



School Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

POLICY PAPER & TOOLBOX

1. Introduction

Purpose

This policy paper and toolbox provide guidance for improving school drop-off and pick-up procedures to enhance student safety, reduce traffic-related conflicts, and support walking and rolling to school. The document combines best practices, policy recommendations, and a practical, easy-to-use menu of solutions that schools, school districts, and the City can draw from when addressing specific arrival and dismissal challenges. Strategies are organized to support real-world application, allowing users to identify and implement approaches based on their site conditions, constraints, and goals.

Project Context

Arrival and dismissal periods are the busiest and most complex times of the school day. High concentrations of students, families, vehicles, and school buses must move safely and efficiently through a limited amount of space within a relatively short period of time. When school sites are not designed or managed to accommodate these demands, congestion, conflicts, and safety concerns result.

These challenges affect students traveling by all modes, including walking, biking, rolling, school bus, and private vehicle. They also influence perceptions of safety and impact families' transportation choices over time.

This document was developed to support schools and partners in identifying and addressing common arrival and dismissal challenges. It provides a framework, best practices, and practical strategies to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support a wider range of transportation options for students and families.

Project Background

This document was developed through South San Francisco's participation in the School Travel Fellowship, an initiative administered by the San Mateo County Office of Education Safe Routes to School Program. The fellowship supports collaboration between school districts, local governments, and community partners to improve student travel safety and access.

The South San Francisco fellowship team included representatives from the South San Francisco Unified School District, the City of South San Francisco, and the San Mateo County Office of Education Safe Routes to School Program. As part of the project, walk audits were conducted at participating school sites during arrival and dismissal

periods to observe circulation patterns, loading and unloading activities, pedestrian and bicycle movements, and interactions between students, families, and vehicles.

The walk audit findings were used to identify common challenges and opportunities across school sites. The framework, best practices, and toolbox strategies included in this document are intended to address recurring themes observed during the audits while providing flexibility for schools to select approaches that best fit their unique conditions and community needs.

How to Use This Document

This document is designed to help schools, school districts, and school stakeholders move from identifying challenges to implementing practical, context-sensitive solutions. It begins by synthesizing key findings from the South San Francisco walk audits and practitioner insights to highlight common patterns and opportunity areas across schools. These findings are then organized into a framework for improving arrival and dismissal conditions across four focus areas (Arrival & Dismissal Operations; Family Behavior & Communication; Active Transportation Encouragement; and Site & Network Conditions), helping users identify where to focus their efforts.

Building on this foundation, the document provides policy guidance and strategic approaches to define key priorities, followed by a toolbox of strategies that serves as a flexible menu of solutions. These strategies are intended to support real-world implementation and can be selected and adapted based on each school's specific conditions, constraints, and goals. Strategies may be used individually or in combination, depending on the nature of the challenge.

Additional guidance is included to support coordination and decision-making, such as clarification of roles and responsibilities and a decision-making flowchart to help determine next steps. Case studies are included to illustrate how strategies can be applied in practice and to support ongoing refinement over time.

Together, these elements are intended to provide a clear and adaptable approach to improving arrival and dismissal conditions across a range of school contexts.

Decision-Making Framework

Individuals and groups seeking to improve arrival and dismissal conditions or improve transportation safety at a school should,

(1) Define the problem being addressed. Start by identifying which challenges and opportunities are most pertinent to the specific school. In this document, Section 2 provides an overview of Key Findings from Walk Audits, including 2.1 System-Level Challenges, 2.2 Behavioral & Perception Challenges, and 2.3 Opportunity Areas for Improvement.

(2) Identify candidate strategies. Next, identify candidate strategies. Section 3. Framework for Improving Arrival & Dismissal, defines the categories of strategies employed to improve circulation and behavior, including Arrival & Dismissal Operations, Family Behavior & Communication, Active Transportation Encouragement, and Site & Network Conditions. Section 4. Implementation Guidance provides roles and responsibilities, as well as coordination strategies, for implementing the strategies outlined in Section 5. Toolbox of Strategies.

(3) Evaluate each strategy against its potential to mitigate the problem, congestion reduction, operational feasibility, and implementation effort. Once potential strategies have been selected, it is important to evaluate them on the following basis:

- Potential to mitigate the identified problem: see 5.3 Implementation Matrix for recommendations to address common problems.
- Congestion reduction: consider if the strategy will reduce traffic congestion or encourage families to walk or bicycle, or reduce their vehicle trips.
- Operational feasibility: Who/what organization will lead the strategy implementation, when will it happen (e.g., in-class or after school), and what structural barriers are there to implementation?
- Implementation effort: How much work will it be to implement the strategy? Does the lead organization have capacity and willingness to take it on, and what activities are they not doing by focusing on this instead?

(4) Distinguish documented constraints from assumptions. As you are considering which strategies to move forward with, be sure to think critically about constraints and benefits. Avoid making assumptions about capacity or willingness for a group to take on a strategy without discussing it with them first.

(5) Pilot strategies where uncertainty exists. Test promising strategies on a temporary or small-scale basis before committing significant time or resources. Piloting allows schools and partners to observe how a strategy performs in real-world conditions, gather feedback from students, families, and staff, and make adjustments before broader implementation.

(6) Track outcomes over time. Finally, after piloting the chosen strategy or strategies, evaluate its effectiveness. Record the frequency of the event(s), participation numbers (students as well as family members), and resources distributed. Collect student Travel Tallies and Parent-Caregiver Surveys to evaluate changes in the school's mode split over time; historic data for schools in San Mateo County is available [here](#). Recognize that new strategies may be a part of a greater suite of interventions in collaboration with school facilities and Safe Routes to School programming. Schools may pilot and adjust these strategies over time as they encounter new challenges with arrival and dismissal.

2. Key Findings from Walk Audits

Walk audits conducted across multiple schools in South San Francisco revealed consistent patterns in how arrival and dismissal conditions function across different sites. While each school has unique characteristics, the findings point to shared challenges related to traffic operations, safety, and user behavior. These patterns highlight opportunities to improve not only site-specific conditions, but also broader approaches to managing school travel.

2.1 System-Level Challenges

Across school sites, arrival and dismissal periods are characterized by congestion, unclear circulation patterns, limited or no pedestrian and bicycle connections from the public right-of-way to school entrances, and conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. In many cases, school sites and surrounding streets are operating beyond their

intended capacity during peak periods, leading to queue spillback, double parking, drivers stopping in active travel lanes, and blocking crosswalks.

Visibility and safety are also affected by physical and operational conditions, including wide intersections, limited sightlines at crossings and driveways, and inconsistent use of designated loading areas. These conditions create unpredictable environments where students and drivers must navigate competing movements in constrained spaces.

Existing site layouts and surrounding street networks often do not fully support safe and efficient access during peak periods. Limited curb space, underutilized entrances, and constrained circulation routes contribute to inefficiencies and increase the potential for conflict.

In addition, arrival and dismissal conditions are influenced by how students are released and directed to and from the school site. Walk audit observations and recommendations identify release timing and pick-up procedures as key factors influencing congestion and conflicts at loading areas. When large numbers of students are directed to limited pick-up locations at the same time, demand can exceed available space, contributing to crowding and unsafe interactions. More structured approaches to student release and coordination with pick-up operations were identified as opportunities to improve overall safety and efficiency.

2.2 Behavioral & Perception Challenges

Many of the behaviors observed during arrival and dismissal are responses to existing site conditions, circulation patterns, and operational procedures. Rather than isolated issues, these behaviors often reflect how families and students adapt to congestion, limited space, and inefficiencies within the transportation system.

- Families may double park, stop outside designated areas, or use informal pick-up and drop-off locations when designated loading areas are congested or inconvenient.
- Students may cross mid-block or outside designated crossings when those routes are perceived as more direct or accessible.
- High traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, and complex circulation patterns can reduce comfort levels for walking and biking, reinforcing reliance on vehicle travel and further contributing to congestion.
- Release timing and pick-up procedures also influence arrival and dismissal behaviors. When large numbers of students are directed to limited pick-up locations simultaneously, crowding and conflicts may occur.

More structured student release procedures and coordination with pick-up operations may improve safety, reduce congestion, and support more efficient loading and unloading. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of operational, communication, and infrastructure strategies that improve safety, reduce congestion, and support a wider range of travel options.

2.3 Opportunity Areas for Improvement

The walk audits identified several consistent opportunities to improve arrival and dismissal conditions by better aligning operations, behavior, and site conditions.

First, many of the challenges observed across sites are driven by how arrival and dismissal are currently organized. Congestion, queue spillback, and conflicts at loading areas often reflect a mismatch between demand and available space during peak periods. Audit observations and recommendations point to the potential for operational strategies such as clearer circulation patterns, staggered release of students, the use of alternate drop-off locations, and improved coordination tools to better distribute demand and reduce pressure on primary pick-up areas.

Second, the audits highlight the importance of clear and consistent expectations for families. Observed behaviors such as double parking, mid-block drop-offs, and informal pick-up locations often reflect a lack of clarity or consistency in procedures. Strengthening communication through regular messaging, visible on-site support during transition periods, suggested route maps for families to use to plan their trips, and clearly defined drop-off and pick-up zones can help align behavior with intended circulation and safety practices.

Third, expanding and supporting active transportation options presents a significant opportunity to reduce vehicle demand while improving safety and accessibility. Strategies that make walking and biking more visible, convenient, and supported, such as organized walking and biking programs, improved bicycle parking, and participation in school-based events, can help shift travel behavior over time.

Finally, the audits identify opportunities to better use existing site features and surrounding community assets to support safer and more efficient movement. This includes improving the use of multiple entrances, addressing visibility constraints, and leveraging nearby spaces such as parks, churches, and community facilities as part of broader arrival and dismissal strategies.

Together, these opportunity areas reflect a need for coordinated, multi-layered approaches that address both how school travel is managed and how space is used during peak periods.

3. Best Practices for Improving Arrival & Dismissal

The findings from the walk audits highlight that arrival and dismissal challenges are not caused by a single factor, but rather by the interaction between how school travel is managed, how people behave within that system, and how space is designed and used. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated approach that considers multiple dimensions of the system.

To support this, the strategies in this document are organized into four focus areas that reflect common themes identified across school sites:

- **Arrival & Dismissal Operations** – How arrival and dismissal are organized and managed, including circulation patterns, loading procedures, student release practices, and coordination between school staff and families.
- **Family Behavior & Communication** – How expectations are communicated and reinforced through messaging, education, signage, and on-site support.
- **Active Transportation Encouragement** – Strategies that support walking and biking as viable transportation options and reduce reliance on vehicle travel.

- **Site & Network Conditions** – How physical conditions within and around the school support or constrain safe and efficient movement.

These focus areas are intended to work together. In many cases, the most effective solutions combine strategies across multiple areas. For example, changes to arrival and dismissal operations may be reinforced through clear communication with families, supported by active transportation options, and enabled by adjustments to how space is used.

The following section outlines best practices associated with each focus area. These best practices provide a foundation for improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting more efficient arrival and dismissal conditions across a range of school contexts.

Best Practices for Arrival and Dismissal

This section outlines best practices that all schools should follow to improve arrival and dismissal conditions. These practices are based on common challenges identified through the walk audits and practitioner insights and reflect approaches that can be applied across a range of school contexts.

Improving arrival and dismissal conditions requires aligning how students are released, how families behave, and how space is used during peak periods. The following guidance establishes a consistent foundation for improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting walking and rolling to school. While specific strategies will vary by site, these approaches are intended to be broadly applicable and should be considered as part of any school's arrival and dismissal planning.

4.1 Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Schools should establish clear and consistent procedures for how arrival and dismissal are organized and managed, with a focus on aligning student release with available pick-up and drop-off capacity. Not all strategies will be appropriate for every school. Schools should develop a clear Arrival and Dismissal Operations Plan, which considers factors such as site constraints, staffing, student age, and family travel patterns when selecting operational improvements.

A primary goal should be to reduce peak demand at any single location or time. This can be achieved by distributing student release through strategies such as staggered dismissal, sequencing of student groups, and the use of alternate drop-off and pick-up locations. These approaches help reduce congestion, improve circulation, and minimize conflicts between vehicles and students.

Procedures should also clearly define how vehicles enter, move through, and exit the site, as well as where loading and unloading are permitted. When expectations are clearly defined and consistently implemented, arrival and dismissal become more predictable and easier to manage for both staff and families.

4.2 Family Behavior & Communication

Schools should establish clear, consistent expectations for family behavior during arrival and dismissal and reinforce those expectations over time. In many cases, unsafe or inefficient behaviors are a response to unclear or inconsistently applied procedures.

Best practices include providing regular and consistent messaging across multiple channels, clearly defining drop-off and pick-up locations, and reinforcing procedures through visible cues such as signage and staff presence. During periods of change, temporary on-site support from staff, students, or volunteers can guide behavior and establish new patterns.

Approaches to communication should emphasize clarity, consistency, and shared responsibility. Framing expectations in a way that supports collaboration, rather than assigning blame, can help build trust and encourage participation. As part of a school community, families are more likely to respond to approaches that rely on relationships, positive reinforcement, and collective problem solving.

Over time, consistent communication and reinforcement can help establish predictable and coordinated behavior that supports safer and more efficient arrival and dismissal conditions.

4.3 Active Transportation Encouragement

Schools and partners should actively support walking and biking as viable and visible options for traveling to and from school. Reducing reliance on vehicle travel is a key best practice for improving safety and reducing congestion during peak periods.

Best practices include providing structured and supported options such as walking school buses and bike buses, identifying and promoting recommended routes, and participating in school-based events that encourage active transportation. Supporting amenities, including secure and accessible bicycle parking, can further enable students to choose walking and biking.

Providing pedestrian and bicycle safety education is also a critical component of supporting active transportation. Incorporating safety education into physical education classes helps ensure that all students are taught the skills and knowledge needed to walk and bike safely. This approach supports equitable access by reaching all students, including those who may not otherwise receive this instruction. San Mateo County schools have access to a wide range of SRTS educational resources through SMCOE. Schools are encouraged to incorporate these resources into existing educational programs and take advantage of the support available through SMCOE's SRTS program. Resources are available at www.smcoe.org.

Hands-on learning opportunities, such as bike rodeos, can further support skill development while reducing barriers to participation. These events provide students with opportunities to practice riding skills and can include access to free or reduced-cost helmets, helmet fittings, bike tune-ups, and bike swaps. By addressing both skills and equipment needs, these efforts help make biking a more accessible option for students and families who may otherwise face financial or logistical barriers.

Making active transportation visible, convenient, and supported helps shift travel behavior over time and contributes to safer, more balanced arrival and dismissal conditions.

4.4 Site & Network Considerations

Schools and partners should evaluate how existing site features and surrounding network conditions influence safety and circulation during arrival and dismissal and prioritize improvements that support safe and efficient movement.

Best practices include making effective use of available space by activating additional entrances, improving visibility at crossings and driveways, and clearly defining how curb space is used for loading and unloading. In many cases, these improvements can be achieved through adjustments to site operations and space allocation rather than major physical changes.

