers to enforce speed limit on surrounding roads.**

Hinsdale Elementary School is near a number of busy roads, where speeding is a concern (namely Brattleboro Road and Plain Road). Portable speed trailers visually display driver’s real-time speeds and compare them to the actual speed limit. They have the potential to reduce speeds and increase awareness of local speed limits. Occasionally, speed trailers are supplemented with a local police officer to further enforce the speed limit. Speed trailers should be placed in locations that do not block pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle traffic, or significant traffic control signs.

**2. Strictly enforce parent pick-up/drop-off process and improve parent pick-up/drop-off zone.**

HES should inform and remind parents of the proper drop-off and pick-up process on a regular basis. The pick-up and drop-off zone could be improved by better communicating traffic flow directions to parents and visitors using painted arrows and signs. HES could also add “No Idling” signs in the parent pick up and drop off zone to reduce potential risks to air quality around school.

Figure 23 - A speed limit trailer communicates driver’s speeds as they drive by.



Figure 24 - Deer Valley School District in Phoenix Arizona uses pavement markings and clear signage to designate parent drop off circulation for school parking lots.



**3. Delineate bus pick-up/drop-off zones.**

Clearly marking the bus loading and unloading zone will improve safety and provide communicate to parents and other vehicles that they are aware of bus activity. To separate the bus zone from other parent pick up and drop off activity, schools will often use orange cones, signs or pavement markings such as arrows and lines.

### Evaluation

Evaluation involves monitoring and documenting outcomes, attitudes and trends through the collection of data before and after program activities or projects. These activities help track which strategies would be most or least successful and which should be modified for better results. Hinsdale School District has already collected baseline data on student travel modes to and from school and parent concerns about walking and bicycling to school. Moving forward, the school should consider the evaluation recommendations listed below.

**1. Administer the “Safe Routes to School Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet” on an annual basis to track trends over time.**

The student arrival and departure tally sheet is simple to administer, and it provides useful data on student travel modes to and from school. In addition, students can be involved with data collection and analysis, turning it into an educational opportunity. By collecting this data on an annual basis, the school will be able to track trends in travel modes over time and adjust education, encouragement, enforcement, and engineering strategies accordingly. The data from the tally sheets can also be used to enhance applications for grant funds to help support Safe Routes to School programs and/or infrastructure projects. The National Center for Safe Routes to Schools will tabulate survey responses for free; for more information please visit [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org). A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix C.

**2. Administer the “Parent Survey about Walking and Biking to School” on a bi-annual basis (every two years).**

The parent take-home survey provides useful information about parents’ safety concerns related to their children walking and biking to school, and it helps to uncover the reasons behind travel behaviors. In addition, students can be involved with data collection and analysis, turning it into an educational opportunity. In order to stay current with the school population, this survey should be administered once every two years. The National Center for Safe Routes to Schools will tabulate survey responses for free; for more information please visit [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org). A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix B.

**3. Update the Safe Routes to School Action Plan every five years.**

The data and recommendations outlined in this Action Plan are intended to be used as a starting point for launching a comprehensive Safe Routes to School program. As the program progresses, the Action Plan will need to be updated to include current data and recommendations that fit the needs of the school and community at that time. The Hinsdale Elementary School staff should consider taking this task on.

**Engineering**

Engineering is a broad concept used to describe the design, implementation, operation and maintenance of traffic control devices or physical measures, including low-cost as well as high-cost capital measures. Infrastructure such as sidewalks, wide paved shoulders or bike lanes, visible crosswalks, trails/paths, and connectivity between sidewalks and trails/paths creates conditions that improve safety for walking and bicycling in the area surrounding the school. Recommended engineering strategies for Hinsdale Elementary School are listed below.

**1. Work with the Town of Hinsdale and N.H. Department of Transportation (NHDOT) to improve pedestrian infrastructure on N.H. Route 119/Brattleboro Road/Main Street.**

The sidewalks and crosswalks along N.H. Route 119 are the only pedestrian infrastructure available for students walking to school from the east side of town. The section of sidewalk on Brattleboro Road between Hinsdale Heights to the west and High Street in particular should be improved. Currently, this section of sidewalk ranges in width from 3 feet to 5 feet and it contains cracks, heaves, and other surface defects. In some locations, it is not separated from the road with a buffer strip and the curb is crumbling. The school should consider working with the Town of Hinsdale and NHDOT to come up with a plan to upgrade this section of sidewalk so it complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and is in good condition. Where possible, the sidewalk should be separated from the road with a buffer strip of grass or concrete, and it should be a minimum of five feet wide.

