SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

NEW YORK MILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

NEW YORK MILLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (ISD) #553

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NEW YORK MILLS, MINNESOTA

Prepared by:
West Central Initiative
1000 Western Avenue
PO Box 318
Fergus Falls, MN 56538-0318
218-739-2239
www.wcif.org

Andrew J. Besold, Principal Author
Emily Ambrosy, Outreach and Research
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Safe Routes to School Plan ................................................................................................................................. 1
Table of Contents .................................................................................................................................................. 3
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................................................ 5
Executive Summary, Significant Findings And Action Plan .............................................................................. 7
    Significant Findings ..................................................................................................................................... 8
    Action Plan Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 10
Chapter 1: Introduction ....................................................................................................................................... 34
    Purpose of the Plan .................................................................................................................................... 34
Chapter 2: About Safe Routes to School (SRTS) ............................................................................................... 36
    Overview .................................................................................................................................................... 36
    History ....................................................................................................................................................... 36
    The Decline of Walking and Bicycling ...................................................................................................... 37
    Health Risks ............................................................................................................................................ 38
    The 5 E’s of SRTS Planning ....................................................................................................................... 39
    A 6th E? - Equity ..................................................................................................................................... 43
    National Physical Activity Trends In Children .......................................................................................... 45
    Safe Routes to School Planning Framework .............................................................................................. 46
    MnDOT Walk / Bicycle Zone Concept ...................................................................................................... 47
    Status of State and Federal Support for Safe Routes to School .................................................................. 48
    Minnesota Schools Statewide Enrollment Options And the Impact on SRTS ......................................... 49
Chapter 3: Vision and Goals .............................................................................................................................. 50
Chapter 4: Community and School Profiles ..................................................................................................... 51
    Community Profile .................................................................................................................................... 51
    School and District Profile .......................................................................................................................... 52
Chapter 5: Strengths – Barriers – Opportunities Analysis .................................................................................. 58
# Table of Contents

Chapter 6: Existing Conditions and Findings

- New York Mills Walk / Bicycle Zones
- Walk Audit
- Observation Results
- Traffic Volume Data
- Crash Data

Chapter 7: Community SRTS Open House Meeting

Chapter 8: Standardized SRTS Survey Analysis

- Key Findings – Parent Survey
- Parent Survey – Select Questions
- Student Travel Tally – Select Questions
- Discussion / Comparison

Chapter 9: Recommendations

Chapter 10: Conclusion

Appendices

- Appendix A: Parent Survey Results
- Appendix B: Student Travel Tally Results
- Appendix C: Data Collection Instruments
- Appendix D: Public Health Law Center, SRTS Policy Amendments
- Appendix E: Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet
- Appendix F: 707L Transportation of Public School Students Policy
- Appendix G: 709L Student Transportation Safety Policy
- Appendix H: 533L Wellness
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Safe Routes to School Team Members

Darla Berry – City Clerk, City of New York Mills

Judith Brockway – Elementary Principal, New York Mills ISD #553

Jane E.W. Butzer, P.E. – Program Coordinator, MnDOT- District 4

James Gritz – Chief of Police, City of New York Mills

Patrick Hollister – Active Living Planner, PartnerSHIP 4 Health

Michelle Lecoustre-Young – High School Principal, New York Mills ISD #553

Marsha Maki – Business Manager, New York Mills ISD #553

Blaine Novak – Superintendent, New York Mills ISD #553

Karen Nitzkorski – Worksite Wellness and School Coordinator, PartnerSHIP 4 Health

Jeff Preuss – Building & Grounds Supervisor, New York Mills ISD #553

Roger Salo – Public Works Director, City of New York Mills

Bob Theisen – Transportation Director, New York Mills ISD #553

Amy Wallgren – Customer Service Officer/Marketing, Farmers & Merchants State Bank
School Board Member & Parent, New York Mills ISD #553
Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

Lisa Austin – Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Coordinator
Nicole Campbell – Former Safe Routes to School Program Administrator
Dave Cowan – Safe Routes to School Program Administrator
Mary Safgren – Planning Director, MnDOT District 4

West Central Initiative

Wayne Hurley – Planning Director
Greg Wagner – Business and Economic Development Director/ GIS Cartography
Donna Ellsworth – Secretary-Receptionist
The purpose of this Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan is to guide school and city staff, local and state officials, parents, and educators in their efforts to make it easier, safer and more comfortable for students to walk and bicycle to and from school. It is the product of direct observation, expert analysis of the existing conditions around the school and in the community, input from members of the community, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) assembled crash and traffic data, and results from standardized parent surveys and student travel tallies. A successful SRTS program will require community involvement if it is to have a meaningful impact on that of students attending school. However, as an added bonus, SRTS programs and infrastructure usually prove beneficial to the whole community.

SRTS plans and programing are just a few of the tools being used to combat physical inactivity and increased levels of obesity in the United States. Both are considered public health crises that are greatly impacting the health of Americans, contributing to the rising costs of medical care today and much more so in the future if current trends continue. Walking or biking to and from school is an easy way for children to get the regular physical activity they need to combat these problems and to build healthy habits into adulthood. Physically active kids have fewer chronic health problems. They also have improved mood and concentration, a stronger self-image and more self-confidence which are all critical for succeeding in school and in life. SRTS programs can also instill safe travel habits to children at an early age which they can then take with them into adulthood.

In the Spring of 2014, the New York Mills School District and City of New York Mills were awarded a SRTS Planning Grant from MnDOT to conduct a SRTS plan for the New York Mills Elementary School. The SRTS planning process began in August of 2014 with a kick-off meeting. The SRTS team envisions a community that is connected, educated and encouraged to pursue active forms of transportation, as well as one where students can safely walk or bike to and from school. Working together, the New York Mills School District and City of New York Mills are uniquely suited to implement the identified recommendations for the New York Mills Elementary School, which can also help students in the adjoining New York Mills High School. The recommendations in this plan address the five “E”s of education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering and evaluation, which is the standard strategy in SRTS planning. Also addressed are possible issues of equity, as some communities and/or members of the community may have been historically underserved, have greater needs and/or have been more negatively affected by transportation planning decisions of the past. After the SRTS plan is approved by both the City of New York Mills and the New York Mills School District, the City and/or School District may seek funding and resources to implement the identified recommendations.
SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

OBSERVATIONS AND WALKING AUDIT

- Drop-off loop in front of elementary school entrance has busy, and sometimes less than orderly, traffic that can pose a possible danger to students walking / biking to and from school who must traverse the area during both morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal. Parents picking up and dropping off students in this area were also observed parking in no parking zones.

- During afternoon dismissal, the high school dismisses 10 minutes after the elementary school, with school buses leaving 15 minutes after the elementary school dismissal. This allows elementary school students walking and biking home to leave school grounds and the surrounding area before a second rush of traffic hits the streets of the city.

- While most children were seen using the crosswalks and sidewalks, some were still seen not using crosswalks.

- The New York Mills School is well-sited within the City of New York Mills and contiguous with neighborhoods and a mostly new, rebuilt sidewalk network.

- The New York Mills School sits directly adjacent to the very active Lund Boat factory with facilities bordering school grounds and to the south across Gilman Street. The High School entrance leads directly out onto the parking lot on the east side of the school with no clear logical walkway heading due east through the parking lot to route pedestrians to destinations east of school like the Kelava Apartments on Walker Avenue or other popular student destinations on Miller Street.