Where conditions extend beyond the school site, coordination with the City may be needed to address signage, striping, or other improvements. Nearby community assets, such as parks, churches, and community facilities, should also be considered as part of arrival and dismissal strategies, particularly for alternate drop-off and pick-up locations.

4. Implementation Guidance

Improving arrival and dismissal conditions requires coordination between schools, school districts, the City, and community partners. While many strategies can be led at the school level, successful implementation often depends on aligning roles, responsibilities, and available resources.

5.1 Roles & Responsibilities

Clear roles and responsibilities are essential for effective implementation. The following provides a general overview of how responsibilities are typically shared.

- *Schools*

Schools play a central role in organizing and managing arrival and dismissal. This includes establishing procedures, communicating expectations to families, and coordinating on-site operations. Schools are also responsible for implementing programmatic strategies such as walking school buses, safety education, and school-based events.

- *School Districts*

School districts support schools by providing guidance, resources, and coordination across sites. This may include developing consistent policies, supporting communication efforts, implementing changes to on-campus circulation through signage and striping, and identifying opportunities to scale successful strategies.

- *City*

The City is typically responsible for conditions within the public right-of-way, including signage, striping, traffic control, and other infrastructure-related improvements. The city may also support enforcement, data collection, and coordination with schools to address safety concerns.

- *Community Partners*

Community partners, including parent groups, local organizations, law enforcement, and volunteers, can support implementation through outreach, program delivery, and on-site assistance. Partnerships can be especially valuable for supporting behavior change efforts and expanding active transportation programs.

5.2 Coordination

Implementation does not need to occur all at once. Schools and partners can begin with strategies that are relatively easy to implement and build toward more complex changes over time.

Early actions may include adjustments to procedures, communication, and temporary on-site support. These strategies can often be implemented quickly and can help establish a foundation for more sustained improvements. In many cases, more complex or long-term solutions begin with a simple, low-cost pilot, allowing schools to test and refine an approach before integrating it more fully into school policy and culture.

Over time, schools and partners may choose to expand efforts to include additional programs, coordination with the city, or changes to how space is used. This phased approach supports continuous improvement and refinement and allows strategies to be adapted based on what works in practice.

5.3 Implementation Matrix

The following implementation matrix is intended to support decision-making and problem-solving by helping schools and partners identify appropriate next steps based on the type of challenge they are addressing. The hyperlinks in the implementation matrix link directly to the toolbox of strategies within this document.

Problem: Congestion at Pick-Up & Drop-Off Areas

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Staggered Dismissal	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low–Medium	School	Schools experiencing crowding or long vehicle queues
Alternate Drop-Off & Pick-Up Locations	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low–Medium	School	Schools with limited on-site loading space
Dismissal Management Apps	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with lengthy or disorganized dismissal procedures
Designated Loading Zones & Times	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low	School	Schools experiencing queue spillback or unsafe loading
Rethinking Parking Lot Circulation	Site & Network Conditions	Medium	School/District	Schools experiencing queue spillback or unsafe loading
Carpool Management & Matching Systems	Family Behavior & Communication	Medium	School	Schools seeking to reduce vehicle volumes

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Walk + Roll Event Days	Active Transportation Encouragement	Low–Medium	School	Schools seeking to reduce vehicle congestion

Problem: Queue Spillback into Surrounding Streets

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Staggered Dismissal	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low–Medium	School	Schools with congestion concentrated at dismissal
Alternate Drop-Off & Pick-Up Locations	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low–Medium	School	Schools with limited on-site circulation space
Rethinking Parking Lot Circulation	Site & Network Conditions	Medium	School/District	Schools experiencing queue spillback or unsafe loading
Designated Loading Zones & Times	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low	School	Schools with early queuing or spillback
Clearly Defined Circulation Routes	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with circulation confusion or blocked drive aisles
School Streets	Site & Network Conditions	Medium	City	Schools with severe congestion near entrances

Problem: Vehicle-Pedestrian Conflicts

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Separating Modes of Travel	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with conflicts between travel modes

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools implementing new procedures or needing active supervision
Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with unsafe crossings or visibility concerns
School Frontage & Access Improvements	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with unsafe frontage conditions
Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects	Site & Network Conditions	Low–Medium	City	Schools testing temporary safety improvements

Problem: Unsafe Loading & Unloading Behavior

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Designated Loading Zones & Times	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Low	School	Schools experiencing unsafe loading behavior
Rethinking Parking Lot Circulation	Site & Network Conditions	Medium	School/District	Schools experiencing queue spillback or unsafe loading
Clearly Defined Circulation Routes	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with circulation confusion
Consistent Safety Messaging Campaigns	Family Behavior & Communication	Low	School	Schools with inconsistent compliance
Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing active supervision and reminders
Community-Based Messaging	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools seeking long-term behavior change

Problem: Confusion About Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Consistent Safety Messaging Campaigns	Family Behavior & Communication	Low	School	Schools with inconsistent procedures
Signage & Wayfinding	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing clearer visual guidance
Dismissal Management Apps	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with disorganized dismissal systems
Clearly Defined Circulation Routes	Arrival & Dismissal Operations	Medium	School	Schools with circulation confusion
Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools rolling out new procedures

Problem: Unsafe Crossings

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Discouraging Unsafe Crossings	Family Behavior & Communication	Low	School	Schools where students regularly cross outside designated crossings
Signage & Wayfinding	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing stronger visual guidance
Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing reinforcement at key crossings
Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with unsafe crossing conditions
Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects	Site & Network Conditions	Low–Medium	City	Schools testing temporary crossing improvements

Problem: Low Participation in Walking & Biking

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Walking School Bus & Bike Bus Programs	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School	Schools seeking to increase active transportation participation
Walk + Roll Event Days	Active Transportation Encouragement	Low–Medium	School	Schools building excitement around active transportation
Pedestrian & Bike Safety Education	Active Transportation Encouragement	Low–Medium	School/District	Schools seeking to build student safety skills
Recommended Route Maps	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School District/City	Schools helping families identify safer routes
Bike Rodeos & Resource-Sharing Events	Active Transportation Encouragement	Low–Medium	School	Schools seeking hands-on skill development
Bike-Friendly School Policies	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School/District	Schools seeking to support regular bike access

Problem: Family Concerns About Walking & Biking Safety

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Recommended Route Maps	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School District/City	Schools helping families identify safer routes
Walking School Bus & Bike Bus Programs	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School	Schools seeking supervised active transportation options

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Pedestrian & Bike Safety Education	Active Transportation Encouragement	Low–Medium	School/District	Schools improving safety knowledge and confidence
Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with unsafe crossing conditions
Creating & Leveraging Active Transportation Corridors	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools improving network connectivity and comfort

Problem: Limited Visibility at Crossings

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with unsafe crossings or visibility concerns
School Frontage & Access Improvements	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with frontage-related safety concerns
Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects	Site & Network Conditions	Low–Medium	City	Schools testing temporary safety treatments
Signage & Wayfinding	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing improved visual guidance
Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff	Family Behavior & Communication	Low–Medium	School	Schools needing active crossing supervision

Problem: Limited Walking & Biking Connectivity

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Creating & Leveraging Active Transportation Corridors	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools improving route connectivity

Strategy	Category	Level of Effort	Lead Partner(s)	Best For
Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades	Site & Network Conditions	Medium–High	City	Schools with infrastructure gaps
Recommended Route Maps	Active Transportation Encouragement	Medium	School District/City	Schools increasing awareness of safer routes
Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects	Site & Network Conditions	Low–Medium	City	Schools testing temporary network improvements
School Streets	Site & Network Conditions	Medium	City	Schools seeking safer active transportation access near campus

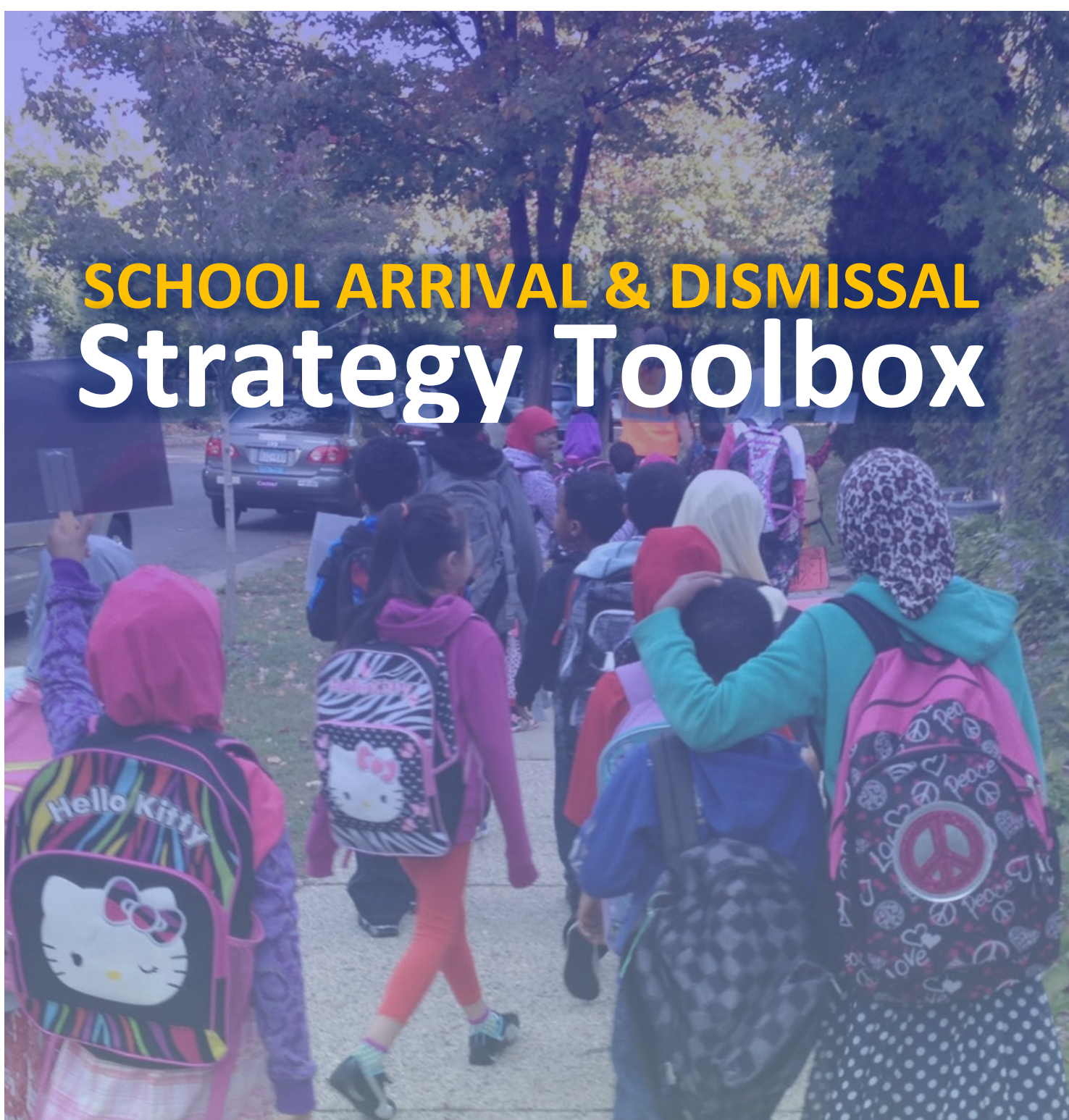
5. Toolbox of Strategies

The following section provides a toolbox of strategies to support implementation of the best practices outlined in this document. The strategies are designed as a practical, easy-to-use menu of solutions that schools and partners can select from based on their specific challenges, site conditions, and goals.

Each strategy aligns with the four focus areas introduced in Section 3 and reflects the best practices described in Section 4. Strategies are intended to be flexible and can be combined and adapted as needed.

Schools and partners are encouraged to begin with feasible approaches and refine them based on observed outcomes. Many effective, long-term solutions begin with simple, low-cost efforts that can be expanded over time.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL Strategy Toolbox



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School Arrival & Dismissal Strategy Toolbox

Strategies are organized by focus area. Schools and partners can use this index to quickly identify potential approaches based on the type of challenge they are experiencing.



Arrival & Dismissal Operations

1. Staggered Dismissal17
2. Separating Modes of Travel19
3. Alternate Drop-Off and Pick-Up Locations21
4. Dismissal Management Apps23
5. Clearly Defined Circulation Route25
6. Designated Loading and Unloading Times27



Family Behavior & Communication

1. Consistent Safety Messaging Campaigns29
2. Discouraging Mid-Block Crossings.....31
3. On-Site Staff or Volunteers.....33
4. Signage and Wayfinding35
5. Positive Reinforcement and Community-Based Messaging37
6. Carpool Management & Matching Systems.....39



Active Transportation Encouragement

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education41
2. Walking School Bus & Bike Bus Programs43
3. Recommended Route Maps45
4. Walk + Roll to School Day and Similar Events47
5. Bike Rodeos and Skill-Building Events49
6. Bike-Friendly School Policies & Bike Parking Facilities51



Site & Network Conditions

1. School Frontage & Access Improvements.....53
2. Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects55
3. Limiting Traffic with School Streets57
4. Rethinking Parking Lot Circulation58
5. Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades61
6. Creating & Leveraging Active Transportation Corridors63



Staggered Dismissal

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing congestion, crowding at pick-up areas, or long vehicle queues



Overview

Staggered dismissal reduces congestion and improves safety by spreading student release over time instead of concentrating it all at once. This approach helps manage demand at pick-up areas and creates a more orderly and predictable dismissal process.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Congestion at pick-up areas
- Queue spillback into surrounding streets
- Crowding at school entrances
- Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians

How It Works

Students are released in phases to reduce the number of people and vehicles moving through the site simultaneously. Schools may stagger dismissal by grade level, classroom, travel mode, or bus schedule to reduce conflicts, improve circulation, and better manage demand at loading areas and school exits.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions: Observe dismissal operations to identify peak congestion times, circulation conflicts, queue spillback, and travel mode interactions. Document existing conditions before implementation.

Define Release Groups: Organize students into staggered release groups based on grade level, classroom location, travel mode, bus schedule, or other operational considerations.

Establish a Release Schedule: Develop a dismissal schedule using short staggered intervals, such as 5–10 minutes, while minimizing disruption to instructional time and family routines.

Identify Priority Travel Modes and Circulation Goals: Determine whether staggered dismissal will support specific goals, such as allowing walkers and bicyclists to exit before vehicle queues form or reducing conflicts at loading areas.

Coordinate with Staff & Families: Ensure teachers, staff, and families understand dismissal procedures, roles, timing, and circulation expectations, while clearly communicating the safety and efficiency goals of the approach.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe conditions during rollout and identify needed adjustments. Extra staffing may be required.