**2. Work with the Town of Hinsdale and NHDOT to implement traffic calming measures on roads near the school, including Plain Road, Brattleboro Road, and Prospect Street.**

High traffic speeds are a major safety concern for students walking and bicycling to school, especially on roads that lack adequate sidewalks or paved shoulders. The school should consider working with the Town of Hinsdale to implement

Figure 25 - Shoulder markings were used to visually narrow travel lanes on a two-way road in Roland, IA.



traffic calming measures on Plain Road between Butler Avenue and Brattleboro Road, Prospect Street near the school, and Brattleboro Road between the Millstream Riverfront Pak and the School. Speeding was detected on each of these roads during school hours, especially on Plain Road where there are no sidewalks or paved shoulders where students can walk.

Potential traffic calming strategies include narrowing travel lanes when restriping the road to no more than 11 feet, posting speed feedback signs that show driver’s speeds in real time, installing School Zone signs with flashing lights to make them more visible, and/or painting pavement markings to help visually narrow travel lanes (i.e. transverse pavement markings, painted shoulders, etc.).

Figure 26 - A Shared Lane Marking, or “Sharrow.”



**3. Work with Town of Hinsdale to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety on Plain Road**

Plain Road is a significant barrier for students who must walk or bike along that road to get to school. Several parents have commented that they think the road is unsafe even for adults walking or bicycling. According to the traffic study that was conducted on Plain Road, 15% of drivers exceeded the speed limit by more than 10 mph during school arrival and departure times, and the highest speed detected during these times was 27 mph over the speed limit. The school should consider working with the Town of Hinsdale to install pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along the section of Plain Road between Brattleboro Road and Butler Avenue. The presence of a wide paved shoulder, or ideally a paved sidewalk, would greatly increase the comfort and safety of people walking and bicycling along this section of road. In combination with traffic calming measures, a widened shoulder or sidewalk could make it possible for more students to safely walk and bike to school.

**4. Work with the Town of Hinsdale and NHDOT to improve bicycle safety on N.H. Route 119/Brattleboro Road.**

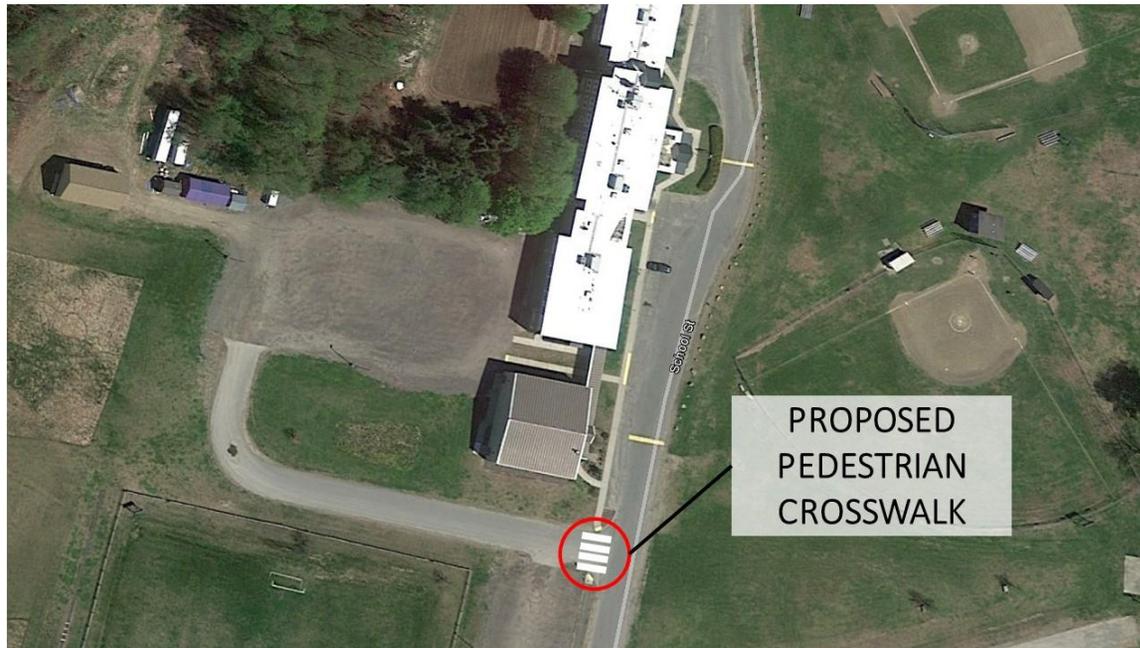
Currently, narrow shoulders and high traffic volumes and speeds make Brattleboro Road feel unsafe for young bicyclists. The School should approach the Town and NHDOT to discuss options for making Brattleboro Road more “bicycle friendly” between the school and downtown area. Potential design considerations could include:

- Narrowing the travel lanes to a minimum of 10 feet to slow traffic and increase the width of the shoulders
- Installing bicycle lanes that are a minimum of four feet wide on both sides of the roadway
- Installing protected or buffered bicycle lanes where space allows
- Placing Shared Lane Markings (i.e. Sharrows) in areas where the road is too narrow to accommodate a four foot shoulder or bike lane
- Including “Share the Road” or “Bicycle May Use Full Lane” signs, and/or other traffic calming measures.

5. Consider adding a pedestrian crosswalk at the entrance to the Hinsdale Elementary School parking lot.

During the field review, the entrance to the HES parking lot was identified as an areas of safety concern for pedestrians walking to school (see Figure 27). There are many vehicles turning into and out of the parking lot, which is where the parent drop-off and pick-up is located. The school should consider painting a pedestrian crosswalk at this location and placing pedestrian crossing signs in order to increase the visibility of pedestrians crossing at this location and remind drivers to yield to pedestrians.

Figure 27 - Site of a proposed pedestrian crosswalk on School Street.



## IMPLEMENTATION

Following the adoption of this Action Plan, Hinsdale Elementary School should identify an existing committee or form a Safe Routes to School Task Force to implement this plan. If possible, the Committee or SRTS Task Force should include representation from parents, school administrators and teachers, community members, City staff and/or officials, and students.

Once a group has been identified to implement this Action Plan, the SRTS strategies should be prioritized based on factors such as the level of impact for each strategy, the funding and/or resources available to help implement each strategy, and the ease of implementation. Figure 28 gives an example chart that can be used to help with the prioritization process. Table 6 provides information about each strategy, including partners to help with the strategy, timeframe for implementation, implementer, and resources for implementation.

### IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

- 1) Designate an existing committee or form a SRTS Task Force to implement this Action Plan that includes the following:
  - a. Parents
  - b. School administrators and teachers
  - c. Community members
  - d. City staff and/or officials
  - e. Students
- 2) Prioritize Strategies for implementation. Factors to consider may include:
  - a. Expected impact of strategy
  - b. Ease of implementation
  - c. Availability of resources such as funding, volunteers, etc.
- 3) Begin putting high priority strategies into action
- 4) Evaluate success and share results!

Figure 28 - Prioritization chart for SRTS strategies.

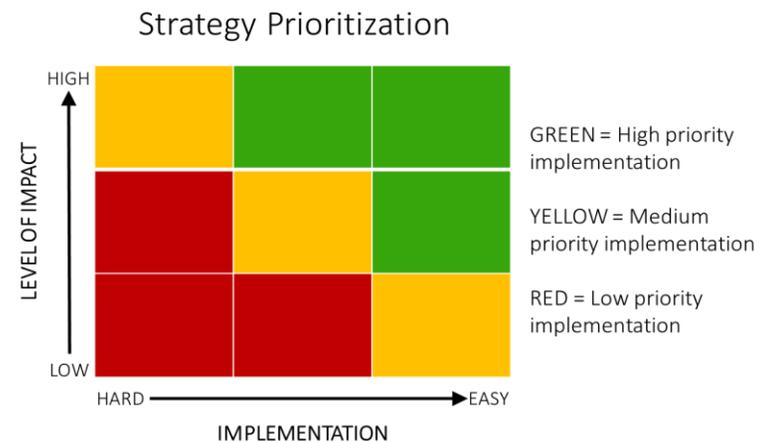


Table 6 - Strategy Implementation Chart goal: To increase the number/percentage of students that walk and bike to school.