- Miller Street had a noticeable amount of motor vehicle and pedestrian traffic particularly after dismissal as students visit stores on Miller after school. However, Miller Street is in poor condition and does not have sidewalks or curbs.

- Driver speeds were notably faster in the afternoons compared to the morning, with some high school students observed driving at high speeds.

- The BNSF Railway line and US Highway 10 both create significant barriers to walking and biking in New York Mills.

- Much of the New York Mills sidewalk network was rebuilt during a major street reconstruction project in 2015.
PARENT SURVEY AND STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY RESULTS

- When compared to the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share numbers of 15.2 percent in the morning and 18.4 percent in the afternoon, the percentages of elementary students walking and bicycling to and from the New York Mills School (four percent morning, five percent afternoon) are below average. The Student Travel Tallies for both elementary and secondary / high school students returned similar walking and biking mode share numbers.

- Even when only students who live within a perceived one-mile distance from the school are considered, only 15 percent of these children walk and/or bike to school in the morning. This number stays the same, at 15 percent, in the afternoon. One mile is an appropriate distance for most students attending the New York Mills School to walk and/or bike to school according to the MnDOT Walk / Bike Zone concept.

- According to the Parent Survey, the school bus was the most frequently used mode of travel to and from school, followed by family vehicle.

- Distance was the main reason some parents do not allow their children to walk or bicycle to and from school, followed by weather.

- Safety factors, such as traffic speed and volume were chosen more frequently than crime or violence as barriers to children walking or biking to school.
ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

EDUCATION

Goal: Establish at least two educational programs a year within the community to teach and foster good bicycle and pedestrian safety habits.

1. **Continue to facilitate an annual bicycle rodeo event to teach bicycle skills and safety to students.**

   Bicycle Rodeos are bicycle safety training events held over the period of several hours that teach bicycle safety lessons and on-bike skills, usually in a station format (e.g., bicycle safety check, helmet fitting, instruction about the rules of the road, on-bike obstacle course, on-bike skills drills, etc.). While geared towards children, many of the lessons can be appropriate for adults as well. Bicycles rodeos can be held as part of a larger event or on their own, and either during the school day or outside of school. Adult volunteers can administer rodeos, or they may be offered through the local police department. Key partners in implementing a bicycle rodeo event may (should) include teachers, League of American Bicyclists Cycling Instructors, and PartnerSHIP 4 Health.

2. **Educate students about proper walking and bicycling etiquette through in-school and after-school bicycle and pedestrian safety education.**
   
   a. **If not existing, establish an after-school club.**
   
   b. **Utilize the Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum to help students understand the rules of the road.**
   
   c. **Identify the need for a bicycle fleet**

Observation results indicate that a portion of students did not exhibit proper walking techniques. Students were not utilizing crosswalks and some were seen not looking for traffic when they were crossing the street. Some of the bicyclists also displayed improper techniques by riding through stop signs and even not looking before entering an intersection. Also, on June 2, 2008 at 19:40 hours, a 12-year-old male on a bicycle was struck by an automobile on Walker Avenue. It was determined that the 12-year-old male on a bicycle was at fault as he darted out into traffic and failed to yield the right-of-way to the driver of the automobile.
The *Walk! Bike! Fun!* curriculum is an in-classroom and real-world (on foot, on bike) educational resource and can help address improper walking and biking behaviors like that observed by the SRTS Team. Taught by specially-trained school district teachers, this curriculum is intended for children ages five through thirteen. It teaches life-long skills related to traffic rules, potential hazards, and bike handling skills that enable students to walk and bike safely and comfortably to and from school along with other trips around their communities. The curriculum addresses a variety of walking and bicycling topics and is endorsed by MnDOT. Finally, in order to engage students in the *Walk! Bike! Fun!* curriculum, the New York Mills School District should identify the need for a bicycle fleet, or identify a nearby fleet they may be able to borrow.

![Figure 1: The Fergus Falls bike fleet is kept inside this towable trailer.](image-url)
3. Look into developing a school district safety campaign to build awareness of students walking and bicycling to and from school, and to encourage safe driving behavior among parents, high school students and passersby. If the referenced resources in this plan do not provide the information desired, please feel free to contact the staff at WCI and PartnerSHIP 4 Health for additional ideas.

While observations by the SRTS Team seem to indicate rather good driver behavior, casual observations made by the author while in the city in March 2016 and in comments from parents in the Parent Survey indicate that driver behavior near the school could be better. This is particularly true at dismissal time when teenage high school drivers depart in their private automobiles. Possibly backing up these concerns is a slight spike in the crash history during the 15:00 hour (3PM to 4PM). A school safety campaign should be developed that builds awareness around students walking and bicycling to and from school. An effective safety campaign might utilize multiple forms of media to get the attention of parents, students and passersby. Desired outcomes would be improved walking, bicycling and driver safety behaviors (particularly near the school), and youth empowerment.
4. Design a parent workshop to provide tools, resources and support needed to encourage parents and other community members to begin walking and bicycling for transportation. If the referenced resources in this plan do not provide the information desired, please feel free to contact the staff at WCI and PartnerSHIP 4 Health for additional ideas.

A parent workshop for those living in and around New York Mills can provide the tools, resources and support needed for parents to overcome some of the common barriers noted by parents to not allow their children to walk or bicycle to and from school. While distance was the most notable barrier noted by parents, traffic speed and the amount of traffic were the 2nd and 3rd most noted barriers. While traffic is a real threat to student safety for those walking to school, it is something that can be mitigated to some degree through education and parent involvement. Topics such as how to be a responsible driver, starting a walking school bus, and launching a safety campaign may impact the amount and speed of traffic near the school route.

5. Create a family-oriented educational training program that builds upon the school safety campaign (#3) such as a family biking class and/or family biking guide to teach basic bicycle maintenance, safety checks, etc. If the referenced resources in this plan do not provide the information desired, please feel free to contact the staff at WCI and PartnerSHIP 4 Health for additional ideas.

Educational trainings teach students the skills necessary to walk and bicycle safely while encouraging them to try walking and bicycling on a regular basis. If held in conjunction with the school safety campaign, students and families have the opportunity to practice skills and gain confidence.

6. Consider constructing the multi-use path in the redesigned / reconstructed Lund Park with “traffic garden” features. Traffic gardens are common throughout Europe and are more often painted onto a playground surface. However, they can be elaborate and complex with completely functioning traffic lights, railroad gates, etc. The planned recreation pathway network could be constructed to have the basic elements of a traffic garden like stop signs, painted crosswalks, solid and dashed yellow centerlines, turn lanes and even a traffic circle to teach children proper traffic and safety behaviors associated with walking and biking.
There are plans to reconstruct Lund Park that lies just to the north and east of the school. There was a desire to incorporate a SRTS transportation element into the proposed 5000 foot long asphalt trail. Unfortunately, even after exhaustive brainstorming, no SRTS transportation benefit could be found due to the park’s restricted location. However, there is no reason why the trail couldn’t be built with common traffic control devices found in New York Mills like traffic signs and striping.