Evaluate and Refine: Document conditions before and after implementation and refine procedures based on observations, feedback, and identified challenges.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Develop and manage the dismissal schedule
- Communicate expectations to families
- Coordinate staff roles during dismissal

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance or support for consistent practices across schools

Implementation Notes

- Timing should reflect student developmental level and supervision needs
- Coordination with after-school programs may be needed
- Clear communication is critical to avoid confusion and frustration
- Initial adjustment period is expected and may require extra staffing

Equity Considerations

Schools should ensure that procedures do not disproportionately burden students of color, multilingual families, students with disabilities, or students who require mobility, sensory, communication, or behavioral supports. Accessible routes, adequate adult support, clear multilingual communication, and consistent procedures are essential to ensuring that staggered dismissal improves safety without creating new inequities.

Tips for Success

- Start with small time intervals and adjust as needed
- Prioritize releasing walkers and bicyclists first to get them safely out of the way
- Use staff or volunteers to guide students during early implementation
- Reinforce expectations through reminders, signage, and engagement with families

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess the effectiveness of staggered dismissal by monitoring:

- Queue length and duration during dismissal
- Congestion at loading areas
- Observed conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Feedback from families and staff
- Student wait times at pick-up locations

Schools may also compare conditions before and after implementation using observations, tallies, photos, or short surveys.





Separating Modes of Travel

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District, City, Transit Providers (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing crowding at entrances, conflicts between travel modes, or inefficiencies



Overview

Separating modes of travel improves safety and efficiency during dismissal by reducing conflicts between students and vehicles. By organizing students based on how they travel home and distributing them across multiple exits, schools can better manage movement, minimize congestion, and create a more predictable dismissal process.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Crowding at main school entrances
- Conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles
- Disorganized dismissal and unclear student flow
- Unsafe mixing of travel modes in high-traffic areas

How It Works

At dismissal, students are grouped by travel mode and directed to specific exits that align with where they are going. Walkers use doors closest to neighborhood sidewalks, while car pick-up students go to a designated loading area. Staff guide students to the correct

locations, and movement is distributed across multiple access points rather than a single entrance.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions: Identify where conflicts occur between vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and other users during arrival and dismissal.

Define Travel Areas and Routes: Establish designated areas and circulation routes for different travel modes, including walking, biking, school buses, family vehicles, and staff parking.

Identify Conflict Points: Evaluate crossings, loading areas, driveways, and shared circulation spaces that may require additional supervision or physical separation.

Install Visual Guidance Tools: Use signage, cones, pavement markings, barriers, or temporary traffic control devices to clearly distinguish travel areas and routes.

Communicate Procedures to Families & Staff: Provide clear maps, instructions, and expectations regarding where different travel modes should enter, wait, load, and travel.

Provide Initial On-Site Support: Use staff or volunteers during rollout to guide circulation and reinforce procedures.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe circulation patterns, conflict points, and compliance during arrival and dismissal.

Evaluate and Refine: Document conditions before and after implementation and adjust as needed

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Assign dismissal locations and manage internal organization of students
- Train staff and support students during transition
- Communicate expectations to families

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance on best practices

City/Traffic Engineering (Support)

- Assist with safe routing, signage, and traffic control near campus

Transit Providers (Support)

- Coordinate bus timing with school procedures

Implementation Notes

- Each exit should provide safe, direct access to the intended travel route
- Younger students may require support
- Internal organization (before students exit) is critical to success
- Signage and repetition help reinforce routines
- Weather may impact how routes are used
- Initial adjustment period is expected and may require extra staffing

Equity Considerations

Mode separation strategies should be designed to ensure all students can access dismissal procedures

safely and comfortably. Schools should consider the needs of students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and families with multiple children. Accessible and safe routes, clear and consistent routines, multilingual communication, and adequate adult support are essential.

Tips for Success

- Use simple maps and visuals in communications
- Color-code dismissal groups
- Practice with students before full implementation
- Assign staff or volunteers to key locations
- Reinforce expectations daily

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether staggered dismissal is improving traffic flow and reducing congestion by monitoring:

- Queue length and duration during dismissal
- Congestion at loading areas
- Observed conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Student wait times at pick-up locations
- Feedback from families and staff



Alternate Drop-Off & Pick-Up Locations

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District, City, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing long vehicle queues, or limited on-site space for pick-up/drop-off



Overview

Alternate drop-off and pick-up locations reduce congestion and safety risks at the school site by shifting some vehicle activity to nearby off-site areas. This approach decreases pressure on the school site and creates safer conditions for students walking and biking near campus.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Long vehicle queues or congestion at the school site
- Unsafe vehicle-pedestrian conflicts near campus
- Limited space for on-site loading/unloading
- Chaotic or inefficient car circulation patterns

How It Works

Families use a designated off-site location for drop-off and pick-up. Students walk to and from the school along a defined route, with staff or volunteers stationed as needed. At dismissal, some students meet caregivers at these locations, reducing the number of vehicles entering the school grounds.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions: Identify where conflicts occur between vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, & buses.

Define Travel Areas and Routes: Establish designated areas and circulation routes for different travel modes.

Identify Conflict Points: Evaluate crossings, loading areas, driveways, and shared circulation spaces that may require additional supervision or physical separation.

Install Visual Guidance Tools: Use signage, cones, pavement markings, barriers, or temporary traffic control devices to clearly distinguish travel areas and routes.

Communicate Procedures to Families and Staff: Provide clear maps, instructions, and expectations regarding where different travel modes should enter, wait, load, and travel.

Provide Initial On-Site Support: Use staff or volunteers during rollout to guide circulation and reinforce procedures.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe circulation patterns, conflict points, and compliance during arrival and dismissal.

Evaluate and Refine: Document conditions before and after implementation and adjust routes, supervision, or traffic control measures based on observations, feedback, and identified safety concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Identify and manage alternate locations
- Communicate expectations and procedures to families
- Coordinate supervision and student support

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance and support for implementation

Implementation Notes

- Locations should be close enough for students to walk comfortably
- Safe, accessible walking routes are essential
- Younger students may require adult supervision
- Clear signage helps reinforce the system
- Consistency is key — families need predictable routines

Equity Considerations

Alternate drop-off and pick-up strategies should ensure all students can participate safely and comfortably. Schools should consider the needs of students with disabilities, younger students, and families with multiple children. Routes should be accessible, well-maintained, and clearly communicated in multiple languages. Schools should also ensure that expectations do not

create additional burdens for families with limited time, mobility, or transportation options.

Tips for Success

- Brand it positively (e.g., “Drop & Walk”)
- Use signage and cones to clearly mark locations
- Start with one location and expand if successful
- Pair with encouragement programs (Walking School Bus, incentives, events)
- Promote the new location by passing out flyers to cars in the car line
- Celebrate participation with the whole school to build buy-in

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of alternate drop-off locations by monitoring:

- Car queue length and congestion
- Traffic circulation and spillback into surrounding streets
- Participation rates
- Observed loading and unloading behavior
- Feedback from families and staff



Dismissal Management Apps

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | District (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing inconsistent, disorganized, or lengthy dismissal procedures



Overview

Dismissal management apps help schools coordinate student pick-up and dismissal procedures through real-time communication and centralized tracking systems.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Congestion at pick-up areas
- Queue spillback into surrounding streets
- Crowding at school entrances
- High volume of office interruptions
- Dismissal confusion and inconsistency
- Unsafe dismissal practices, including releasing students to the wrong individual

How It Works

Families check in through a mobile app or vehicle-based QR code system as they enter the pick-up queue. School staff receive real-time notifications indicating which students should be released, helping coordinate pick-up more efficiently and reduce wait times and congestion.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions and Establish a Baseline:

Document existing dismissal procedures, queue length, wait times, circulation challenges, office interruptions, and dismissal-related safety concerns.

Select a Platform: Choose a platform that aligns with school needs, staffing capacity, and family access to technology.

Establish Procedures and Staff Roles: Define how the system will be used during dismissal and clarify staff responsibilities.

Train Staff and Prepare Materials: Provide staff training and develop family guidance materials and instructions.

Introduce the System to Families: Communicate expectations, timelines, and troubleshooting information before launch.

Pilot the System: Test the platform during a short implementation period and identify operational challenges. Observe queue movement, communication issues, and staff coordination during dismissal.

Evaluate and Refine: Compare conditions before and after implementation and refine procedures based on observed outcomes, staff feedback, and family experience. Share data and findings with the community and other agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Select and manage the platform
- Coordinate staff roles and training
- Communicate procedures to families

School District (Support)

- Support procurement, technology coordination, or consistency

Implementation Notes

- Staff training and family onboarding are critical
- Backup procedures should be maintained in case of technical issues
- Clear pick-up procedures should still be communicated outside the app
- Additional staffing may be needed during early implementation

Dismissal Apps to Consider

Most platforms offer a free demo before payment is required.

- Pikmykid
- Pickup Patrol
- Carline App
- Car Rider Pro
- School Dismissal Manager
- FetchKids
- Kids Pickup
- iDismiss
- DashPass
- Schoolhouse Driveline

Equity Considerations

Schools should provide alternative communication methods for families who may have limited access to smartphones, internet service, translated materials, or digital platforms. Procedures should ensure that all families can participate regardless of technology access or familiarity.

Tips for Success

- Start with a small pilot (1-4 weeks) to get community feedback and buy-in
- Use QR codes that are easy to scan and provide families with visible vehicle tags – both as a backup and also for families without smartphones
- Provide families with simple multilingual instructions and clear visuals at the entrance
- Reinforce procedures consistently during rollout to encourage adoption and to improve efficiency
- Gather staff and family feedback

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether car line management apps are improving coordination and reducing congestion by monitoring:

- Pick-up wait times
- Queue length and circulation efficiency
- Number of dismissal-related office interruptions
- Staff and family feedback
- Overall dismissal duration and organization

1 Vehicle Arrival



Staff scans carline cards and communicates with families.

2 Students Ready (Classroom or Waiting Area)



Students are prepared for dismissal and wait for their vehicle to be called.

3 Student Release



Staff calls students to the dismissal area in an organized manner.

4 Student Pickup



Students enter the vehicle and dismiss safely.



Clearly Defined Circulation Routes

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | City (As Needed)

Best For: Schools experiencing circulation confusion, unsafe vehicle movement, congestion, or conflicts within school parking lots and loading areas



Overview

Clearly defined circulation routes establish predictable movement patterns for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists within school parking lots and loading areas during arrival and dismissal. Clear circulation patterns can create safer, more efficient movement of traffic.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Unsafe vehicle maneuvers in parking lots
- Confusion about where vehicles should queue
- Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Blocking of drive aisles or loading areas

How It Works

Schools establish designated circulation patterns for entering, moving through, and exiting the school site. Routes may include separate paths for family vehicles, buses, staff parking, walking routes, and bicycle access. Circulation patterns are reinforced through signage, pavement markings, cones, maps, and staff guidance.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions and Establish a Baseline:

Document existing circulation patterns, congestion points, conflict areas, and unsafe vehicle or pedestrian behavior within the school site.

Identify Desired Traffic Flow: Separate travel modes by establishing preferred entry, queue, loading, and exit patterns for vehicles, busses, pedestrians, and bikes.

Define Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes: Identify safe walking and biking paths that minimize interactions with vehicles.

Install Visual Guidance Tools: Use cones, signage, pavement markings, barriers, or temporary traffic control devices to reinforce circulation patterns.

Communicate Procedures to Families and Staff:

Provide circulation maps and clear multilingual instructions to families prior to implementation.

Monitor Initial Implementation

Observe traffic flow, queue formation, and conflict points during rollout, making adjustments as needed.

Evaluate and Refine

Compare conditions before and after implementation and refine routes or procedures based on observations, congestion patterns, and feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Develop and manage circulation procedures
- Communicate expectations to families and staff
- Coordinate on-site supervision during implementation

School District (Support)

- Support site planning and operational coordination

City (As Needed)

- Coordinate on adjacent roadway access or signage if circulation impacts extend beyond the school site

Implementation Notes

- Routes should minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Emergency and ADA access must be maintained
- Use temporary traffic control devices as needed
- Additional staffing may be needed initially

Equity Considerations

Circulation routes should consider accessibility needs for students and caregivers with disabilities and should not create barriers for students who walk or bike to school. Communication materials should be accessible

and available in languages commonly spoken within the school community.

Tips for Success

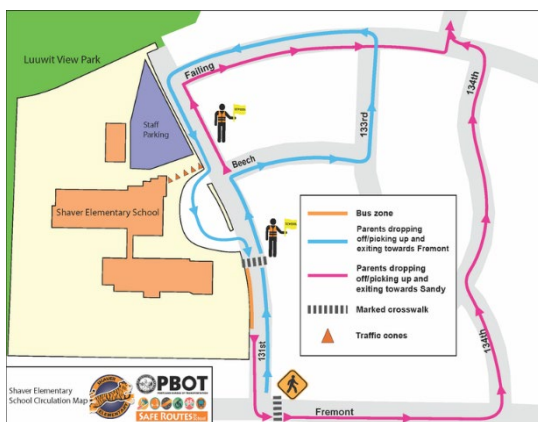
- Keep circulation patterns as simple and intuitive as possible
- Use visual reinforcement tools & signage consistently
- Separate modes of travel where feasible
- Communicate changes to families through multiple channels and expect hangups during rollout

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether circulation routes are improving safety and efficiency by monitoring:

- Vehicle queue patterns and circulation flow
- Frequency of unsafe vehicle maneuvers
- Observed conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Driver compliance with circulation patterns
- Feedback from families and staff



Designated Loading Zones & Times

Category: Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Level of Effort: Low

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | City (As Needed)

Best For: Schools experiencing congestion, unsafe loading behavior, or queue spillback.



Overview

Organizing when and where loading occurs can improve circulation, reduce conflicts, discourage early vehicle queuing, and create safer and more predictable arrival and dismissal conditions.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Early queuing in the car line
- Queue spillback into surrounding streets
- Crowding at school entrances
- High volume of office interruptions
- Dismissal confusion and inconsistency
- Unsafe dismissal practices, including releasing students to the wrong individual

How It Works

Families check in through a mobile app or vehicle-based QR code system as they enter the pick-up queue. School staff receive real-time notifications indicating which students should be released, helping coordinate pick-up more efficiently and reduce wait times and congestion.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions and Establish a Baseline:

Document current loading behavior, congestion patterns, queue length, early vehicle queuing, and safety concerns.

Identify Appropriate Loading Areas: Select locations that maximize visibility, reduce conflicts, and support efficient circulation.

Establish Loading and Queuing Times: Define when vehicles may begin entering loading areas or queuing on-site to allow pedestrians, bicyclists, and other travel modes time to clear out before vehicle pick-up begins.

Install Visual Guidance Tools: Use signage, cones, pavement markings, curb paint, or temporary traffic control devices to reinforce procedures.

Communicate Procedures to Families and Staff:

Provide clear instructions, circulation maps, and reminders prior to implementation.

Provide Initial On-Site Support: Use staff or volunteers during rollout to guide drivers and reinforce procedures.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe loading behavior, congestion, early queuing, and circulation patterns during arrival and dismissal.