	Strategy	Partners	Timeframe	Implementer	Resources
EDUCATION	1. Schedule school-wide assemblies focused on pedestrian and/or bicycle safety.	Local Police Department, Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire, Local Civic Group (i.e. Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc.)	Ongoing/yearly	Hinsdale Elementary School (HES)	Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire; Hinsdale Elementary School (HES)/Hinsdale School District (HSD)
	2. Lead small group “Walkability Audits” for children and parents.	Parent Volunteers, HES SRTS Task Force	3 months - 1 year	HES	N/A
	3. Provide developmentally appropriate on-the-bicycle education via ‘bicycle rodeos’.	Local Bicycle Shop, Local Civic Group (i.e. Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc.)	Ongoing/Yearly	HES/HSD	HES/Hinsdale School District; AFHY Mini Grant Program
	4. Start a “HES Bike Club” to teach students bicycling skills in a safe and supervised environment.	Parents, School Staff person(s) interested in leading the club	3 months-1 year, then ongoing	HES/HSD	HSD; AFHY Mini Grant Program
	5. Share information on student bicycle and pedestrian safety via the school website, newsletter, and/or other information outlets.	Staff in charge of maintaining the school website; SRTS Task Force	Ongoing	HES/HSD	N/A

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	Strategy	Partners	Timeframe	Implementer	Resources
EDUCATION	6. Include information about how families can walk, bike, take the bus, or carpool to school in the HES Website.	Staff in charge of maintaining the school website; SRTS Task Force, SWRPC (to help make walking route maps, etc.)	Ongoing	HES/HSD	N/A
	7. Give presentations about Safe Routes to School at School Board meetings, Parent Group meetings, and other meetings as appropriate.	HES PTA, HES SRTS Task Force, SWRPC	Start September 2016, then ongoing	HES SRTS Task Force	N/A
ENCOURAGEMENT	1. Create a school-wide mileage club or contest to offer incentives to students who walk or bike to school.	HES PTA, Local Businesses, Community Service Groups	3-6 months to implement,	HES SRTS Task Force	HES/HSD, AFHY Mini Grant Program
	2. Organize Walk/Bike to School Day events to promote walking and bicycling to school.	HES PTA, Local Businesses, Community Service Groups	Start September 2016, then ongoing	HES SRTS Task Force	HES/HSD, AFHY Mini Grant Program
	3. Organize a “Walking School Bus” or “Bicycle Train” with parents and community members	HES PTA, Hinsdale Middle/High School Students	3-6 months to implement, then ongoing	HES SRTS Task Force	HES/HSD, AFHY Mini Grant Program
	4. Provide resources for parents to carpool to school.	HES PTA, HSD	3-6 months to implement, then ongoing	HES SRTS Task Force	N/A

HINSDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

	Strategy	Partners	Timeframe	Implementer	Resources
ENFORCEMENT	Install active speed monitors or radar speed trailers to enforce speed limits on surrounding roads.	Local Police Department, Town of Hinsdale	3-6 months to obtain speed trailers, situate in problem areas when needed	HSD	Local Police Department
	Enforce and improve parent drop-off/pick-up process.	Local Police Department, Town of Hinsdale	Start September 2016, then ongoing	HSD	Local Police Department
	Delineate bus drop-off/pick-up zone.	HES SRTS Task Force	Start Fall or Spring 2016	HSD	HSD
ENGINEERING	Work with the Town of Hinsdale and N.H. Department of Transportation (NHDOT) to improve sidewalks on Route 119/Brattleboro Rd.	Town of Hinsdale, SWRPC, NHDOT	1 - 5 years	NHDOT	Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)* grant; Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)*
	Work with the Town of Hinsdale and NHDOT to implement traffic calming measures on roads near the school.	Town of Hinsdale, SWRPC, NHDOT	1 – 5 years	NHDOT (Brattleboro Rd), Town of Hinsdale (Plain Rd & Pleasant St)	TAP*, Town of Hinsdale
	Work with the Town of Hinsdale to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety on Plain Road.	Town of Hinsdale, SWRPC	1 – 5 years	Town of Hinsdale	TAP*, Town of Hinsdale

HINSDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

	Strategy	Partners	Timeframe	Implementer	Resources
ENGINEERING	Work with the Town of Hinsdale and NHDOT to improve bicycle safety on NH Route 119/Brattleboro Rd.	Town of Hinsdale, SWRPC, NHDOT	1 – 5 years	NHDOT	TAP*, HSIP*
	Consider adding a pedestrian crosswalk at the entrance to the Hinsdale Elementary School parking lot.	Town of Hinsdale	6 months – 1 year	HSD/Town of Hinsdale	HSD, Town of Hinsdale
EVALUATION	Administer the “Safe Routes to School Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet” on an annual basis to track trends over time.	SWRPC (can enter data for school)	Ongoing/Yearly	HES SRTS Task Force	N/A
	Administer the “Parent Survey about Walking and Biking to School” on a bi-annual basis (every two years).	SWRPC (can enter data for school)	Ongoing/Every two years	HES SRTS Task Force	N/A
	Update the HES Safe Routes to School Action Plan every five years.	SWRPC (to help update plan)	Every 5 years	HES SRTS Task Force	N/A

\*Note: Projects may or may not be eligible for funds through TAP and HSIP. Please contact SWRPC for assistance with applying for funds via these programs.

## APPENDICES

[Appendix A: Hinsdale Elementary School Field Review Summary](#)

[Appendix B: National Safe Routes to Schools Parent Survey](#)

[Appendix C: National Safe Routes to Schools In-Classroom Student Tally](#)

[Appendix D: Safe Routes to Schools Resource List](#)

## Hinsdale Elementary School Field Review Fall 2015

During the month of October, students from the Keene State College Geography Department visited Hinsdale New Hampshire several times to examine and evaluate the safety conditions of routes in proximity to the school for students who choose to walk and/or bike to school. The students were also looking to grasp a better understanding of the needs and interests of the school community to increase biking and walking ability. These observations took place for both morning drop off and afternoon pick up at the elementary school. The most important findings in these observations are addressed in this document.

### *Parent drop off/Pick up of children*

- In the morning parent drop off wait time was anywhere between 1 minute to 7 minutes.
- Drop off zones were not clearly marked but parents knew where to go from “word of mouth”.
- Some parents dropped their child off at the front entrance of the school which where the loading zone and bus zones were located, not drop off zone (signs are facing the school).



**Right:** “Bus Zone” sign facing the wrong direction of traffic.

**Left:** “Loading Zone” in front of school clearly marked.

- There was slight traffic congestion after slowing down from the speed bumps before cars turned the corner to go around the back of the school for drop off.
- Flow of traffic was smooth because School Street is a one-way street during school hours (7:00am-4:00pm).
- In the afternoon parent pick up took anywhere from 1 minute to 15 minutes.
- Parents drove their cars around the back of the school where they formed a line around the parking lot.
- There is a potential safety concern at the right turn to go behind the school to wait in the pickup line because students are crossing the road there to get into cars waiting in the parking lot along the field.



**Right:** Right turn off of School Street to enter back of the school where students are crossing to cars waiting in the parking lot by the field where parents are waiting for pickup.

**Left:** Parents starting pickup line in the back of school (no specific direction).

### *Bus drop off/Pick up of children*

- Bus loading and drop off zones are not clearly marked with paint, there is one sign that says “Bus Drop/Pickup”.
- In the morning the drop off/pickup zone is marked with orange traffic cones to show where the buses will pull up to the sidewalk curb.
- In the morning it took 4 minutes to unload all students off of the bus and into the school. The afternoon took 6 minutes to load all students on to the bus that were not being picked up by their parent.
- The school principal and three teachers stood at the entrance of the school as students got onto the bus in the afternoon.
- Four teachers, school principal, and one Hinsdale Police officer stood at the entrance of the school as students got off of the buses in the morning.
- The bus drop off/pickup zone are restricted to other vehicles by the “School Bus Only” sign.
- One crossing guard stood to assist students in crossing the road at the intersection of School Street and Brattleboro Road at 3:10pm when school was let out and stayed for approximately 10 minutes.