Figure 3: An early rendering of the proposed “Eagle Pride Health and Wellness Recreational Area.” The author of this report has already suggested that the trail be a minimum of eight feet wide to meet minimum AASHTO Bikeway standards.
Figure 4: This is an example of an elaborate traffic garden from the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Basic, but still effective, traffic garden elements could be incorporated into the recreational pathway network being considered for Lund Park.
(Photo courtesy of Clarence Eckerson Jr. and Elizabeth Press at Streetfilms)

For more Education ideas, see Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet (Appendix E) and the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center – Education:

http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/education.html.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Goal: Explore strategies to promote walking and bicycling through the identification of safe routes, organizing events, rewarding participation, and educating adults.

1. A review of relevant New York Mills School District policies was performed as part of this SRTS plan. The district should follow through on its policy for providing bicycle and pedestrian safety education in grade K through 5 and investigate updating its policy language with the goal of making it more encouraging of the goals and best practices of SRTS. Amendments for the Wellness providing detailed SRTS guidance specific to Minnesota was produced by the Public Health Law Center at the William Mitchell College of Law and can be found in Appendix D. It is suggested that the school district look to adopt these policies in whole or in parts. An additional policy resource specific to Minnesota is the Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet which can be found in Appendix
E. Furthermore, the SRTS National Partnership, in cooperation with ChangeLab Solutions (a multi-disciplinary, multi-government agency policy partnership), has developed an online SRTS District Policy Workbook. This resource is a comprehensive SRTS policy guide covering everything from general policies supporting SRTS to more advanced policies like “No Idling Policies” and “School Siting Policies.” This resource is best accessed on-line and can be found at: [http://www.changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/welcome](http://www.changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/welcome). Finally look for possible improved policies coming out of the MnDOT SRTS Office and/or the Minnesota Department of Education in the near future.

Between the School District’s two Transportation Policies, (Appendices F and G), only the 709L Student Transportation Safety Policy (an 18-page document mostly dedicated to busing students) mentions anything about walking or biking to school. It states “The school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades K through 5,” and “Parents/Guardians are responsible to support safe riding and walking practices, and recognizes that students are responsible for their actions.” None of the other policies mention anything directly about bicycling, even though the term “riding” from the above-quoted policy could be interpreted to mean riding a bicycle but more likely refers to riding a bus.

The Wellness Policy is overall very supportive of the same goals generally pursued by SRTS and characterized by the statement “Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Towards that end, physical education and health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television.” It also states that “The New York Mills School District will encourage parents to support their children’s participation in physical activity.”

Overall the language in the three policies appears to be relatively standard as written by the Minnesota School Boards Association. However, since most of this standard policy language predates the SRTS movement, there is room for a great deal of improvement with regards to walking, biking and other SRTS initiatives.

2. **Consider developing informational messages to be included in the monthly school newsletter or email blast, encouraging students to walk or bike to school and highlighting associated health benefits.** If the referenced resources in this plan do not provide the information desired, please feel free to contact the staff at WCI and PartnerSHIP 4 Health for additional ideas.
Monthly informational messages can raise awareness about the positive health and academic benefits associated with increased physical activity, such as walking and bicycling. To get information to parents, a short message could be included in the monthly school newsletter.

3. **Explore the development of a remote school bus drop site, possibly on Centennial or Main Avenue, where students would have the option of walking the remaining distance to school or taking the bus.**

In a rural school district where students can live 20, 30 or more miles away from the school, it is not practical to have these students walk or bike to school. Others may live close by but are confronted with traffic barriers like highways and/or railroad track. These students can still get the exercise benefits of walking to school if the school buses give them the option of walking a few blocks to school from a safe remote drop-off site. This would also allow these students to participate in walking and biking to school competitions (see below).

4. **Explore / develop a competition or challenge to reward students by tracking the number of times they walk or bike to school, including those that take the bus and opt to be dropped off remotely or participate in some sort of physical fitness activity like walking on school grounds, etc.**

Competitions or challenges provide students with immediate, positive reinforcement. Beyond a walk and bike to /from school challenge, opportunities for possible competitions or challenges are endless and could target individuals, classrooms or the entire school.

5. **Continue participating in International Walk and Bike to School Days to encourage students and their families to try walking or biking to school.**

International Walk and Bike to School Day attracts millions of participants all over the world. The intent is to encourage students and their families to try walking or bicycling to school for one day. In some districts with high busing numbers, events on this day might include a walk around school grounds and throughout the town for all students, or a remote bus drop-off which would allow all students to walk to school from that location. Depending on the response rate, these events could be extended into the future and turn into ongoing designated walking and bicycling days. Key partners might include law enforcement officials, high school students, teachers, parent advocates and PartnerSHIP 4 Health. A desired result is that youth become empowered and more connected to health benefits of walking and biking and their environment as well.
6. Consider installing a bicycle repair station near one of the school entrances, preferably by the elementary school entrance, which would make it more useful for both student age groups.

Outdoor bicycle repair stations (Figure 5) are a great way to encourage bicycling, provide a way to make sure that bicycles are in good working order before students leave school for the day, make minor repairs that might otherwise leave a student stranded, all while teaching students basic mechanics and self-reliance. A typical station is equipped with a repair stand that holds the bike from the saddle, a heavy-duty, all-weather bicycle pump, and basic tools attached to the stand with theft resistant cables that allow a person to make most basic repairs.

7. Investigate the feasibility of a walking school bus for students within New York Mills city limits.

A walking school bus is a group of students walking to and from school with chaperones (usually adult / parent volunteers). A walking school bus is a fun, healthy and an easy opportunity for students to be physically active. A walking school bus usually provides front door pick-up and drop-off of students along the way, which can allay most parents’ fears. It can be done daily or just on certain days of the week and/or depending on weather conditions. The New York Mills Elementary School should investigate the desire for a walking school bus and see if parents or other citizen volunteers are interested in taking turns walking students. If a walking school bus is explored, outreach to parents could be done via the parent newsletter. The hardest part to operating a walking school bus is finding enough dedicated volunteers to act as “drivers” but active elderly members of the community have been recruited to perform this task in other towns and cities with very successful results.
For more Encouragement ideas, see Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet (Appendix E) and the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center – Encouragement:
http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/encouragement.html.

ENFORCEMENT

Goal: Address traffic and safety concerns by identifying and implementing enforcement measures within the school walk and bike zone.

1. **Increase the prevalence of traffic law enforcement in strategic locations during students’ morning arrival and afternoon dismissal.**

   The SRTS Team and one or two parents from the Parent Survey noted speeding traffic, particularly amongst the high school students, as a barrier for their children to walk and/or bike to school. Increasing the prevalence of law enforcement officers near the school may help to reduce vehicle speeds, improve compliance with speed limits around the school and increase the likelihood of vehicles yielding to pedestrians. This is a short-term, easy-to-implement recommendation that can be low cost.

2. **If not done so already, employ a trained adult crossing guard at the corner of Gilman Street and Hayes Avenue in coordination with Engineering suggestions #2, #3 and #4 (Figures 7, 8 and 9) at a location in front of the New York Mills Elementary School.**

   The presence of a trained adult crossing guard can be of invaluable importance to student safety at locations with busy and/or fast moving traffic like near the elementary front entrance. They often also act as a second pair of much more experienced eyes and can see hazards that young children may not be aware. Also crossing guards can help with the traffic flow of parents picking up and dropping off students and enforce the no parking restrictions in front of the school which was a noted violation by the SRTS Team and during Observation Day. Adult crossing guards have the added benefit of acting as a source of encouragement to students and reassurance to parents. This person could be a school employee, a new hire, or an adult volunteer.