Evaluate and Refine: Compare conditions before and after implementation and adjust procedures based on observations, compliance, and feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Develop loading procedures and schedules
- Communicate expectations to families and staff
- Coordinate on-site supervision and implementation

School District (Support)

- Support operational coordination and district-wide consistency

City (As Needed)

- Coordinate curb modifications, signage, or roadway-related improvements

Implementation Notes

- Loading zones should prioritize visibility and safety
- Loading zones should remain actively monitored during peak periods
- ADA-accessible loading areas should be clearly identified
- Procedures should discourage early vehicle queuing before dismissal begins, minimizing the blocking of drive aisles, crossings, and travel lanes

Equity Considerations

Loading and unloading procedures should consider accessibility needs for students and caregivers with disabilities, multilingual communication needs, and the

needs of families with multiple students arriving or departing at different times.

Tips for Success

- Keep loading procedures simple and easy to understand
- Reinforce expectations through reminders & signs
- Use staff or volunteers during early implementation
- Adjust loading times and locations based on observed conditions

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether designated loading and unloading zones and times are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Frequency of unsafe loading behavior
- Queue length and spillback
- Frequency and length of early vehicle queuing
- Vehicle circulation efficiency
- Driver compliance with loading procedures
- Feedback from families and staff





Consistent Safety Messaging Campaigns

Category: Family Behavior & Communication

Level of Effort: Low

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | City (As Needed)

Best For: Schools experiencing confusion, inconsistent dismissal behavior, circulation challenges, or low compliance with arrival and dismissal procedures.



Overview

Clear, repeated communication can improve compliance with school procedures, support smoother circulation, and create more predictable and welcoming conditions for students, families, and staff.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Inconsistent arrival and dismissal behavior
- Unsafe loading and unloading practices
- Confusion about pick-up and drop-off procedures
- Queue spillback and circulation conflicts
- Families stopping in unauthorized locations
- Difficulty implementing new procedures or circulation changes

How It Works

Schools use consistent, repeated communication to reinforce arrival and dismissal expectations across multiple platforms and throughout the school year.

Messaging may include circulation maps, reminders about loading procedures, safety expectations, walk and bike information, and updates about operational changes.

Key Implementation Steps

Identify Key Safety Messages: Determine the most important behaviors and procedures families need to understand and follow.

Develop or Borrow Clear and Consistent Materials: Use simple, easy-to-understand messaging featuring visuals, maps, diagrams, and consistent language.

Use Multiple Communication Methods: Share information through newsletters, emails, social media, signage, school websites, parent apps, and printed handouts.

Provide Multilingual and Accessible Communication: Translate materials and consider accessibility needs, literacy levels, and preferred communication methods.

Reinforce Messaging Regularly: Repeat key information throughout the school year, especially before schedule changes, special events, or new procedure rollouts.

Coordinate Staff Communication: Ensure staff and volunteers communicate expectations consistently during arrival and dismissal.

Monitor and Refine Messaging: Observe areas of confusion or noncompliance and adjust communication materials as needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Distribute safety and circulation messaging
- Communicate expectations to families
- Coordinate consistent messaging among staff

School District (Support)

- Support translation, communication tools, and district-wide consistency
- Assist with template development and communication standards

City (As Needed)

- Provide enforcement upon request if messaging and education does not lead to behavior change

Implementation Notes

- Visual communication is often more effective than text-heavy materials
- Messages should remain simple, specific, and action-oriented
- Repeated reminders are often necessary during the early stages of implementation
- Positive and welcoming language may improve family engagement and compliance

Equity Considerations

Communication materials should be accessible to all families, including those who speak languages other than English, have limited internet access, or may be unfamiliar with school transportation procedures. Schools should provide information in multiple formats and avoid relying solely on digital communication. Messaging should also be designed to support families

with varying reading levels and communication preferences by incorporating visuals, maps, symbols, and simple language whenever possible. Schools should consider whether messaging approaches, visuals, terminology, or communication styles may need cultural adaptation to better resonate with and build trust with different communities.

Tips for Success

- Use maps and visuals whenever possible
- Keep messaging short and easy to understand
- Repeat key messages regularly throughout the year
- Coordinate messaging across staff and platforms
- Introduce changes gradually when possible
- Schedule safety and circulation messaging on social media in advance to save on time

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether messaging campaigns are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Family understanding of procedures
- Compliance with loading and unloading expectations
- Frequency of unsafe loading or crossing behavior
- Arrival and dismissal congestion patterns
- Feedback from families and staff
- Need for repeated staff intervention during dismissal



Discouraging Unsafe Crossings

Category: Family Behavior & Communication

Level of Effort: Low

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | City (As Needed)

Best For: Schools where students have a habit of crossing outside of designated crossing locations.



Overview

Mid-block crossings can create serious safety risks near schools, particularly during busy arrival and dismissal periods. Schools often achieve long-term behavior change through positive social reinforcement. Visual cues, consistent messaging, and community-wide education can help establish designated crossings as the expected and normalized place to cross.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Students crossing outside designated crossing areas
- Conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles
- Reduced driver predictability near schools
- Congestion caused by unpredictable crossing behavior
- Limited use of existing crosswalks or crossing guards

How It Works

Schools use visual cues, student-centered messaging, and consistent family communication to guide students

toward designated crossing locations. Strategies such as mascot-themed footprints, lawn signs, student engagement, and repeated messaging help reinforce safe crossing behavior as a visible and shared school-wide expectation.

Key Implementation Steps

Identify Crossing Concerns: Observe and document where and why mid-block crossings are occurring and identify preferred crossing locations.

Improve Visibility of Preferred Crossings: Use cones, temporary markings, footprints, or signs to guide students to the safest crossings. Use fencing and more permanent infrastructure when possible.

Coordinate Messaging: Reinforce crossing expectations through newsletters, social media, classroom reminders, signs, and family communication.

Create Student Engagement Opportunities: Incorporate school mascots, student artwork, or student-created messaging to increase visibility and ownership.

Support Safe Crossing Behavior On-Site: Use staff, volunteers, or crossing guards to reinforce expectations during arrival and dismissal.

Monitor and Adjust: Observe crossing behavior over time and refine messaging or visual guidance tools as needed.

Evaluate Effectiveness: Document changes to crossing behavior following the campaign to measure if the behavior change continues once signs are removed. If the behavior returns, launch a new campaign.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Identify crossing concerns and preferred crossings
- Coordinate messaging and student engagement
- Install temporary visual guidance tools when appropriate

School District (Support)

- Support communication, materials, and coordination
- Assist with district-wide safety messaging consistency

City (As Needed)

- Evaluate crossing locations and roadway conditions
- Support signage, pavement markings, or crossing improvements

Implementation Notes

- Visual guidance tools are often most effective when paired with repeated messaging and adult reinforcement
- Temporary materials such as spray chalk and lawn signs can be low-cost and flexible
- Behavior change is often more effective when safe crossing behavior is reinforced as a visible and positive community norm rather than relying solely on enforcement
- Strategies should encourage safe behavior without shaming students or families
- Repeated mid-block crossings or informal walking patterns may indicate that preferred crossing locations feel inconvenient or do not align with where students naturally walk

Equity Considerations

Crossing expectations and messaging should be accessible and understandable for all families. Schools should consider language access, varying reading levels, and cultural communication differences when designing messaging and visuals. Strategies should avoid punitive or stigmatizing approaches and recognize that families may choose unsafe crossings when preferred routes feel inconvenient, inaccessible, or unclear.

Tips for Success

- Use simple, engaging, and highly visible visual cues
- Coordinate messaging across signs, social media, and newsletters
- Incorporate school mascots or student-created artwork
- Reinforce expectations consistently during dismissal
- Focus on building positive school-wide norms around safe crossing behavior

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether strategies are reducing mid-block crossings by monitoring:

- Frequency of mid-block crossings
- Use of designated crosswalks
- Pedestrian and vehicle conflicts near dismissal areas
- Driver yielding behavior near crossings
- Feedback from families, staff, and crossing guards
- Observed compliance during arrival and dismissal



Crossing Guards & On-Site Staff

Category: Family Behavior & Communication

Level of Effort: Low–Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | PTA/PTO Volunteers (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing congestion, unsafe arrival and dismissal behavior, confusion during pick-up and drop-off, or challenges implementing new circulation procedures.



Overview

The presence of staff and crossing guards during arrival and dismissal can improve safety, reinforce school procedures, and create a calmer and more predictable environment. This strategy can be especially helpful during transitions, such as the rollout of new circulation procedures or efforts to encourage behavior change, when families may need additional reminders, guidance, and support.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Unsafe loading and unloading behavior
- Confusion during arrival and dismissal
- Drivers stopping in unauthorized locations
- Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Difficulty implementing new circulation procedures
- Unsafe infrastructure at key crossings

How It Works

Staff or volunteers are positioned at key locations during arrival and dismissal to help guide traffic flow, reinforce procedures, support safe crossing behavior, and answer questions from families. Visible adult presence can help schools introduce new procedures gradually while providing families with consistent reminders and support.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions & Identify Priority Locations:

Document existing arrival and dismissal conditions and driver behavior. Identify locations where additional supervision or guidance may be needed.

Define Roles and Responsibilities: Establish clear expectations for staff or volunteers.

Recruit and Coordinate Support: Identify staff, PTA/PTO members, safety patrols, or community volunteers who can assist during peak periods.

Provide Training and Messaging: Ensure all participants understand school procedures, safety expectations, and communication approaches.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe circulation patterns, family behavior, and areas of confusion during rollout.

Evaluate and Refine: Compare conditions before and after implementation and adjust staffing locations, procedures, or communication strategies based on observations and feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Coordinate staffing assignments and supervision needs
- Train staff and volunteers on procedures and expectations
- Communicate arrival and dismissal procedures to families

School District (Support)

- Support staffing coordination and safety guidance
- Assist with volunteer policies or training requirements

PTA/PTO or Community Volunteers (Support)

- Provide additional supervision and reinforcement during peak periods
- Assist with family communication and circulation support

Implementation Notes

- Visible adult presence can improve predictability and reinforce expectations
- This strategy is often most helpful during transition periods when new procedures or behavior changes are being introduced
- Families may need repeated reminders, education, and patience while adjusting to new routines
- Positive interactions are often more effective than punitive approaches
- Staff and volunteers should avoid directing traffic in active roadways unless properly trained and authorized

Equity Considerations

Staff and volunteers should use respectful, culturally responsive communication and avoid punitive or unevenly enforced approaches. Schools with limited staff capacity or lower parent involvement may need alternative staffing or partnership approaches.

Tips for Success

- Position staff at high-conflict or high-visibility locations
- Use clear, friendly, and consistent communication
- Provide training before implementation begins
- Rotate responsibilities when possible
- Pair staff presence with signage and visual guidance tools

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether on-site staff or volunteers are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Driver compliance with school procedures
- Frequency of unsafe loading or crossing behavior
- Arrival and dismissal congestion patterns
- Observed conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
- Family and staff feedback
- Need for repeated intervention or redirection





Signage and Wayfinding

Category: Family Behavior & Communication

Level of Effort: Low–Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | City (As Needed)

Best For: Schools experiencing confusion during arrival and dismissal, circulation challenges, unsafe loading behavior, or difficulty guiding families to preferred routes and procedures.



Overview

Signage and wayfinding tools can help create clearer, safer, and more predictable arrival and dismissal conditions by guiding families, students, and drivers through school circulation patterns and reinforcing expectations visually. Wayfinding can also encourage walking and biking by helping families identify preferred routes, understand how far destinations are from the school, and feel more confident navigating active transportation connections within the community.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Confusion during arrival and dismissal
- Unsafe loading and unloading behavior
- Drivers stopping in unauthorized locations
- Queue spillback and circulation conflicts
- Difficulty identifying loading zones or safe crossings
- Limited awareness of walking and biking routes
- Inconsistent compliance with school procedures

How It Works

Schools use signs, pavement markings, cones, maps, and other visual tools to guide circulation patterns and reinforce arrival and dismissal expectations. Wayfinding can help families identify loading zones, pick-up locations, crossing routes, preferred walking paths, and bike routes while increasing awareness of active transportation options.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current and Identify Confusion Points: Observe where families experience uncertainty or unsafe behavior during arrival and dismissal. Determine which locations or procedures require additional guidance.

Select Appropriate Signage and Wayfinding Tools: Use temporary or permanent tools such as cones, curb paint, sandwich boards, lawn signs, pavement markings, or route signs showing walking and biking connections.

Coordinate Messaging Across Platforms: Ensure signage aligns with school newsletters, social media posts, maps, and verbal communication.

Install and Test Materials: Place signs and wayfinding tools in visible locations and observe whether they improve circulation and understanding.

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe circulation patterns, compliance, and areas where additional clarification may be needed.

Evaluate and Refine: Adjust sign placement, messaging, or materials based on observations and feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Identify wayfinding needs and circulation priorities
- Coordinate messaging and placement of temporary signage
- Communicate procedures to families and staff

School District (Support)

- Support sign standards, materials, or communication coordination
- Assist with district-wide consistency when applicable

City (As Needed)

- Coordinate roadway signage, curb regulations, or permanent traffic control devices
- Support installation of roadway-related improvements when needed

Implementation Notes

- Visual communication is often more effective than text-heavy messaging
- Temporary signage can be useful during transitions or pilot projects
- Consistent colors, symbols, and terminology can improve understanding
- Wayfinding signs showing walking or biking distances can help families feel more comfortable choosing active transportation
- Wayfinding should reinforce preferred behavior without overwhelming families with information

Equity Considerations

Wayfinding materials should be accessible and easy to understand for families with varying language

backgrounds, reading levels, and familiarity with school procedures. Visual tools and symbols can improve accessibility and reduce reliance on text-heavy communication.

Tips for Success

- Keep signs simple, clear, and highly visible
- Use maps and visuals whenever possible
- Coordinate signage with school messaging campaigns
- Test temporary materials before investing in permanent signage
- Focus signage on the most important decision points
- Include walking or biking distances when appropriate

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether signage and wayfinding strategies are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Driver compliance with circulation procedures
- Frequency of unsafe loading or crossing behavior
- Arrival and dismissal congestion patterns
- Requests for clarification from families
- Observed circulation efficiency
- Use of walking and biking routes
- Feedback from families and staff



Community-Based Messaging

Category: Family Behavior & Communication



Level of Effort: Low–Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | Community Organizations (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to improve arrival and dismissal behavior, support operational changes, encourage active transportation, or strengthen family understanding of school procedure



Overview

Positive reinforcement and community-based messaging strategies encourage safer and more cooperative transportation behavior through clear communication, encouragement, recognition, and community engagement. These approaches support behavior change while helping schools build a positive transportation culture.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Confusion around arrival and dismissal procedures
- Unsafe loading and unloading behavior
- Difficulty changing established family travel habits
- Limited participation in walking, biking, and carpooling programs
- Inconsistent compliance with school procedures
- Frustration or tension during arrival and dismissal

How It Works

Schools use recognition programs, multilingual communication, family outreach, student-created

messaging, events, incentives, and trusted community voices to reinforce transportation expectations and encourage safer travel behaviors, active transportation participation, and carpooling.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Current Conditions: Identify transportation challenges, confusion points, or behaviors the school hopes to improve.