**Right:** The only “Bus Drop/Pick up” sign on the sidewalk in front of the school

**Middle:** Orange traffic cones during morning drop off to dictate bus drop off area

**Left:** “School Bus Only” sign to show restriction of other vehicles at the sidewalk in front

### *Speed*

- Three speed bumps are present at entrance of School Street, in the middle, and one at the end of the street.
- Traffic is slow because of speed bumps out front of the elementary school but cars are driving faster by the high school because speed bumps are mostly located in front of the elementary school.
- Speed signs are located near the beginning of School Street on Brattleboro Road (15 mph) and there is also a speed sign located at the end of School Street when taking a right on to Proctor Street (25 mph).

### *Wayfaring*

- Neither the entrance to School Street nor the exit are clearly marked. People seem to be making their own routine from the sign that indicated a one-way street during school hours.
- Walking and biking routes in the school zone are defined by sidewalks. There are no signs.
- Sidewalks are only located by the elementary school.
- No indication of speed limit signs on school grounds. The only speed limit signs are located on the streets off of School Street (Prospect Street and Brattleboro Street).



**Right:** Only sign posted about direction of school zone traffic.

**Left:** Speed limit sign posted on Proctor Street at the end of School Street

### Lighting

- Lights are on the sides of the buildings but no street light posts are present.
- There are street lights on both main roads leading to School Street (Brattleboro Street and Prospect Street).

### Bike use/Facilities

- Bike rack is located in between the main school building and the gymnasium.
- There are 60 spots available for bikes and is located in a secure area where they can be monitored by anyone on school grounds.
- There were no bicycles parked at the bike rack when the school ground was surveyed.
- No bike lanes are present for bikers, they just ride along School Street in any direction.
- Both the entrance from Brattleboro Street and Prospect Street are sharp turns and since there are no signs indicating bikers this could be dangerous to bikers entering or exiting the school grounds.
- Bikers are required to wear helmets if they are biking to the elementary school.



Elementary school bike rack showing no bikes present on this day.

## Sidewalks

- Sidewalks located on school grounds but are in fair condition and made of concrete.
- Grassy shoulder is on one side of the sidewalk that interferes with walking path only slightly, but it is still very walkable
- Sidewalks in this area have curb ramp transitions and are handicap friendly.
- Sidewalk stops right in front of the high school where a new sidewalk begins that is in much better condition than the elementary school sidewalks.
- Sidewalk is interrupted by the entrance to the school playground in the back.
- Sidewalks are also only located on one side of School Street (East).
- On the day that was observed, students and parents and teachers at the elementary school made very good use of the sidewalks that were present.



**Right:** Sidewalk in fair condition out front of elementary school.

**Left:** Poor sidewalk that stops at playground entrance



## Crossings

- There is one crosswalk past the elementary school gym and just before the high school that connects both parking lots together.
- There is no sign that indicates pedestrian crossing.
- There was no crossing guard present of the first day that we observed but on our second trip there was a crossing guard that was located on the corner of School Street and Brattleboro Road at 3:10pm when school was let out and stayed for approximately 10 minutes.
- Vehicles on school grounds seemed to always be stopping for pedestrians crossing that were no in a crosswalk.

## Driver Behavior

- On the day that was observed, many cars were parking in front of the school at the “Loading Zone” signs and would quickly back out without looking.
- Drivers followed a single line of traffic to exit and enter School Street.

## Environmental Conditions

- Noise of cars and traffic was not an issue.
- Buses were turned off instead of idling while they waited for students.

- Most parents kept their cars on while they were waiting to drop off or pick their child up, less parents shut their engines off while they waited in line.

### *Policies*

- Non-custodial parents are allowed to pick students up as long as the school is notified of this change.
- Bike locks are not available for student at the school but they are allowed to bring their own to lock their bike to the bike rack.
- Helmets are required for students to wear while riding their bike to school but are not supplied by the school.
- Extensive afterschool program is offered that contains 80-100 children and varies each week.