3. **If not done so already, investigate restricting high school student drivers to entering and exiting school grounds at the Miller Street entrance via Broadway Avenue, not Walker (See Engineering suggestion #3 and Figures 8 and 9).**
Some teenage drivers are not known for exhibiting the best judgment. With this in mind, it is best to try and remove the traffic they generate from Gilman Street with all of its pedestrians and parent drop-off and pick-up traffic.

4. If not done so already, investigate rescinding parking privileges to high school students observed driving in an irresponsible manner while arriving and leaving the school grounds. If possible, extend such restrictions to any student who receives any traffic citation and is found guilty of a moving violation.

Being able to drive a private automobile to school and park it on school property is a privilege. Irresponsible driving behaviors by students near the school and around New York Mills should not be tolerated as the consequences can easily be fatal. Several parents of younger students noted the driving behaviors of high school students as a deterrent to allowing their children to walk and/or bike to and from school.

5. Identify the most effective form of automated speed feedback sign and investigate the possible installation (permanent or temporary) at strategic locations within New York Mills.

While frequently noted as a problem, the SRTS Team observations and community input did not end up identifying one or more particular locations where speeding was a noticeable problem within or near city limits. Speed feedback signs are a fairly uncontroversial and effective means of slowing down traffic and have been used in numerous communities through Greater and west central Minnesota. Using radar to detect a vehicle speed, these signs will display the speed of the oncoming vehicle to remind the driver of their speed if driving above the posted speed limit. If driving more than five mph over the limit the sign can be programmed to flash the detected speed, sometimes with a flashing light to really catch the driver’s attention. It is recommended that the City of New York Mills, with help of county and MnDOT officials, identify the most effective form of automated speed feedback and possible locations for deployment.

For more Enforcement ideas, see Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet (Appendix E) and the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center – Enforcement:
http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/enforcement.html.
ENGINEERING

Goal: Improve the existing infrastructure within the community to ensure active transportation is encouraged and made safe.

Note – All of the following recommended proposals are rough but well thought-out ideas from a professional active transportation planner. They will need further vetting and refinement, including that of a licensed engineer, to see if they are feasible. The recommendations below are listed in a general order of priority. For a visual summary of the suggested Engineering proposals, please see Figures 6 - 11.

1. With the following engineering suggestions, ensure that all meet conventional standards including but not limited to the latest Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) for ADA compliance and the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. For more information regarding ADA PROWAG guidelines in Minnesota, please see MnDOT’s Curb Ramp Guidelines from October 2010.

2. Install sidewalks and crosswalks near the school per Figure 7 to aid students walking and biking to school. Be aware of the recommended sidewalk widths which are advised to handle the extra pedestrian traffic of walking students near the school and gathering in groups, along with children being dropped off on Gilman Street.

3. Investigate closing the drop-off loop directly in front of the school and Gilman Street west of Hayes Avenue to all traffic during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal (see Figure 7). This is proposed in order to create a more orderly traffic flow, reduce automobile/pedestrian conflict zones at crosswalks near the school and to help make it safer for children as they gather and depart near the elementary school entrance.

4. In coordination with the suggested sidewalk, crosswalk and road closure recommendations, investigate the implementation of the suggested morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up circulation plans complete with parking restrictions (see Figures 8 and 9).

5. Post 10 mph speed limit signs at the points where Hayes Avenue and Miller Street cross onto school property. The speed limit on school property should be clearly marked at 10 mph.
6. Investigate “School Zone” speed limit of 15 mph on Gilman Street in front of the school to Walker Avenue, Hayes Avenue from a point 300 feet south of Gilman, and on Miller Street from a point immediately west of the Mills Car Wash.

7. Investigate reconstructing Miller Street with curb and gutter, a south side sidewalk, and well-engineered, marked crosswalks that follow logical desire lines to shopping destinations on the north that are commonly frequented by students after school.

8. Investigate the reconstruction of the high school parking lot so that the sidewalk from the south side of Miller Street at Walker Avenue to the front entrance of the high school follows a more logical and direct desire line. Also ensure that this new sidewalk lines up well with the proposed sidewalk on the south side of Miller Street and has landscape protections to make it an inviting route, as well as protecting the pedestrian space from possible intruding parked cars (see Figure 7).

9. Investigate reducing the width of Hayes Avenue just west of the school building (currently 48 feet curb to curb not including parking) and widen the sidewalk in this area. Hayes Avenue north of Gilman Street has been vacated by the city and is now a part of school property. As such, Hayes Avenue no longer needs to be this wide and can be made narrower to accommodate a sidewalk of proper width in front of the school that also includes a boulevard buffer from parked cars (see Figure 7).

10. Coordinate with MnDOT and Otter Tail County regarding the construction of a multi-use pathway along Broadway Avenue (County 67) through the U.S. Highway 10 interchange from Gilman Street in the south to Mockingbird Lane or County Highway 56 to the north (see Figure 10). Preliminary investigation by WCI staff suggests that routing this path on the east side of Broadway Avenue may be preferable due to the available ROW space and the lower number of roadway and driveway conflicts. It is recommended that the best contemporary bicycle and pedestrian safety countermeasures be employed to ensure the maximum safety of both bicyclists and pedestrians at both highway ramp crossings and the street crossings at Carlund Parkway and Mocking Bird Lane.
11. Rehabilitate and install new sidewalk per the recommendations in Figure 10 and PROWAG. Start with sidewalks closest to the school like Gilman, Miller Street and Hayes Avenue, generally working outward with a secondary focus on busier streets like Broadway and those with a greater number residences and on roadways that connect to neighborhoods. Coordinate sidewalk installations with other road / infrastructure projects, to take advantage of potential cost savings. Use best local and engineering judgment when prioritizing installations.

12. Where practicable, set sidewalks as far back as possible from the roadway curb to create a buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic. Such buffers can reduce traffic stress on pedestrians and make walking safer and more enjoyable, while providing a place for street trees to grow. These buffers are even more important on busier roadways with higher traffic volumes, faster vehicle speeds, and/or significant heavy truck traffic.

13. Investigate traffic calming measures on streets not intended for through-traffic such as Cornwell, Gilman, Parke (east of Broadway), Smith and Lund, as well as streets south of the railroad and east of Main Avenue and far South Walker, which is outside of city limits. This is especially important on streets where sidewalks are not recommended due to their very low traffic volumes, narrow nature, dispersed residences and/or distance from the school.

14. Work with MnDOT and even the State Legislature on the posting of 20 mph speed limits. It is suggested that all streets within New York Mills that are not a part of the state and county networks be posted at 20 mph. Many are already posted as such within the city. Lowering traffic speeds is a solidly-proven traffic safety countermeasure and lowering the speed limits can be done rather inexpensively. Nearly all of the roads that fall under this recommendation are residential in nature and have limited potential to well serve through-traffic.