Develop Messaging & Encouragement Strategies: Create positive, easy-to-understand messaging and encouragement activities that reinforce desired behaviors and reflect community values.

Identify Trusted Messengers and Community Partners: Engage the school community and local partners who can help communicate and reinforce messaging.

Launch the Campaign: Introduce messaging and encouragement strategies with consistent reinforcement

Monitor Initial Implementation: Observe participation, compliance, and community response during implementation

Evaluate and Refine: Adjust messaging, outreach methods, or incentive strategies based on observations and feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Identify transportation behavior goals and communication priorities
- Coordinate messaging, outreach, and engagement
- Communicate expectations to families and staff

School District (Support)

- Support communication coordination and translation services

Community Organizations (Support)

- Help distribute messaging and engage families

Implementation Notes

- Community-based campaigns can help normalize walking, biking, carpooling, and safe behaviors. Examples of community-based messaging are:
 - Student-created messaging campaigns
 - Parent ambassador programs
 - Community storytelling campaigns
 - Walk-and-roll promotion events
 - Partnerships with community organizations
- Positive reinforcement is often more effective than punitive messaging for long-term behavior change. Examples of positive reinforcement strategies are:
 - Cocoa for Carpools
 - Golden Sneaker / Golden Wheel awards
 - Carpool priority loading or parking
 - Classroom participation competitions
 - Walk & Roll punch cards & raffles

Equity Considerations

Messaging should be multilingual, culturally responsive, and accessible to families with varying language backgrounds, literacy levels, and familiarity with school procedures. Incentives and recognition programs should be inclusive and accessible to all students and families.

Tips for Success

- Keep messaging positive and action-oriented
- Use visuals, student voices, and community stories whenever possible
- Pair messaging campaigns with established community events or visible incentives
- Celebrate participation and progress publicly through announcements, bulletin boards, newsletters, or social media

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether positive reinforcement and community-based messaging strategies are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Driver compliance with school procedures
- Frequency of unsafe loading or crossing behavior
- Participation in walking and biking programs
- Arrival and dismissal congestion patterns
- Feedback from families and staff
- Student participation in encouragement activities
- Observed changes in transportation culture





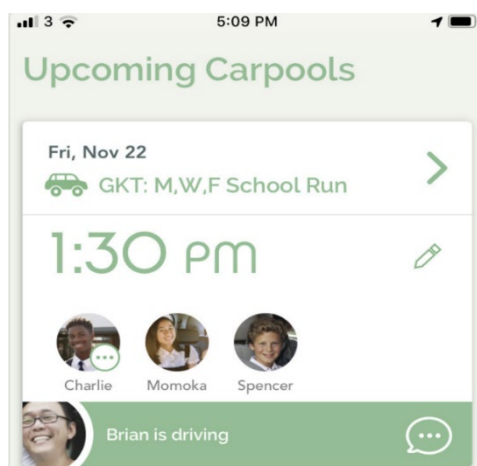
Carpool Management & Matching Services

Category: Family Behavior & Communication

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District (Support) | PTO/PTA (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to reduce the number of vehicles arriving on campus, improve arrival and dismissal efficiency, encourage ridesharing, or better organize shared transportation between families.



Overview

Carpool management systems help schools coordinate and encourage shared transportation by connecting families, organizing carpools, and streamlining arrival and dismissal procedures.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- High vehicle volumes during arrival and dismissal
- Limited participation in carpooling
- Safety conflicts due to traffic congestion
- Limited transportation options for some families

How It Works

Schools use digital platforms, sign-up systems, school-managed matching programs, or incentive campaigns to help families coordinate carpools and shared rides.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Travel Patterns and Interest: Identify current congestion challenges, family transportation needs, and potential interest in carpooling.

Select an Appropriate Carpool Management Tool:

Determine whether the school will use a digital platform, school-managed matching system, or informal coordination approach.

Establish Participation Guidelines and Procedures:

Develop expectations related to pick-up locations, communication, safety, and participation.

Coordinate Messaging and Outreach: Provide families with clear information about how the system works and the benefits of participation.

Launch the Program: Introduce the carpool system with clear instructions, technical support, and visible encouragement.

Monitor Participation and Operations: Observe participation levels, circulation impacts, and any operational challenges during implementation.

Evaluate and Refine: Adjust procedures, communication, or incentives based on feedback and observed outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Identify program goals and operational needs
- Select a tool that supports community goals
- Coordinate communication and family outreach
- Support implementation and ongoing participation
- Monitor impacts to arrival and dismissal

School District (Support)

- Support technology purchasing & legal coordination
- Provide guidance related to privacy or data-sharing

PTO/PTA (Support)

- Help promote participation and family engagement
- Assist with outreach or incentive activities

Implementation Notes

- Schools may use digital carpool coordination tools such as *GoKid*, *KidHop*, or *Let's Ride Kids* to help families organize shared rides
- Carpool programs are often most successful when paired with positive reinforcement and community-based messaging strategies
- Using a school event to launch the program can lead to higher numbers of participation
- Families may need time, encouragement, and repeated communication before participating
- Some families may feel more comfortable participating in grassroots carpool programs coordinated directly by trusted school staff
- Designated carpool loading zones or priority parking areas can help encourage participation
- Simple, easy-to-use systems are typically more successful than highly complex programs
- Limit data sharing and only collect information necessary to coordinate participation

Equity Considerations

Carpool programs should consider the needs of families with varying schedules, work demands, technology access, language backgrounds, and comfort levels with shared transportation. Participation should remain voluntary and accessible to all families.

Tips for Success

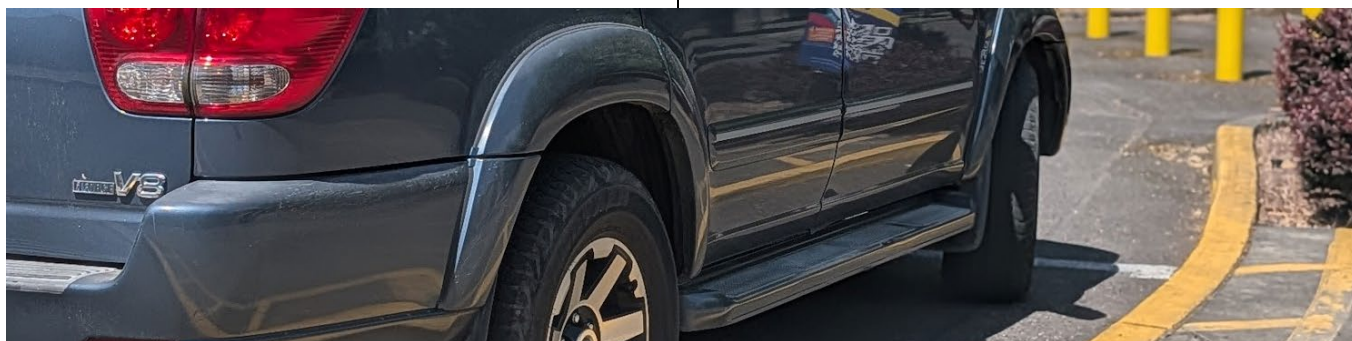
- Start with a pilot program or small group of interested families
- Pair carpool programs with encouragement campaigns or incentives
- Clearly communicate participation expectations
- Use simple sign-up and communication systems
- Highlight convenience, cost savings, and benefits
- Celebrate participation publicly to encourage additional interest

Measuring Effectiveness

Document existing conditions before implementation and compare conditions afterward to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether carpool management systems are improving safety and circulation by monitoring:

- Participation rates and number of active carpools
- Reduction in vehicles during arrival and dismissal
- Queue length and congestion patterns
- Family feedback and participation trends
- Changes in curb space utilization
- Reports and observations from staff who manage the carpool system



Pedestrian and Bike Safety Education

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School or District (Lead) | City, Safe Moves, Music Notes (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to improve student safety skills, support walking and biking, and reinforce infrastructure improvements



Overview

Pedestrian and bicycle safety education helps students develop the skills and confidence needed to safely walk and bike to school. Communities may partner with organizations such as to provide safety lessons, bike rodeos, helmet fitting events, and interactive traffic safety education.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Limited experience and student knowledge or of pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Family concerns about allowing students to walk or bike to school
- Unsafe student behaviors near traffic
- Low participation in walking and biking programs

How It Works

Schools partner with organizations such as [Safe Moves](#), [Music Notes](#), and local Safe Routes to School programs to deliver pedestrian and bicycle safety programming

during PE, classroom instruction, assemblies, or school-wide events. Programming may include walking safety lessons, bike handling skills, helmet fitting, traffic awareness, music-based assemblies, and real-world practice navigating streets and intersections.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Needs and Conditions: Identify current safety concerns, student travel patterns, and educational needs.

Identify Target Grade Levels and Goals: Determine which students will participate and what safety concepts should be emphasized.

Coordinate with School Staff and Partners: Work with PE teachers, administrators, community organizations, and local agencies to support implementation.

Partner with Qualified Education Providers: Coordinate with organizations such as [Safe Moves](#) or [Music Notes](#) Live to deliver programming.

Schedule Programming and Activities: Plan lessons, assemblies, traffic gardens, walking field trips, or safety practice activities.

Promote the Program: Share information with students and families to encourage participation and reinforce safety messaging.

Reinforce Concepts Over Time: Support continued learning through Walk and Roll events, encouragement campaigns, and repeated practice opportunities.

Evaluate and Refine: Gather feedback, participation data, and observations to improve future programming.

Roles and Responsibilities

School or School District (Lead)

- Identify educational goals and target audiences
- Coordinate scheduling and logistics
- Communicate with families and staff
- Support implementation
- Monitor program effectiveness

City (Support)

- Assist with funding, outreach, and partnerships
- Help connect schools with local resources

Partner Organizations (Support)

- Deliver educational programming and activities
- Provide safety expertise, equipment, or instructors
- Support outreach and student engagement efforts

Implementation Notes

- Hands-on learning opportunities are often more effective than one-time assemblies alone
- Integrating programming into PE or classroom instruction can improve participation
- Interactive and engaging formats are often most successful for younger students
- Pairing education with encouragement events can reinforce learning and increase participation
- Repeated exposure and practice are important for long-term behavior change
- Schools should coordinate with families to reinforce safety concepts at home

Equity Considerations

Programs should be accessible and inclusive for all students, including multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students without access to bicycles or safety equipment. Materials and instruction should be culturally responsive and available in multiple languages when possible.

Tips for Success

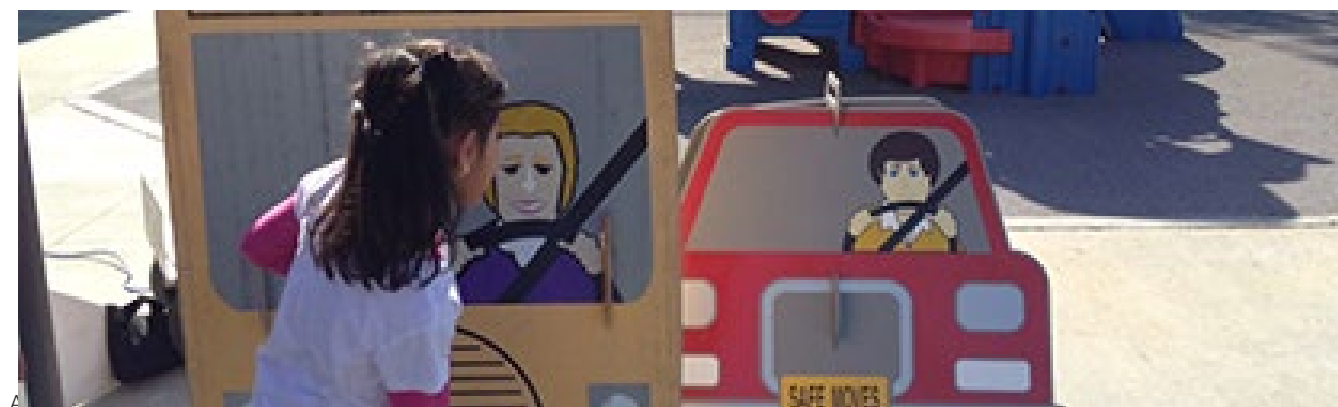
- Use hands-on and interactive teaching strategies
- Reinforce concepts throughout the school year
- Pair programming with Walk and Roll events or encouragement campaigns
- Include families in safety education and messaging
- Adapt programming for different ages and abilities
- Celebrate student participation and progress

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether pedestrian and bicycle safety education is improving student safety knowledge and active transportation participation by monitoring:

- Student participation rates
- Student knowledge or skill assessments
- Family feedback and confidence levels
- Observed student safety behaviors near school
- Participation in Walk and Roll events or related programs



Walking School Bus & Bike Bus Programs

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District, City, Parent Volunteers, Community Organizations, Safe Routes to School Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to increase walking and biking participation, reduce traffic congestion near school, improve student safety, and build community connections.



Overview

Walking school buses and bike buses are organized groups of students who walk or bike to school together along a planned route with adult supervision. These programs help students safely build independence and create a more visible active transportation presence.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- High vehicle volumes during arrival and dismissal
- Family concerns about student safety
- Low participation in active transportation
- Transportation access barriers for some families

How It Works

Schools partner with volunteers, community organizations, and Safe Routes to School programs to organize supervised walking and biking groups along designated routes to school. Programs operate daily, weekly, monthly, or during special events depending on volunteer capacity and community interest.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Interest and Existing Conditions: Identify student travel patterns, likely routes, safety concerns, and family interest in participation & volunteering.

Identify Routes and Meeting Locations: Select routes that maximize safety, visibility, and accessibility for students.

Coordinate with School and Community Partners: Engage school staff, families, local agencies, and community organizations to support implementation.

Recruit and Train Volunteers: Identify route leaders and provide training related to supervision, communication, traffic safety, and emergency procedures.

Develop Program Procedures: Establish expectations related to attendance, communication, weather, behavior, and supervision.

Promote the Program: Share route maps, schedules, and participation information with families and students.

Launch the Program: Begin operations with visible support and encouragement from the school community.

Monitor, Refine, & Evaluate: Observe participation, safety concerns, and operational challenges and adjust routes or procedures as needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Coordinate program planning and communication
- Help recruit volunteers and participants
- Promote participation and encouragement activities
- Support program oversight and coordination
- Monitor participation and operational needs

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance related to volunteer procedures or risk management

Parent Volunteers and Route Leaders (Support)

- Supervise students along designated routes
- Communicate with families and school staff

Implementation Notes

- Consistent schedules and predictable meeting locations help improve participation
- Student travel groups are often most successful when paired with Walk + Roll events
- Programs may support chronic absenteeism reduction
- Group travel can improve visibility and driver awareness near schools
- Schools may consider “drop-and-walk” models where families park nearby and join a supervised walking route
- Route maps and communication materials should be simple and easy to understand

Equity Considerations

Walking school buses and bike buses can help reduce transportation barriers for families who may not have

reliable vehicle access. Programs should consider varying family schedules, language access needs, disability accommodations, and neighborhood infrastructure conditions. Schools should work to ensure programs are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive for all students.