8. Has your child asked you for permission to walk or bike to/from school in the last year?  Yes  No

9. At what grade would you allow your child to walk or bike to/from school without an adult?

(Select a grade between PK,K,1,2,3...)   grade (or)  I would not feel comfortable at any grade

**Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box**

10. What of the following issues affected your decision to allow, or not allow, your child to walk or bike to/from school? (Select ALL that apply)

11. Would you probably let your child walk or bike to/from school if this problem were changed or improved? (Select one choice per line, mark box with X)

- Distance.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Convenience of driving.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Time.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Child's before or after-school activities.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Speed of traffic along route.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Amount of traffic along route.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Adults to walk or bike with.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Sidewalks or pathways.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Safety of intersections and crossings.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Crossing guards.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Violence or crime.....  Yes  No  Not Sure
- Weather or climate.....  Yes  No  Not Sure

**Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box**

12. In your opinion, how much does your child's school encourage or discourage walking and biking to/from school?

- Strongly Encourages  Encourages  Neither  Discourages  Strongly Discourages

13. How much fun is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

- Very Fun  Fun  Neutral  Boring  Very Boring

14. How healthy is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

- Very Healthy  Healthy  Neutral  Unhealthy  Very Unhealthy

**Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box**

15. What is the highest grade or year of school you completed?

- Grades 1 through 8 (Elementary)  College 1 to 3 years (Some college or technical school)
- Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school)  College 4 years or more (College graduate)
- Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate)  Prefer not to answer

16. Please provide any additional comments below.




## Appendix D: Safe Routes to School Resources

### **National Safe Routes to School Guide:**

[http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide\\_full.pdf](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_full.pdf)

This guide is a comprehensive online reference manual designed to support the development of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs. Available online or in a downloadable PDF version, the guide covers engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement, evaluation and more.

### **Safe Routes to School's Bicycle and Pedestrian Curricula Guide: Making the Case for Bicycle and Pedestrian Youth Education**

<http://www.in.gov/indot/files/BicyclePedestrianCurriculaGuide2011.pdf>

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership created this guide to provide background and tips for systematic implementation of bicycle and pedestrian safety education and a variety of curriculum programs and materials are provided.

### **How to Plan a Walk to School Day Event Guide:**

[http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/sites/default/files/WBTS\\_HowToPlan\\_ForWeb.pdf](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/sites/default/files/WBTS_HowToPlan_ForWeb.pdf)

This guide provides steps, tips, and ideas for planning a fun and safe walk to school day event.

### **Get Out and Get Moving: Opportunities to Walk to School through Remote Drop off Programs:**

[http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/SRTS-Remote-Drop-Off-Rural\\_School\\_Districts-FINAL\\_20140611.pdf](http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/SRTS-Remote-Drop-Off-Rural_School_Districts-FINAL_20140611.pdf)

This resource provides information on organizing a remote drop off location and offers examples of how different schools have structured their own remote drop off programs to ensure safety.

### **Safe Routes to School Encouragement Guide**

[http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide\\_Encouragement.pdf](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_Encouragement.pdf)

The Safe Routes to School Encouragement Guide provides tips for organizing a variety of encouragement activities including walk to school day events and mileage clubs and contests.

### **Student Drop off and Pick up Guide:**

[http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide\\_Dropoff-Pickup.pdf](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_Dropoff-Pickup.pdf)

The Student Drop off and Pick up Guide provides information on how to improve drop off and pick up procedures using engineering, enforcement, and education, and encouragement solutions.

### **School Walk and Bike Routes: A Guide for Planning and Improving Walk and Bike to School Options for Students**

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5463FD69-F7B9-477D-B9AA-D21CEEFCF722/0/SchoolAdminGuide.pdf>

This guide provides resources for school administrators and educators to help develop, maintain, and improve school walk routes and address bicycle and pedestrian safety.

### **Walkability Checklist**

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/walkabilitychecklist.pdf>

The walkability checklist allows users to evaluate a neighborhood's walkability to plan safe walking routes to and from school.

### **Bikability Checklist**

[http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/Bikeability\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/Bikeability_Checklist.pdf)

The bikability checklist allows users to evaluate a neighborhood's bikability.