15. Investigate installing sidewalk bump-outs at select intersections in downtown, namely on Centennial 84 Drive and Main Avenue. Bump-outs have a traffic calming effect, reduce the distance that pedestrians are in the street with automobiles, can prevent illegal parking of vehicles too close to a crosswalk and/or stop sign, which can block a driver’s view of these traffic control devices. They aid in making pedestrians and stop signs more visible to drivers by placing them in a more conspicuous, easier to be seen location, without being in the roadway. Sidewalk bump-outs can be engineered to be mountable when large heavy trucks need to turn at bump-out intersections.
16. Investigate reducing the width of Centennial 84 Drive between Hayes and Broadway Avenues (currently 54 to 70 feet) to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and to add a traffic calming effect. For a measure of comparison, U.S. Highway 10 in Wadena, with two shoulders and three traffic lanes, is only 48 feet wide curb to curb. This reduction can be done while keeping a practical amount of on-street parking and maintaining operating room for larger heavy trucks and farm equipment. An on-street bike lane could also have a road width reducing effect while providing guidance on proper lane placement and encouragement for those who may choose to ride a bicycle to school. At the same time, when safe to do so, the bicycle lane can be encroached upon during the infrequent times required by the driver of a larger vehicle to navigate the street. It should be noted that there was a crash involving a 66-year-old pedestrian that caused possible injuries that occurred at the intersection of Centennial 84 Drive and Main Avenue on June 1, 2011 at 09:03 hours. The driver was found to be at fault for failing to yield to the pedestrian. It is possible that proven pedestrian safety countermeasures, such as roadway width reduction and bump-outs suggested in #16, may have prevented this crash.

17. Coordinate with MnDOT, BNSF Railroad and Otter Tail County, regarding the possible reconstruction of the Main Avenue South (County 67) at-grade railroad crossing to assure that both sidewalks meet the latest PROWAG ADA standards. It is also suggested that barrier gates be installed at all four sidewalk access points to physically prevent pedestrians from encroaching into and crossing the railroad right-of-way when trains are present or approaching (see Figures 6 and 11).
18. Coordinate and investigate with BNSF Railroad and MnDOT regarding the installation of a single, PROWAG ADA-compliant pedestrian crossing of the railroad on the west side of Walker Avenue. It is also suggested that barrier gates be installed at both sidewalk access points to physically prevent pedestrians from encroaching into and crossing the railroad right-of-way when trains are present or approaching (see Figures 6 and 11).

19. Coordinate and investigate with BNSF Railroad and MnDOT regarding the installation of fencing on the south side of the railroad from Boardman Avenue in the west to a point several hundred feet to the east of the South Broadway Avenue ROW, and on the north side from point approximately 500 feet to the west of Walker Avenue (likely located between the main line and the railroad siding) to a location approximately 2500 feet east of Main Ave (approximately 300 feet east of Mills Lanes & Lucky Strike). This can help to prevent pedestrian trespass on the railroad right-of-way and focus pedestrians to legal crossing locations with proper warning beacons and gates (see Figure 11).

For more Engineering ideas see Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet (Appendix E) and the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center – Engineering:

http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/engineering.html.
Investigate closing drop-off loop to parent as well as Gilman west of Hayes during arrival and dismissal times.

Narrow Hayes Street remnant east of school building (vacated by city and now school property) and move sidewalk and parking eastward.

Close Gilman west of Hayes to all but factory traffic but construct sidewalks to allow students to walk to and from residences located west of the factory.

Relocate Bicycle Racks to a new concrete pad located closer to the entrances per APBP Bicycle Parking Guidelines.

Legend
- NYM School
- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Proposed Crosswalks
- Proposed Removal
- Close @ arrive/dismiss
- Recommended Width

Basemap Cartography by: Greg Wagner, WCI
New York Mills School Suggested SRTS Morning Circulation (Figure 8)
All closure lines and no parking areas are intended to be temporary; just for arrival and departure and affect only parents and students, not local residents, teachers or school bus drivers. Lund factory employees and delivery drivers will be discouraged from using Gilman in front of the school during morning arrival.

An adult crossing guard will be assigned to Hayes and Gilman to assist students walking and biking to school at this busy intersection.

To avoid additional traffic congestion at the corner of Hayes and Gilman, all high school students who drive must arrive via Miller from Broadway and not Walker.

New York Mills School Suggested SRTS Afternoon Circulation (Figure 9)
All closure lines are intended to be temporary; just for arrival and departure and affect only parents and students, not local residents, teachers or school bus drivers. Lund factory employees and delivery drivers will be discouraged from using Gilman in front of the school during afternoon departure.

To avoid heavy traffic conditions at time of departure, students walking or biking home to the south and east will not be allowed to cross Gilman at Hayes. An adult crossing guard will guide students to walk on the north side of Gilman east to cross at Walker or Main where traffic from parents picking up students will be lighter. Only students getting picked up by parents on the west side of Hayes will be allowed to cross Gilman. A second crossing guard may be assigned to Walker.

To avoid additional traffic congestion at the corner of Hayes and Gilman, all high school students who drive must depart via Miller to Broadway and not Walker.
New York Mills School Suggested SRTS Morning Circulation

All closure lines and no parking areas intended to be temporary just for arrival and departure and effect only parents and students, not local residents, teachers or school bus drivers. Lund Factory employees and delivery drivers will be discouraged from using Gilman in front of the school during morning arrival.

An adult crossing guard will be assigned to Hayes and Gilman to assist students walking and ailing to school at this busy intersection.

To avoid additional traffic congestion at the corner of Hayes and Gilman, all high school students who drive must arrive and depart via Miller St. and from Broadway.

Legend

NYM School
Existing/Proposed Sidewalks
Proposed Crosswalks
Proposed Closure Lines
Proposed Removal
Drop Off/Pick Up Area
Close/No Parking
Student Walk Route
Parent Drive Route
Student Drive Route

Figure 8: New York Mills School Suggested SRTS Morning Circulation.
New York Mills School Suggested SRTS Afternoon Circulation

All closure lines are intended to be temporary, just for arrival and departure and affect only parents and students, not local residents, teachers or school bus drivers. Lund Factory employees and delivery drivers will be discouraged from using Gilman in front of the school during afternoon departure.

To avoid heavy traffic conditions at time of departure students walking or biking home to the south and east will not be allowed to cross Gilman at Hayes. An adult crossing guard will guide students to walk on the north side of Gilman east to cross at Walker or Main were traffic from parents picking up will be lighter. Only students getting picked up by parents on the west side of Hayes will be allowed to cross Gilman. An adult crossing guard may be assigned to Walker.

Legend
- NYM School
- Exist Prop. Sidewalks
- Proposed Crosswalks
- Proposed Closure Lines
- Proposed Removal
- Drop Off/Pick Up Area
- Close No Parking
- Student Walk Route
- Parent Drive Route
- Student Drive Route

To avoid additional traffic congestion at the corner of Hayes and Gilman, all high school students who drive must arrive and depart via Miller to and from Broadway.
Figure 10: New York Mills Safe Routes to School proposed engineering walking and biking facility improvements.
Figure 11: New York Mills proposed bicycle and pedestrian railroad safety improvements.
EVALUATION

Goal: Evaluate the effectiveness of programming by tracking baseline data and, in addition, actively work on improvement, based on results.

1. Administer the student travel tallies at least once per year to track the number of students walking and bicycling in comparison to the 2017 baseline results.