Tips for Success

- Start with a pilot route or limited schedule
- Recruit enthusiastic volunteer leaders
- Use clear communication and simple procedures
- Celebrate participation publicly to build momentum
- Pair programs with incentive programs
- Conduct regular route assessments
- Build a volunteer network through relationships and community engagement

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess whether walking school buses and bike buses are improving safety and active transportation participation by monitoring:

- Student participation levels
- Walking and biking mode share changes
- Traffic congestion and queue length near school
- Attendance and tardiness trends
- Family and student feedback
- Volunteer participation and retention



Recommended Route Maps

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead / Key Partners: School District or City (Lead) | School, Safe Routes to School (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to help families identify safer walking and biking routes, support active transportation participation, or improve communication about school travel options.



Overview

Recommended school route maps help families identify preferred walking and biking routes to school by highlighting safer crossings, sidewalks, bike facilities, crossing guard locations, shared-use paths, and other important travel information.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Family uncertainty about safe travel routes
- Walking and biking due to safety concerns
- Lack of awareness of available sidewalks & paths
- Confusion about school arrival and dismissal
- Unfamiliarity with infrastructure improvements

How It Works

Schools and partners develop route maps that identify recommended walking and biking routes to school based on existing infrastructure, traffic conditions, crossing locations, and observed travel patterns. Maps

may include route highlights, crossing guard locations, traffic signals, bike facilities, walking school bus routes, bike bus routes, drop-off areas, and safety reminders. Maps are distributed digitally, printed for families, and reinforced through school communication and encouragement activities.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions and Recommend Routes:

Review infrastructure, traffic conditions, student travel behaviors, and common travel routes near the school. Select routes that maximize safety and connectivity for students walking and biking to school.

Coordinate with School and Community Partners:

Work with school staff, families, City staff, and community organizations to review routes and identify concerns.

Develop the Route Map: Create maps that clearly identify recommended routes, crossings, bike facilities, crossing guards, signals, sidewalks, bike lanes, shared-use paths, and ADA-accessible routes.

Translate and Distribute Materials: Provide maps in multiple languages and distribute them through school websites, newsletters, events, classrooms, and registration materials.

Promote the Maps: Reinforce route awareness through Walk and Roll events, walking school buses, bike buses, and family outreach efforts.

Evaluate and Refine: Review feedback, participation, and route usage and update maps as needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

School District or City (Lead)

- Coordinate route planning and map development
- Review infrastructure and traffic conditions
- Support map design, printing, and distribution
- Update maps as conditions change

School (Support)

- Share maps with families and students
- Reinforce route information through school communication
- Support outreach and encouragement activities
- Help identify common travel concerns or barriers

Safe Routes to School (Support)

- Assist with route assessments and engagement
- Support map design and accessibility considerations

Implementation Notes

- Maps should be visually simple, multilingual, and easy for families to understand
- Recommended routes should prioritize lower-stress crossings and facilities when possible
- Maps may include walking times, biking distances, or estimated travel times to encourage active transportation
- Schools may integrate walking school bus routes, bike bus routes, or drop-and-walk locations
- Digital maps may allow easier updates and broader distribution
- Student and family feedback can help identify barriers or route concerns not visible through infrastructure review alone
- Maps should be reviewed regularly as infrastructure and circulation patterns change

Equity Considerations

Alternate drop-off and pick-up strategies should ensure all students can participate safely and comfortably. Schools should consider the needs of students with disabilities, younger students, and families with multiple children. Routes should be accessible, well-maintained, and clearly communicated in multiple languages. Schools should also ensure that expectations do not create additional burdens for families with limited time, mobility, or transportation options.

Tips for Success

- Brand it positively (e.g., “Drop & Walk”)
- Use signage and cones to clearly mark locations
- Start with one location and expand if successful
- Pair with encouragement programs (Walking School Bus, incentives, events)
- Promote the new location by passing out flyers to cars in the car line
- Celebrate participation with the whole school to build buy-in

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of alternate drop-off locations by monitoring:

- Car queue length and congestion
- Traffic circulation and spillback into surrounding streets
- Participation rates
- Observed loading and unloading behavior
- Feedback from families and staff



Walk + Roll to School Event Days

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District, City, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to encourage walking and biking and reduce vehicle congestion



Overview

Walk + Roll Event Days encourage students and families to walk, bike, roll, or use other active transportation modes to travel to school on designated days. These events build excitement around active transportation, increase visibility of walking and biking, and help families practice safer travel behaviors together. Event days can range from simple encouragement campaigns to larger community celebrations with activities, prizes, route groups, and community partners.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Heavy vehicle congestion in the car line
- Limited awareness or comfort with walking and biking routes
- Lack of family engagement around active transportation

How It Works

Schools organize a designated Walk + Roll event day and encourage students and families to participate by

walking, biking, rolling, carpooling, bussing or parking nearby and walking part of the route. Schools may provide route maps, group meeting locations, incentives, or activities to support participation.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions: Identify a baseline of student travel modes & current barriers to participation.

Identify Date, Routes, and Meeting Locations: Identify a date and establish safe walking and biking routes, remote drop-off locations, or group meeting points as needed.

Coordinate Partners and Volunteers: Engage school staff, PTO/PTA groups, community organizations, local agencies, or volunteers to support event operations and activities.

Develop Promotion and Outreach Materials: Create flyers, route maps, announcements, social media content, classroom reminders, and multilingual communication materials.

Prepare Event Logistics: Organize signage, incentives, supplies, supervision plans, crossing support, and any planned activities or celebrations.

Launch and Support the Event: Provide visible encouragement, guidance, and support during arrival and dismissal.

Evaluate and Refine: Gather participation data, observations, and feedback to improve future events and identify opportunities for ongoing programming.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Coordinate event planning and communication
- Organize staff and volunteer support
- Promote participation and school-wide engagement

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance, resources, and promotional support

City / Community Partners (Support)

- Support route planning, promotion, traffic safety, outreach, or event activities

Implementation Notes

- Events can be simple and low-cost or larger community celebrations
- Recurring events often build stronger participation over time
- Pairing events with route maps or Walking School Buses can increase participation
- Weather planning and contingency communication are important
- Visible encouragement from school leadership helps build buy-in
- Events can serve as an introduction to longer-term active transportation programs

Equity Considerations

Walk + Roll events should be designed to ensure all students can participate safely and comfortably. Schools should consider barriers related to distance, disability, language access, weather, work schedules, and access to bicycles or equipment. Outreach materials should be multilingual and culturally responsive, and participation options should include walking partway, rolling, or using

mobility devices. Schools should avoid framing participation in ways that unintentionally exclude students or families with transportation limitations.

Tips for Success

- Make events fun, welcoming, and highly visible
- Use incentives, music, signage, or themed activities to build excitement
- Partner with community organizations or local businesses
- Start small and build consistency over time
- Use student leaders or classroom competitions to encourage participation
- Celebrate all forms of active transportation participation
- Take photos and share successes with the school community

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of Walk + Roll Event Days by monitoring:

- Event participation rates
- Changes in arrival and dismissal congestion
- Observed walking and biking activity
- Student and family feedback
- Volunteer and staff participation
- Repeat participation over time
- Interest in ongoing programs such as Walking School Buses or Bike Buses



Bike Rodeos & Resource-Sharing Events

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School (Lead) | School District, City, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to improve bicycle safety skills, increase student confidence while biking, encourage family participation in active transportation, or support Safe Routes to School programming



Overview

Bike rodeos are hands-on bicycle safety events that teach students important biking skills. Events typically include helmet fitting, bicycle safety checks, riding practice courses.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Limited bicycle riding experience among students
- Unsafe riding behaviors
- Low rates of biking to school
- Limited access to bicycle safety education and usable equipment

How It Works

Schools organize a bicycle safety event where students participate in skill-building activities and guided riding exercises. Events may include obstacle courses, helmet fitting stations, bicycle inspections, safety demonstrations, and route practice. Community partners, volunteers, instructors, or local bike organizations.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions: Identify student biking rates, common safety concerns, available riding spaces, and potential barriers to participation.

Select a Safe Event Location: Choose a paved area such as a playground, parking lot, traffic garden, or closed street with adequate space for riding activities.

Coordinate Partners and Volunteers: Engage school staff, bike organizations, local agencies, volunteers, or community groups to support instruction, bike checks, and event logistics.

Develop the Riding Course and Activities: Create age-appropriate stations or exercises focused on bicycle handling, scanning, signaling, stopping, and yielding.

Prepare Equipment and Safety Supplies: Organize cones, signage, helmets, repair tools, bikes, waiver materials, and instructional resources.

Promote the Event to Families and Students: Share clear information about participation, bike and helmet requirements, and available support such as loaner bikes or helmets.

Launch and Support the Event: Provide active supervision, encouragement, and hands-on instruction throughout the event.

Evaluate and Refine: Gather participation data, observations, and feedback to improve future rodeos and identify opportunities for ongoing bicycle education programming.

Roles and Responsibilities

School (Lead)

- Coordinate event planning and communication
- Manage student participation and supervision
- Support volunteer coordination and logistics

School District (Support)

- Provide guidance, resources, or facility support
- Assist with district-wide coordination or promotion

City / Community Partners (Support)

- Assist with helmet fitting or bike repair
- Support encouragement activities & incentives

Implementation Notes

- Events should be tailored to student age and ability
- Helmet fitting and bike safety checks are important components
- Smaller station rotations often improve participation and supervision
- Loaner bikes and helmets can improve accessibility
- Traffic gardens or temporary street layouts can create realistic practice environment
- Pairing rodeos with encouragement events can increase participation and visibility

Equity Considerations

Bike rodeos should be designed to ensure all students can participate safely and comfortably, including students who do not own bicycles or helmets. Schools

should consider access to loaner bikes, adaptive bicycles, multilingual communication materials, and culturally responsive outreach. Activities should accommodate different skill levels and abilities, including students with disabilities.

Tips for Success

- Keep activities active and age-appropriate
- Use positive encouragement and celebrate progress
- Partner with local bike organizations or shops
- Offer helmet fitting and basic bike repair support
- Use visuals and realistic practice scenarios
- Include family participation opportunities
- Take photos and share with the community

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of bike rodeos by monitoring:

Event participation rates

- Observed riding behaviors during activities
- Number of helmets fitted & provided
- Family and student feedback
- Interest in biking to school after the event
- Participation in future bicycle safety or encouragement programs



Bike-Friendly School Policies

Category: Active Transportation Encouragement

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead/Key Partners: School District (Lead) | School, City, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to support and normalize bicycling as safe and practical transportation



Overview

Bike-friendly school policies help create a supportive environment for students who bike to school by establishing clear expectations, procedures, and supportive infrastructure. Policies may address bicycle parking, helmet expectations, on-campus riding behavior, access to lockers or storage, participation in bike education programs, and encouragement activities.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Lack of clarity around bicycling expectations
- Unsafe riding or bicycle storage practices
- Limited support for students who bike to school
- Low rates of bicycling due to perceived barriers

How It Works

Schools establish policies and procedures that support bicycling to school and clearly communicate expectations to families, and staff. Policies may include

guidance on bicycle parking, helmet use, campus riding rules, dismissal procedures, or bike registration.

Key Implementation Steps

Assess Existing Conditions: Review current bicycling rates, existing policies, bicycle parking conditions, and common barriers or concerns.

Identify Policy Goals and Priorities: Determine what the school or district hopes to improve, such as safety, participation, parking management, or consistency.

Review Existing District and Local Policies: Coordinate with district administration, local agencies, and legal or risk management staff as needed.

Develop Clear Procedures and Expectations: Establish guidance related to bicycle parking, helmet use, riding behavior on campus, dismissal procedures, storage access, or participation requirements.

Coordinate Supporting Infrastructure and Programs: Ensure policies align with available bicycle parking, route maps, education programs, encouragement events, or supervision practices.

Communicate Policies to Families and Staff: Share expectations through student handbooks, websites, newsletters, registration materials, and multilingual outreach.

Provide Initial Education and Reinforcement: Support implementation through signage, reminders, classroom education, or staff guidance.

Evaluate and Refine: Gather feedback and review implementation challenges, participation trends, or safety concerns to improve policies over time.

Roles and Responsibilities

School District (Lead)

- Develop and approve district-wide policy guidance
- Coordinate legal or risk management review
- Support communication and implementation

School (Support)

- Implement and reinforce school-level procedures
- Communicate expectations to students and families
- Monitor bicycle parking and campus behavior

Implementation Notes

- Locations should be close enough for students to
- Policies should be easy to understand and consistently applied
- Positive encouragement is often more effective than punitive approaches
- Policies should align with existing arrival and dismissal procedures
- Secure and convenient bicycle parking is an important supporting element
- Schools may consider integrating bike registration or identification systems
- Policies work best when paired with education and encouragement activities

Equity Considerations

Policies should avoid creating unnecessary barriers or punitive measures that disproportionately impact

students with limited resources. Communication materials should be accessible, multilingual, and culturally responsive. Schools should also consider the needs of students using adaptive bicycles or mobility devices.

Tips for Success

- Consider removing any policies banning the use of bikes or scooters on campus
- Keep policies simple, clear, and student-friendly
- Pair policies with bicycle education and encouragement
- Provide secure and visible bicycle parking
- Use positive messaging that encourages participation
- Review policies regularly as participation grows
- Involve students and families in identifying barriers and solutions
- Celebrate bicycling as a healthy and practical transportation option

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of bike-friendly policies by monitoring:

- Policy changes
- Student bicycling rates
- Bicycle parking utilization
- Observed riding and parking behavior
- Family and student feedback



School Frontage & Access Improvements

1



Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Medium to High

Lead / Key Partners: City (Lead) or School District (Lead), School, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, unsafe crossings, poor visibility, inaccessible routes, or congestion near entrances.



Overview

School frontage and access improvements focus on making the area immediately surrounding the school safer, more organized, and easier to navigate for students walking, biking, rolling, and arriving by vehicle. Improvements may include upgraded crossings, curb extensions, sidewalks, bikeways, ADA improvements, signage, lighting, traffic calming, and redesigned pick-up/drop-off areas.

What Problem Does This Solve

- Inaccessible or unsafe conditions near school front
- Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, & bicyclist
- Missing or inaccessible sidewalks and crossings
- Poor visibility or unclear circulation patterns
- Speeding traffic near school
- Poor walking, biking & rolling access

How It Works

The City, school district, and school work together to identify frontage and access challenges through walk

audits, traffic observations, community feedback, and safety data. Improvements are prioritized based on student safety, accessibility, and circulation needs.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information: Review crash data, walk audit findings, accessibility, traffic operations, and family feedback to identify safety and circulation issues.

Identify Priority Improvements: Determine which operational or infrastructure improvements would most improve safety, visibility, accessibility, and traffic flow.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities: Clarify which agencies or departments are responsible for planning, funding, design, implementation, and maintenance.

Engage the School Community: Gather input from families, staff, crossing guards, and nearby residents to identify barriers and prioritize improvements.

Implement Improvements: Install quick-build or permanent improvements such as signage, striping, crossing signals, bike parking, lighting, or traffic calming.

Educate and Communicate: Share new routes, crossings, and access changes through maps, outreach, and on-site support. Hold a kickoff event and community walk once the project is complete.

Evaluate and Adjust:

Gather feedback and assess whether improvements reduce conflicts and improve safety and access. Share results and refinement plans with the City, school, and families.

Roles and Responsibilities

City / Jurisdiction (Lead or Support)

- Plan, fund, and implement infrastructure improvements
- Support traffic analysis and safety reviews

School District (Lead or Support)

- Identify school access priorities & operational needs
- Support funding, planning, and implementation

School (Support)

- Identify operational need, safety concerns, and circulation challenges
- Communicate plans to students and families
- Support education and evaluation efforts

Families & Community Partners

- Share feedback on barriers and safety concerns
- Participate in engagement

Potential Strategies & Improvements

- Quick-build demonstration projects
- High-visibility crosswalks
- Curb extensions/bulb-outs
- Lead Pedestrian Intervals at signalized crossings
- ADA curb ramps and accessible pathways
- Sidewalk gap infill
- Protected bike lanes or shared-use paths
- Traffic calming measures
- School zone signage and flashing beacons
- Wayfinding signage
- Bicycle parking improvements
- Drop-off/pick-up circulation redesign
- Separate bus and family vehicle access

Equity Considerations

Students with disabilities, students walking from nearby neighborhoods, and families without access to a vehicle

are often most impacted by unsafe or incomplete school access conditions. Improvements should prioritize accessibility, safety, and connectivity for all users.

Tips for Success

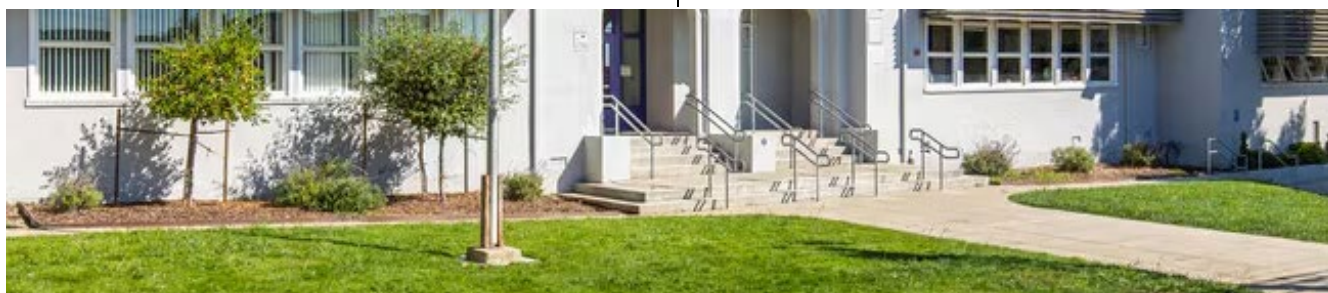
- Prioritize improvements near primary student crossing locations and entrances
- Combine infrastructure changes with education and communication efforts
- Use walk audits and arrival/dismissal observations to identify real-world challenges
- Consider quick-build or temporary improvements before permanent construction
- Coordinate improvements with existing maintenance or paving projects when possible
- Engage students, families, and crossing guards early in the planning process
- Evaluate improvements after implementation and refine as needed

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of improvements by monitoring:

- Changes in observed conflicts at the school frontage
- Changes in driver behavior and vehicle speeds
- Changes in rates of walking, biking, and rolling
- Changes in arrival & dismissal traffic congestion
- Feedback from families, staff, and crossing guards
- Observed use of new crossings, sidewalks, or access improvements



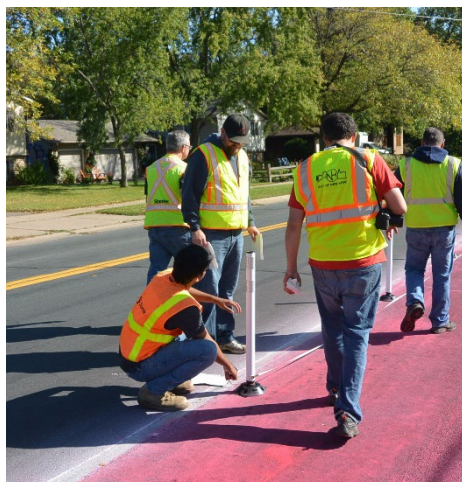
Quick-Build & Demonstration Projects

Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Low to Medium

Lead / Key Partners: City (Lead) | School District, School, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to quickly test safety improvements, calm traffic, improve visibility, or pilot circulation changes before investing in permanent infrastructure.



Overview

Quick-build and demonstration projects use temporary, low-cost materials to test potential safety and access improvements before permanent construction. These projects allow schools and jurisdictions to evaluate how changes affect traffic flow, visibility, safety, and school access in real-world conditions.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Unsafe crossings or circulation patterns
- Speeding near schools
- Limited funding for capital projects
- Community hesitation around new plans & designs

How It Works

The City, school district, and school identify a safety or operational challenge and temporarily install improvements using low-cost materials such as cones, paint, signs, planters, or flexible delineators. T Allowing

the agencies and the community to observe how changes impact safety, circulation, and access before deciding whether to permanently implement changes.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information: Review crash data, walk audit findings, traffic operations, accessibility concerns, and community feedback to identify project goals.

Identify a Demonstration Strategy: Select a temporary treatment that addresses the identified safety or circulation issue.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities: Clarify which agencies or partners are responsible for planning, materials, installation, communication, monitoring, and removal.

Engage the School Community: Gather input from students, families, staff, and nearby residents before and during implementation.

Install the Demonstration Project: Use temporary materials and clear signage to safely implement the project.

Educate and Communicate: Explain the purpose of the project and help families and students understand any temporary circulation or access changes.

Evaluate and Refine: Monitor operations, gather feedback, and determine whether the project improved safety, circulation, or access enough to support refinement or permanent installation.

Roles and Responsibilities

City / Jurisdiction (Lead or Support)

- Plan, approve, and install temporary improvements
- Provide engineering and safety review support
- Monitor project performance and determine feasibility for permanent improvements

School District (Lead or Support)

- Coordinate implementation across schools
- Support communication and operational planning

School (Lead or Support)

- Identify site-specific concerns & operational needs
- Communicate project information to families
- Support observations and evaluation activities

Potential Quick-Built Improvements

- Temporary curb extensions or bulb-outs
- Painted safety zones or curb areas
- Temporary protected bike lanes
- Flexible delineators or bollards
- Pop-up pedestrian plazas
- Temporary crossing improvements
- Lane narrowing or lane reallocation
- Temporary pick-up/drop-off circulation changes
- School street or limited vehicle access pilots
- Temporary wayfinding signage
- Parklets or expanded waiting areas

Equity Considerations

Quick-build projects can provide faster safety improvements in communities that may not have immediate access to major infrastructure funding. Because these projects are lower-cost and easier to

implement, they can help address urgent safety concerns while building momentum for long-term improvements. Engagement should prioritize students and families most impacted by unsafe conditions, including students walking, biking, rolling, or relying on public transit to get to school.

Tips for Success

- Start with clearly defined safety goals and evaluation criteria
- Use highly visible materials and signage
- Pair projects with education and outreach efforts
- Conduct demonstrations during active travel times
- Use observations and feedback to guide refinement
- Coordinate with maintenance and emergency access needs
- Consider weather, durability, and accessibility during design process

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of improvements by monitoring:

- Changes in observed conflicts or unsafe behaviors
- Changes in vehicle speeds or driver behavior
- Changes in walking, biking, and rolling rates
- Changes in traffic circulation and congestion
- Feedback from families, staff, and nearby residents
- Observed use of temporary crossings, bike lanes, or access improvements



Limiting Traffic with School Streets

Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Medium to High

Lead / Key Partners: City (Lead) | School District, School, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing severe congestion, unsafe vehicle-pedestrian conflicts, speeding near entrances, or limited space for safe walking and biking access during arrival and dismissal.



3



Overview

School Streets temporarily limit or restrict vehicle access near a school during arrival and dismissal times to create safer, calmer conditions for students walking, biking, and rolling. These programs can reduce conflicts and support active transportation by prioritizing people over vehicle traffic during peak school travel times.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Unsafe vehicle-pedestrian conflicts near campus
- Long vehicle queues or congestion at the school site
- Speeding or aggressive driving behaviors
- Limited space for walking, biking, and rolling
- Unsafe air quality conditions caused by idling vehicles

How It Works

The City, school district, and school temporarily restrict or limit vehicle access on a street near the school during arrival and dismissal periods. Access may remain open for emergency vehicles, school buses, residents, or

approved local traffic depending on the program design. Staff, signage, barricades, and outreach help families understand circulation changes and safe access routes. Programs may begin as pilot or demonstration projects before becoming permanent.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information:

Review traffic operations, safety concerns, and community feedback to identify project goals.

Develop an Operations Plan:

Determine the closure area, operating hours, access exceptions, staffing needs, and circulation changes.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities:

Clarify which agencies are responsible for planning, traffic control, communication, and evaluation.

Engage the School Community and Neighbors:

Gather input from students, families, nearby residents, and emergency services before implementation.

Implement the Program:

Install barricades, signage, and temporary traffic control devices to support safe operations.

Educate and Communicate:

Provide clear information about circulation changes, access routes, and program goals.

Evaluate and Refine:

Monitor operations, gather feedback, and adjust the program as needed to improve safety, access, and circulation.

Roles and Responsibilities

City (Lead or Support)

- Approve and coordinate street closures
- Provide traffic engineering, signage, and traffic control support
- Coordinate with emergency services and transit providers
- Monitor operations and evaluate feasibility for long-term implementation

School district (Lead or Support)

- Coordinate planning and operational needs
- Support communication, staffing coordination, and implementation planning

School (Lead or Support)

- Identify operational concerns and circulation needs
- Communicate program information to families
- Support on-site implementation and evaluation

Implementation Notes

- Locations should be close enough for students to walk comfortably
- Safe, accessible walking routes are essential
- Younger students may require adult supervision
- Clear signage helps reinforce the system
- Consistency is key — families need predictable routines

Equity Considerations

School Streets can improve safety, comfort, and air quality for students who walk, bike, roll, or rely on transit to get to school. Programs should consider

accessibility needs, local traffic impacts, and how families traveling from farther distances will safely access the school site. Engagement should include students, families, nearby residents, and communities most impacted by unsafe traffic conditions.

Tips for Success

- Start with a pilot program or temporary demonstration
- Clearly communicate circulation changes before implementation
- Coordinate closely with nearby residents and emergency services
- Use highly visible barricades, signage, and staffing
- Pair the program with encouragement activities like Walk & Roll events
- Monitor operations closely during the first weeks of implementation
- Adjust access rules and circulation as needed

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of School Street pilots by monitoring:

- Changes in observed conflicts near the school
- Changes in vehicle speeds and driver behavior
- Changes in walking, biking, and rolling rates
- Changes in congestion during arrival and dismissal
- Feedback from students, families, staff, nearby residents, and crossing guards



Rethinking Parking Lot Circulation

Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Medium to High

Lead/Key Partners: School District, School (Lead) | Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing congestion, vehicle conflicts, or inefficient circulation patterns.



Overview

Rethinking parking lot circulation involves redesigning or reorganizing how vehicles, buses, pedestrians, bicyclists, and staff move through the school site during arrival and dismissal. Improvements can increase safety, reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, and create more predictable circulation patterns for all users.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Congestion or long vehicle queues
- Unsafe backing, turning, or drop-off behavior
- Conflicts between different travel modes
- Inefficient parking lot circulation patterns
- Confusion about loading zones or travel paths
- Limited space for safe walking and biking access

How It Works

The school district, school, and City evaluate how people and vehicles move through the school site during arrival and dismissal. Based on observed challenges, the site circulation pattern may be adjusted

through operational changes, restriping, signage, access management, or physical redesigns that improve safety, visibility, and efficiency.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information: Review traffic operations, arrival and dismissal observations, walk audit findings, and community feedback to identify circulation challenges.

Identify Circulation Issues and Opportunities:

Evaluate loading zones, pedestrian crossings, vehicle flow, bus access, parking operations, and walking and biking connections.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities: Clarify which agencies or partners are responsible for planning, design, communication, implementation, and maintenance.

Engage the School Community: Gather input from students, families, staff, crossing guards, and nearby residents before changes are implemented.

Implement Improvements: Install operational, striping, signage, or infrastructure changes that improve circulation and reduce conflicts.

Educate and Communicate: Provide clear instructions, maps, and signage to help families and staff understand new circulation patterns and expectations.

Evaluate and Refine: Monitor operations, gather feedback, and adjust the circulation plan as needed to improve safety and efficiency.

Roles and Responsibilities

School District (Lead)

- Coordinate planning, design, funding, and implementation
- Oversee on-site operational and circulation changes
- Coordinate with the City and school on access needs

School (Lead)

- Identify operational concerns and circulation challenges
- Communicate changes and expectations to families
- Support implementation and evaluation efforts

City (Support)

- Support traffic analysis and adjacent roadway coordination as needed

Potential Strategies & Improvements

- One-way circulation patterns
- Separate bus and family vehicle circulation routes
- Dedicated pick-up and drop-off zones
- Relocated loading areas
- Improved pedestrian crossings within parking lots
- Restriped loading or parking areas
- Enhanced signage and pavement markings
- Traffic calming within the parking lot
- Improved bike and scooter access routes
- Separate walking paths from vehicle circulation
- Staffed loading and unloading support areas

Equity Considerations

Parking lot circulation changes should prioritize safety and accessibility for students walking, biking, rolling, or

using mobility devices. Planning should consider how circulation changes impact families with different transportation needs, including carpools, transit users, and students requiring accessible loading areas.