In order to track the results of implemented programming, it is recommended that the New York Mills Elementary School and the New York Mills School District administer the student travel tallies at least annually. The results will indicate the number of students walking and bicycling, which in turn will identify the effectiveness of programs. If possible, try to conduct the student travel tallies more than once per year so it is possible to capture travel data during periods of inclement weather, particularly rain and snow, to see how that affects student travel mode choice. This data will also be useful when applying for non-infrastructure or infrastructure funding.

2. Administer a parent survey questionnaire once every two to three years to track and analyze school travel behaviors and parents’ perceptions in comparison to the 2014 baseline results.

The parent survey tool tracks and analyzes student travel behaviors and parents’ perceptions of walking and bicycling. This survey should be conducted no more than biannually as attitudes are not likely to change that quickly. If done too frequently, parents may not be as inclined to fill them out.

3. Explore establishing baseline health data (possibly already gathered) to evaluate possible health improvements over time related to SRTS improvements.

In order to track student health improvements over time, it is suggested that the New York Mills School District collect baseline health data. It is likely that the school district is already collecting this data. As SRTS programs and improvements are implemented, the health of students can be tracked on a continual basis. PartnerSHIP 4 Health may be able to help the school district organize this.

For more Evaluation ideas see Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet (Appendix E) and the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center – Evaluation:
http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/evaluation.html.
Goal: Eliminate conflicts with high school student drivers who have been observed driving inappropriately at afternoon dismissal times.

1. Maintain the later dismissal times for high school students so the high school-aged drivers are not leaving at the same time as the younger elementary school students.

While not observed by the SRTS Team during Observation Day, aggressive driving was observed at dismissal by the author when he was in New York Mills in the Spring of 2016. It likely benefits student safety by having the elementary school students dismiss several minutes before the high school students so the younger students can clear the area around the school before the high school drivers leave. Since the buses must wait for the high school students to dismiss this also eliminates bus traffic from around the school and nearby streets when elementary school students are walking home.

Goal: Create partnerships with local businesses and organizations to increase support and encouragement of active transportation.

2. Identify opportunities or partners to fund bicycle helmets for educational events like bike rodeos and/or Walk! Bike! Fun! training events.

Goal: Work to ensure all City policies and ordinances are supportive of active transportation.

3. If not done so already, the city should create an ordinance that mandates the preservation of sidewalks installed within the public right-of-way. This ordinance should include maintenance and clearance of those sidewalks by adjacent property owners during snow and other weather events.

4. Investigate a policy that ensure that existing sidewalks are properly cleared of snow within 24 hours and identify snow storage areas that do not impede walking and bicycling to school. This is particularly important at the corners of intersections.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In April of 2014, New York Mills School District and City of New York Mills were awarded a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Planning Grant from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to conduct a SRTS Plan for the New York Mills Elementary School. This plan is a product of that grant and was developed to encourage students who live within an appropriate distance of the New York Mills Elementary School to walk and bike to and from school, and to do so safely. In a collaborative effort with the city, school district, and members of the community, West Central Initiative staff developed this plan, which is focused on developing strategies and identifying the infrastructure needs to help attain these goals.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

A SRTS plan is a multi-faceted guide for school officials, city staff, parents and educators to improve the conditions for students walking and biking to and from school. Walking or biking to and from school is an easy way for children to get the regular physical activity they need for good health. Physical inactivity and increased levels of obesity are considered a public health crisis and as such, the Minnesota Department of Health has allocated funds and personnel through the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to assist with SRTS programs such as Walk to School Day. Physically active kids have fewer chronic health problems, have improved mood and concentration, a stronger self-image, and increased self-confidence and independence—all of which are critical for succeeding in school and in life. In some communities, SRTS programs have had the added benefit of reducing and, in select cases, eliminating expensive student transportation costs. The recommendations in this plan are intended to improve safety, encourage walking and bicycling, empower students and reduce traffic congestion during the morning and afternoon school rush. Parents will only allow their children to walk to and from school if they are comfortable that it is safe for their children to do so. This plan was commissioned with these goals in mind.
While the primary goal of the plan is to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and desirable transportation choice, the safety improvements proposed have the potential to benefit the community as a whole. Sidewalk, trail and/or intersection improvements possibly built for students as a result of this plan will always be there for any and all who wish to walk or bike for transportation and/or recreation, whether that be a couple going for an evening stroll after dinner or an elderly widow who has no other means but to walk to her local church, convenience store, pharmacy, etc.

This five-to-ten year plan was developed for the City of New York Mills and the New York Mills School District for students at the New York Mills Elementary School and is based specifically on the school’s location, the City’s and the surrounding School District’s geography, pre-existing conditions, school walk and bicycle zones, strengths, barriers, opportunities and student population throughout the district. This SRTS plan uses the standard “5 Es” approach (see Chapter 2) and greatly improves a school’s and community’s chances to be awarded state and federal SRTS infrastructure grant funds.

Figure 12: New sidewalks and street lights next to the Barnesville, MN football stadium were installed after the need was identified in a SRTS plan. While the sidewalk and lights were paid for with a SRTS infrastructure grant primarily to benefit students walking to and from school, these amenities are in the public right-of-way and benefit all in the community who wish or need to use them.
CHAPTER 2: ABOUT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS)

OVERVIEW

Today more than ever, there is a need to provide options that allow all children—including those with disabilities—to walk and bicycle to school safely. Many communities struggle with traffic congestion around schools and motor vehicle emissions polluting the environment. At the same time, children in general engage in less physical activity, which contributes to the prevalence of childhood obesity. At first glance, these problems may seem to be separate issues, but SRTS programs can address all these challenges through a coordinated action plan.

SRTS programs use a variety of education, engineering and enforcement strategies that help make routes safer for children to walk and bicycle to school and encouragement strategies to entice more children to walk and bike. They have grown popular in recent years in response to problems created by a growing reliance on motor vehicles for student transportation, an expanding built environment, as well as the development and availability of federal and state funding for SRTS programs.


HISTORY

The SRTS concept began in the 1970s in Odense, Denmark, rooted in concern for the safety of children walking and bicycling to school.

The SRTS concept spread internationally, with programs developing in other parts of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. The Bronx, a borough of New York City, started the first SRTS program in the United States in 1997. In the same year, the State of Florida implemented a pilot program. In August of 2000, the U.S. Congress funded two SRTS pilot projects through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Within a year of the launch of the pilot projects, many other grassroots SRTS efforts began throughout the United States.

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Success with the pilot projects generated interest in a federally-funded national program. In 2003, advocates convened meetings with experts in pedestrian and bicycle issues to talk about SRTS issues and ideas for developing a national program. Momentum for a national SRTS program in the United States continued to build as several states developed their own programs.

Congress created the Federal-Aid Safe Routes to School Program in 2005 through comprehensive transportation legislation, ultimately resulting in nearly $1 billion in funding. Subsequent transportation legislation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) passed in 2012 making Safe Routes to School (SRTS) activities eligible to compete for funding alongside other programs, including the Transportation Enhancements program and Recreational Trails program, as part of a new program called Transportation Alternatives.


### THE DECLINE OF WALKING AND BICYCLING

Not long ago, children routinely moved around their neighborhoods by foot or by bicycle, and that was often how they traveled to and from school. That is no longer the case. Whether looking at the total proportion of children walking and bicycling to school, the proportion of children who live within a mile of school or the proportion of children living within one mile of school who walk or bike, the decline is apparent.