Tips for Success

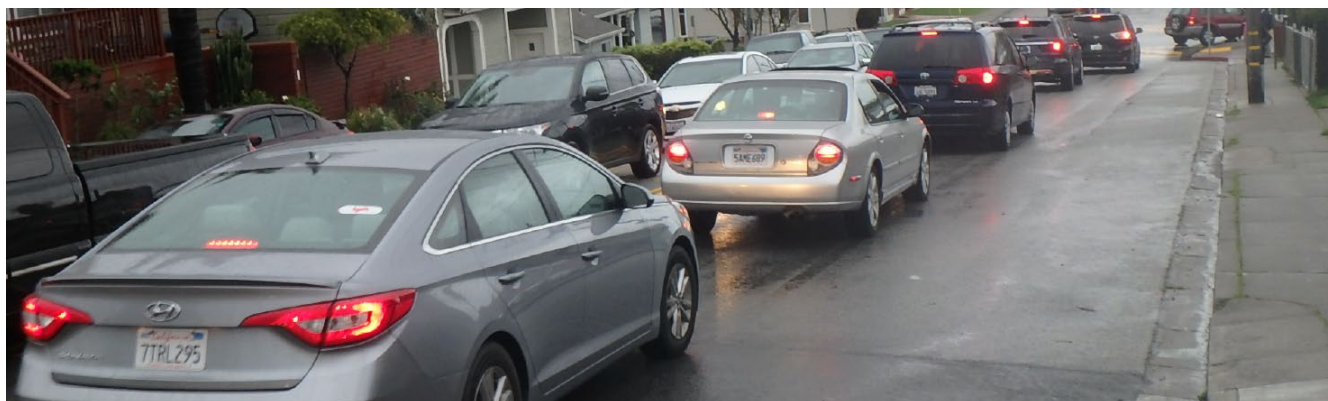
- Observe circulation during active travel periods
- Prioritize pedestrian visibility and crossing safety
- Use signage and pavement markings to reinforce expectations
- Pilot operational changes before permanent redesigns
- Communicate & coordinate changes with families
- Consider staff supervision needs during transitions
- Evaluate operations regularly and refine as needed

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of improvements by monitoring:

- Changes in vehicle queue lengths or congestion
- Changes in observed conflicts or unsafe behaviors
- Changes in circulation efficiency during arrival and dismissal
- Feedback from students, families, staff, and crossing guards
- Changes in walking, biking, and rolling access conditions
- Observed compliance with circulation patterns and loading procedures



Crossing & Pedestrian Safety Upgrades

Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Medium to High

Lead/Key Partners: City/Jurisdiction (Lead) | School, School District, Community Partners (Support)

Best For: Schools experiencing unsafe crossings, limited pedestrian visibility, accessibility barriers, speeding near crossings, or gaps in pedestrian infrastructure near the school site.



Overview

Crossing and pedestrian upgrades improve safety, visibility, and accessibility for students walking and rolling to school. Improvements may include upgraded crosswalks, curb extensions, pedestrian signals, ADA accessibility improvements, lighting, traffic calming, and other treatments that make crossings safer and easier to navigate.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Unsafe or difficult street crossings
- Limited pedestrian visibility near schools
- Speeding near crossing locations
- Missing or inaccessible pedestrian infrastructure
- Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians

How It Works

The City, school district, and school identify crossing and pedestrian safety concerns through walk audits, traffic

observations, crash data, and community feedback. Based on identified needs, operational or infrastructure improvements are implemented to improve pedestrian visibility, accessibility, and crossing safety near the school site.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information: Review crash data, traffic operations, walk audit findings, accessibility concerns, and community feedback to identify crossing safety challenges.

Identify Priority Crossing Locations: Evaluate where students cross, where conflicts occur, and where upgrades would most improve safety and accessibility.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities: Clarify which agencies or partners are responsible for planning, funding, design, implementation, and maintenance.

Engage the School Community: Gather input from students, families, crossing guards, staff, and nearby residents before implementation.

Implement Improvements: Install operational or infrastructure upgrades that improve pedestrian visibility, accessibility, and crossing safety.

Educate and Communicate: Help families and students understand new crossings, signals, or circulation changes through outreach and signage.

Evaluate and Refine: Monitor operations, gather feedback, and adjust improvements as needed to improve safety and accessibility.

Roles and Responsibilities

City (Lead)

- Plan, fund, and implement crossing and pedestrian infrastructure improvements

School District (Support)

- Coordinate planning and implementation with schools and the City
- Support communication and school access planning

School (Support)

- Identify crossing concerns and operational challenges
- Communicate improvements and safety information to students and families

Potential Strategies & Improvements

- High-visibility crosswalks
- Raised crosswalks or raised intersections
- Curb extensions or bulb-outs
- Median refuge islands
- Accessible curb ramps and pathways
- Pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs)
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)
- Lead Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) at signals
- Crossing guard enhancements
- Pedestrian-scale lighting improvements
- Traffic calming near crossings
- School zone signage and flashing beacons

Equity Considerations

Crossing and pedestrian improvements are especially important for students who rely on walking, rolling, or

mobility devices to get to school. Improvements should prioritize locations with the greatest safety risks and barriers to accessibility, particularly in communities that have historically experienced underinvestment in pedestrian infrastructure.

Tips for Success

- Prioritize crossings used most by students
- Pair infrastructure improvements with education and outreach efforts
- Use walk audits to identify safety concerns
- Consider accessibility and visibility in all designs
- Coordinate improvements with crossing guard operations and school circulation patterns
- Implement quick-build treatments when permanent improvements are delayed
- Evaluate conditions regularly and refine as needed

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of improvements by monitoring:

- Changes in observed conflicts at crossing locations
- Changes in driver behavior and vehicle speeds
- Changes in walking and rolling rates to school
- Feedback from students, families, staff, and crossing guards
- Observed use of upgraded crossings by families
- Changes in accessibility and comfort for pedestrians near the school site



Creating & Leveraging Active Transportation Corridors



Category: Site & Network Conditions

Level of Effort: Medium to High

Lead/Key Partners: City (Lead) | School District, Regional Agencies, School (Support)

Best For: Schools seeking to improve connectivity, increase walking and biking rates, create safer travel routes, or strengthen access between schools and surrounding neighborhoods.



Overview

Active transportation corridors are connected routes that prioritize safe, comfortable, and accessible travel for students walking, biking, and rolling to school. Corridors may include sidewalks, bikeways, crossings, traffic calming, wayfinding, lighting, greenways, or shared-use paths that connect schools to neighborhoods and community destinations.

What Problem Does This Solve?

- Gaps in walking, biking, and rolling connectivity
- Unsafe or uncomfortable travel routes
- Barriers to accessing schools by active transportation
- High vehicle dependence for short school trips

How It Works

The City, school district, and school identify key student travel routes and prioritize improvements that strengthen active transportation safety, comfort, and

connectivity. In some cases, small gap closures or “missing link” improvements can significantly improve access to safe routes.

Key Implementation Steps

Collect Baseline Information: Review student travel patterns, crash data, walk audit findings, accessibility concerns, and community feedback to identify priority routes and barriers.

Identify Priority Corridors: Determine which routes would most improve safety, connectivity, and access for students walking, biking, and rolling.

Coordinate Roles and Responsibilities: Clarify which agencies or partners are responsible for planning, funding, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation.

Engage the School Community: Gather input from students, families, staff, nearby residents, and community organizations to identify priorities.

Implement Improvements: Install infrastructure, operational, and wayfinding improvements that improve safety, visibility, accessibility, and comfort along the corridor.

Educate and Communicate: Promote the corridor through route maps, signage, engagement efforts, encouragement programs, and community outreach.

Evaluate and Refine: Monitor corridor use, gather feedback, and adjust improvements as needed to improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility.

Roles and Responsibilities

City/Regional Agencies (Lead)

- Plan, fund, and implement corridor improvements
- Maintain public infrastructure and traffic control devices
- Conduct traffic analysis, design, and safety reviews

School District (Support)

- Coordinate planning and implementation with schools and partners
- Support communication, route planning, and encouragement efforts

School (Support)

- Identify travel barriers and priority destinations
- Promote corridor use with education and outreach
- Support evaluation and encouragement activities

Potential Strategies & Improvements

- Neighborhood greenways or bicycle boulevards
- Protected or separated bike lanes
- Shared-use paths or multi-use trails
- Sidewalk gap infill
- Enhanced crossings and pedestrian signals
- Traffic calming along school travel routes
- Wayfinding signage and route maps
- Lighting improvements
- Safe routes to transit connections
- Park and community destination connections
- Quick-build corridor improvements
- Tree canopy or shade improvements along routes

Equity Considerations

Active transportation corridors can improve access to schools, parks, transit, and community resources for

students who rely on walking, biking, rolling, or transit. Planning should prioritize routes serving students facing the greatest transportation barriers and communities that have historically experienced underinvestment in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Tips for Success

- Prioritize routes already heavily used by students
- Connect schools to parks, transit stops, and community destinations
- Coordinate corridor improvements across agencies and departments
- Pair infrastructure improvements with encouragement programs and route maps
- Use temporary improvements to test corridor concepts when appropriate
- Consider lighting, shade, and comfort along routes
- Evaluate corridor conditions regularly and refine as needed

Measuring Effectiveness

Compare conditions before and after implementation to assess effectiveness and guide refinements.

Schools can assess effectiveness of active transportation corridors by monitoring:

- Changes in walking, biking, and rolling rates
- Changes in observed conflicts along the corridor
- Feedback from students, families, staff, and residents
- Observed use of corridor infrastructure and crossing



Case Study: Adjusting Car Line Access to Reduce Conflicts

Arrival & Dismissal Operations

Aloha, Oregon | Aloha-Huber Park Elementary School

Challenge

Families entering the bus loop before buses departed created congestion and conflicts between buses, vehicles, and pedestrians during dismissal. Dismissal operations required significant staff time and felt chaotic due to the number of queued vehicles of parents arriving up to an hour early to pick up students. The restricted space created challenges for bus drivers and decreased the visibility in the parking lot significantly.

Strategy

Aloha-Huber Park K-8 School adjusted dismissal operations so families picking students up by car were required to wait until after buses exited the site before queueing. The school communicated updated procedures, coordinated with the district and the City to provide extra staffing during the transition, and maintained consistent expectations during dismissal operations.

Key Takeaways

- Small operational changes can significantly improve safety, circulation efficiency, and air quality
- Separating buses and family vehicles can reduce conflicts and confusion
- Limiting the number of queued vehicles by restricting car lines to set times improves spillback into surrounding streets
- Clear communication and consistent, friendly enforcement are critical during transitions



Case Study: Temporary Wayfinding & Crossing Encouragement

Family Behavior & Communication

South San Francisco, California | Martin Elementary School

Challenge

Families were not consistently using preferred walking routes and crossing locations near the school, contributing to unsafe crossing behaviors and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.

Strategy

Martin Elementary used temporary chalk paint markings and visual cues such as colorful footsteps leading to crosswalks to encourage students and families to use designated walking paths and safer crossing locations. The low-cost intervention helped draw attention to pedestrian routes in a fun, visible, and student-friendly way.

Key Takeaways

- Temporary visual cues can help reinforce safer travel behaviors
- Low-cost materials can quickly improve visibility and awareness near schools
- Creative, student-friendly interventions can support behavior change and increase engagement
- Temporary treatments can be used to test ideas before investing in permanent improvements



Case Study: Temporary Wayfinding & Crossing Encouragement

Active Transportation Encouragement

Alameda County, California | Alameda Safe Routes to Schools

Challenge

Many schools struggle to increase participation in walking and biking programs without dedicated encouragement activities that build excitement, visibility, and community support around active transportation.

Strategy

Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools supports schools through recurring Walk & Roll events designed to encourage students and families to walk, bike, roll, carpool, or use transit to get to school. Events are supported with promotional toolkits, incentives, outreach materials, classroom encouragement, and community partnerships that help schools build participation and visibility.

Programs such as International Walk & Roll to School Day, Golden Sneaker contests, Bike to School Day, and monthly Walk & Roll events help normalize active transportation while creating positive, community-centered experiences around getting to school safely. Many schools also pair events with safety education, bike rodeos, crossing guard support, and family engagement activities.

Key Takeaways

- Recurring events can help build a lasting culture around walking, biking, and rolling to school
- Encouragement activities can increase participation and awareness of Safe Routes to School programs
- Incentives, student leadership, and friendly competition can improve engagement
- Partnerships with local agencies and community organizations can strengthen program capacity and visibility
- Events can serve as an entry point for broader infrastructure and policy improvements



Case Study: Pop-Up Mini-Circle Tests Traffic Calming Near School

Site and Network Conditions

South San Francisco, California | Los Cerritos elementary School

Challenge

The intersection of B Street and W. Orange Avenue near Los Cerritos Elementary experienced unsafe driver behavior, blocked intersections, turning conflicts, and vehicles driving over curb extensions during school arrival and dismissal periods. These conditions created safety concerns for students walking and biking near the school.

Strategy

As part of a Safe Routes to School workshop and walk audit process, project partners recommended testing a temporary “pop-up” mini-circle using low-cost, removable materials such as paint, planters, temporary delineators, rubber curbing, and hay bales. The demonstration project was intended to slow turning movements, improve driver behavior, and increase pedestrian safety before considering permanent infrastructure changes.

The project also included recommendations for temporary barriers on curb extensions to prevent vehicles from cutting across pedestrian areas and operational changes to improve circulation near the adjacent high school.

Key Takeaways

- Quick-build projects can help communities test traffic calming strategies before permanent construction
- Temporary materials allow improvements to be implemented more quickly and at lower cost
- Demonstration projects provide opportunities to observe driver behavior and gather community feedback
- Small intersection changes can significantly improve pedestrian safety near schools



Next Steps

Improving arrival and dismissal conditions is an ongoing process that requires coordination, flexibility, and continuous refinement over time. Schools and partners do not need to implement every strategy at once. Many successful efforts begin with small operational changes, temporary pilots, or targeted communication strategies that can be expanded over time based on observed outcomes and community feedback.

Review Existing Conditions and Identify Priorities

Begin by reviewing existing arrival and dismissal conditions, walk audit findings, and the common challenge areas identified throughout this document. Schools and partners can use the [Implementation Matrix](#) (pages 8-14) to identify strategies that align with the specific challenges occurring at their site and better understand the level of effort, lead partners, and implementation considerations associated with each approach.

Select Strategies from the Toolbox

Use the [Strategy Toolbox](#) (pages 15-64) to identify approaches that align with site conditions, operational needs, staffing capacity, and available resources. Strategies may be implemented individually or combined across focus areas depending on the nature of the challenge.

Start with Feasible and High-Impact Approaches

Consider beginning with operational, communication, or temporary demonstration strategies that can be implemented relatively quickly and refined over time. In many cases, small changes can significantly improve safety, circulation, and predictability during arrival and dismissal.

Test, Evaluate, and Refine

Pilot projects and temporary strategies can help schools evaluate effectiveness, identify operational needs, and build community familiarity before pursuing larger or more permanent changes. Simple evaluation tools such as tracking participation, number of events, and feedback on the strategies, as well as tracking mode split over time, help school communities focus resources on the most beneficial strategies. Schools should continue monitoring conditions, gathering feedback, and refining procedures over time based on observed outcomes.

Coordinate with Partners

Engage school district staff, City partners, and community organizations as needed to support implementation, particularly for strategies that extend beyond the school site or require additional resources. Coordination can help align responsibilities, improve communication, and support long-term success.

Build Toward Long-Term Improvements

As successful strategies become established, schools and partners may choose to formalize procedures, expand programs, pursue infrastructure improvements, or integrate successful approaches into long-term planning efforts and school culture.

Safe, efficient, and welcoming arrival and dismissal conditions support not only transportation goals, but also student well-being, accessibility, community connection, and the overall school experience. The time students spend arriving at and leaving school shapes how safe, supported, and connected they feel within their school community. Thoughtful arrival and dismissal practices can help reduce stress, improve predictability, encourage independence, and create more positive daily interactions between students, families, staff, and neighbors.