- In 1969, 48 percent of children 5 to 14 years of age usually walked or bicycled to school.
- In 2009, 13 percent of children 5 to 14 years of age usually walked or bicycled to school.
- In 1969, 41 percent of children in grades K–8 lived within one mile of school.
  - 89 percent of these children usually walked or bicycled to school.
- In 2009, 31 percent of children in grades K–8 lived within one mile of school;
  - 35 percent of these children usually walked or bicycled to school.

The circumstances that have led to a decline in walking and bicycling to school did not happen overnight and have created a self-perpetuating cycle. As motor vehicle traffic increases, parents become more convinced that it is unsafe for their children to walk or bicycle to school. They begin driving them to school, thereby adding even more traffic to the road and sustaining the cycle. Understanding the many reasons why so many children do not walk or bicycle to school is the first step in interrupting the cycle.

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Many factors contribute to the reduction in children walking and bicycling to school. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a nationwide survey of parents to find out the most common barriers that prevented them from allowing their children to walk to school. Parents of children aged 5 to 18 years cited one or more of the following six barrier reasons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier Reason</th>
<th>Percentage of parents identifying with the barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance to school:</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic-related danger:</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather:</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime danger:</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposing school policy:</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons (not identified):</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this CDC report is from 2005, a report from the National Center for Safe Routes to School in 2010 found that these barriers remain the same.


**HEALTH RISKS**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity each day and that the bulk of this physical activity comes through aerobic exercise, such as walking and bicycling. For children and adolescents, regular physical activity helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, reduces the risk of developing obesity and chronic diseases, reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well-being.
Despite these benefits, many children are not getting adequate physical activity. In the 2014 United States Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth, the National Physical Activity Plan Alliance reports that only 24.8 percent of youth ages 12-15 years obtain 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. A 2014 CDC study reports that during the school day, only 4 percent of elementary schools and 8 percent of middle/junior high schools provide daily physical education classes, and in 2012 only 58.9% of all school districts required that elementary schools provide students with regularly scheduled physical activity. Unfortunately, less active children are more likely to be overweight, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When it comes to children’s health, the costs of inadequate physical activity and poor eating habits are alarming. Inadequate physical activity and poor eating habits are major contributors to the increased rates of childhood obesity and overweight in the United States. Obese children are at least twice as likely to become obese adults. According to both a 2003 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics and a 2015 CDC, this puts obese children at greater risk for premature death and chronic diseases than their healthy-weight counterparts.


THE 5 E’S OF SRTS PLANNING

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are intended to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. The recommendations outlined in this plan are based on the “5 Es” of the National SRTS program, which include Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation. An integrated approach, each one of the “5 Es” is intended to complement one another. Below is a detailed description of the “5 Es”.

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Programs focused on education can have long-lasting effects on students that continue into adulthood. Education programs that teach students safety skills for walking and bicycling also form the basis of good driving skills they may need in the future. Programs should also target parents and other drivers to inform them how to drive more safely around pedestrians and bicyclists. A few examples of possible education strategies are bicycle rodeos that teach safe bicycling skills, classroom lessons focused on traffic safety, take-home flyers informing parents of the rules and regulations regarding student pick-up and drop-off at the school, the Minnesota *Walk! Bike! Fun!* program, and thoughtfully placed billboards with safety messages targeting drivers.

![Image: Bike MN instructors demonstrate to teachers how to do on-bike skill drills in a parking lot at the Rothsay, MN School.](image-url)
ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement strategies are focused on getting students to try walking and bicycling to school and in turn, to celebrate and reward students for their efforts. These strategies can be low-cost, easy to implement and fun for students. Examples of encouragement activities include walking school buses and organizing events such as “Walk to School Day” (in October) and “Bike to School Day” (in May) to encourage students to try walking and biking to school.

ENFORCEMENT

The primary goals of enforcement strategies are to help reduce unsafe behaviors by drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists; and to increase awareness of laws protecting children who are walking and bicycling. Enforcement strategies include students, parents and school personnel working in conjunction with law enforcement officers. Examples of enforcement activities include the installation of digital speed feedback signs, adult or student safety patrol, crossing guards and educational “stings” that inform motorists of the dangers of seemingly minor traffic infractions without issuing tickets.

ENGINEERING

Engineering involves the planning and implementation of physical improvements to the built environment that make it safer and more attractive for students to walk and bicycle to and from school. For example, providing a designated space for pedestrians, such as sidewalks, has been proven to reduce pedestrian crash risks. Up to an 88 percent reduction in ‘walking along the roadway’ pedestrian crashes has been seen with

Figure 14: Hundreds of Frazee, MN students along with teachers, parents, local officials, including police participate in International Walk to School day by walking on the new multi-use trail. The trail was built after it was identified in a SRTS plan as a possible valuable connector between a new neighborhood and the school (as well as downtown).
the installation of sidewalks on both sides of the road. However, engineering projects are most successful when used in conjunction with education, encouragement and enforcement strategies. Partnering with engineers and planners is crucial to the successful implementation of projects. Examples of engineering strategies include adding bicycle racks, installing fully-accessible crosswalks, sidewalks and multi-use trails, traffic calming, bicycle lanes, signs and signals, as well as other infrastructure.

Figure 15: This crosswalk is equipped with a pedestrian (push button) activated, solar-powered Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). It is located in Frazee, MN and crosses County Road 12 near the north entrance into town. It is a prime example of an engineering SRTS solution. It was installed as part of a new trail that allows students to get to school in a more direct and safer manner. Once a pedestrian presses the button located on the sign posts, super-bright yellow LED lights flash in an eye-catching “wiggle” pattern under both signs and in both directions. Otherwise, the LED lights remain turned off as seen in this photo. Driver compliance rates for crosswalks with RRFBs are significantly higher than at crosswalks without them, and can be relatively inexpensive to install.

EVALUATION

In order to measure the progress of the program activities over time, consistent evaluation is necessary. Evaluation techniques include a combination of quantitative and qualitative information. Schools are very strongly encouraged to continue conducting the National Centers for SRTS parent surveys (every two to three years) and student travel tally (once or twice a year) which were already done as part of this plan to provide baseline data. You can find the National Centers for SRTS survey forms in the Appendix C of this report. Other examples of evaluation strategies include but are not limited to school walking audits and observations of student travel behaviors arriving to and leaving school.

A 6TH E? - EQUITY

Recently, the principle of Equity has begun to be added to the standard “5 Es” of SRTS planning. According to the MnDOT SRTS webpage:

*Equity is a needs-based approach to allocating resources that aims to achieve fairness in the distribution of benefits and costs. In transportation planning, discussion of equity acknowledges that some communities and populations may require additional resources in order to have the same opportunities as other communities.*

*Equity is often confused with equality, when in fact they have different meanings. Equality assumes that all needs are the same. The result is that every community gets the exact same resources without regard to individual differences. Equality works only in circumstances where everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things. Equity allows resources to be provided on the basis of need. Communities disproportionally impacted by safety, health or transportation access inequities*
are provided appropriate resources to address their individual needs. Therefore, resource allocation may differ between communities.  

![Diagram of Equity vs Equality](image)

**Figure 17:** This is a common diagram used to illustrate the concept of Equity versus Equality.

Equality is demonstrated on the left, where six boxes (units of aid) are given equally to three people despite their differences in height (need). The two boxes are more than enough for the tall person to reach the fruit high in the tree (goal). Two boxes, however, are just enough for the person of medium height but still not enough for the short person (the one with the most need) to reach the high hanging fruit. When resources are distributed equally, some people may be given more assistance than they need, while others are still not given enough.

Equity is demonstrated on the right where the same six boxes (units of aid) are distributed to three people based on their differences in height (need). The tall person is given just one box as that is all (the aid) that person needs. The person of medium height is again given two boxes as that remains the amount of boxes (aid) this person needs to reach the high hanging fruit (goal). Finally, the short person is given three boxes (units of aid) as this is the additional level of assistance that person needed to be able to reach the fruit in the tree (goal).

**Source:** Modified version of an image obtained from the Maine Office of Health Equity website.

The introduction of equity to the SRTS planning formula is an effort to better focus limited SRTS resources to communities and groups that have been often underserved, have greater needs and/or have been more negatively affected by transportation planning decisions of the past and the transportation infrastructure now found in their local community.

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Children today are not attaining the recommended amounts of physical activity, contributing to the increasing rates of obesity and a variety of chronic diseases. Lack of physical activity along with poor nutrition is the second leading cause of preventable death, according to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Physical activity not only prevents chronic diseases but also improves moods and helps with weight control. There is also increasing evidence that physical activity improves academic performance, attentiveness and concentration in the classroom.  

There are many ways to promote physical activity among youth, and improving walking and biking to school is one of them. SRTS programs can increase students’ daily amount of physical activity and has the potential to decrease the prevalence of students becoming overweight or obese. It is recommended that children get sixty minutes of physical activity a day. Nationally, only 50 percent of high school students participated in any kind of physical activity that increased their heart rate for a total of 60 minutes on five or more days a week. A 15-minute walking or biking route to and from school can help students meet much of their recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Walking and bicycling to school at a young age also has the potential to instill habits of an active lifestyle that children may take with them into adulthood.

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

SRTS TEAM

Successful SRTS programs recognize each community as being unique and emphasize the importance of including a diverse range of community representation on the team. The New York Mills SRTS team included representation from the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools, the New York Mills Public School District (a superintendent, various directors and managers, a board member and parent), the City of New York Mills, New York Mills Police Department, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) – District 4, and PartnerSHIP 4 Health. The team members were directly involved in the planning process, with many having the knowledge and skills needed to implement the plan recommendations. After delivering the plan, West Central Initiative (WCI) will continue to provide ongoing technical assistance to aid in plan implementation.

SRTS PLANNING PROCESS

In the Spring of 2014 New York Mills School District and City of New York Mills were awarded a SRTS Planning assistance grant which MnDOT contracted with WCI to complete. With the assistance and expert staff at WCI, the SRTS team came together to review the school and community profiles, provide input on the barriers, outline the vision and goals, assist in data collection, and to develop and review the recommendations. As part of the planning and outreach process, the community was invited and encouraged to provide feedback on the community’s strengths, barriers and opportunities; a kind of SWOT Analysis tailored to planning.

In addition to gathering community input, the team conducted an assessment of the community’s current conditions and policies in order to identify opportunities to advance walking and bicycling to school or programs that support active transportation. The team conducted observations to understand how many students walk and bike to and from school, what routes are the most traveled, their behaviors as pedestrians and bicyclists and the interactions between pedestrians and motorists. In addition, the team conducted a separate walk-audit of the entire community to survey its geography and infrastructure. During the walk-audit, the team recorded sidewalk conditions, child-friendly opportunities to cross streets, along with vehicle speeds, and potential trail and sidewalk connections.

Furthermore, the team helped administer the National Centers for Safe Routes to School (National Centers) student travel tally survey and a separate parent survey. The student travel tally form is used to count the number of students arriving to and departing from school by various modes. The parent survey collects information from parents of K-8th graders about how their children travel to and from school, their
attitudes towards active transportation, and finally barriers that prevent their children from participating in active transportation modes of travel. The results were then entered into the National Centers’ database. These assessment tools illustrate the range of current barriers and opportunities, which is the foundation of the identified recommendations. These surveys are to be done yearly with continuing WCI assistance so that possible trends in student travel behavior and parent perceptions can be identified and recorded with the National Centers for Safe Routes to School database. Understanding the possible changes in student travel trends will give school, school district and WCI staff the information they need to be able to determine if the goal of getting more children to walk and bike to and from school is being met.

All of this information was then reviewed by the SRTS team and analyzed by the staff at WCI to provide a list of action plan recommendations to improve walking and biking to and from school structured around the active transportation planning principles of the “5 Es”.

**MNDOT WALK / BICYCLE ZONE CONCEPT**

Children are more likely to walk or bicycle to school if they live within the school “Walk / Bike Zone.” MnDOT defines this as “the area within the school’s enrollment boundary from which students can realistically walk or bike to school.” MnDOT guidelines generally assume distances of up to 0.5 mile for children in grades PreK-5, one mile for grades 6-8, and 1.5 miles for grades 9-12 are within the Walk / Bike Zone.  

While not stated in any MnDOT documents, the Walk / Bike Zone distances are likely based on the following accepted standards. The average adult can walk a distance of 0.5 miles in 10 to 12 minutes. For a child in grades PreK-5, the same distance would likely require twice as much time (20 to 24 minutes) which is a reasonable amount of time to travel to school. For students in grades 6-8, 1 mile can likely be walked within 20 to 30 minutes, similar to an adult. However, children in these grades have the maturity to bicycle that distance if there are no significant traffic hazard barriers. At the relaxed speeds of 8 to 10 mph (the bicycle equivalent to a modest walking pace), 1 mile can be bicycled in 6 to 8 minutes. For high school students in grades 9-12, a distance of 1.5 miles could be walked in 30 to 40 minutes. However these students can bike that distance in 9 to 11 minutes and have the maturity to navigate even more complex traffic situations.

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STATUS OF STATE AND FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

A SRTS plan is not required to receive Minnesota state and/or federal SRTS infrastructure grants but is highly recommended. A school and/or community with a SRTS plan will be much better able to compete for limited funding and resources to implement the identified recommendations. Please be aware with anticipated future changes in federal and state transportation laws, the following funding sources below are likely to change. Please contact WCI or MnDOT for updated funding information at any point in the future.

FEDERAL

In previous federal transportation laws, the SRTS program was a separately funded category, independent of the Transportation Enhancements program (TE - bikeways, trails, sidewalks, streetscapes reconstruction, etc.) and Scenic Byways program. In 2012, Congress passed a Federal transportation bill entitled Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). This law combined the SRTS, TE and Scenic Byways programs into one funding source called Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). TAP is funded from the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund at an amount equal to 2% of the total amount of federal-aid highways each fiscal year. Each state was charged with developing their own program for soliciting projects to be funded by the TAP funds allocated to them. Since MAP-21, states also have the option of redirecting 50% of TAP to other transportation projects.

Late in 2015, Congress passed a five-year transportation spending bill called Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which was then signed into law by the President on December 4th. It is the first law enacted in over 10 years that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. Overall, the FAST Act largely maintains current program structures and funding for SRTS. The only difference is that Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) which provides SRTS infrastructure funding has been renamed Transportation Alternatives (TA). The FAST Act does include two modest funding increases (4% over the life of the Act) for TA/SRTS programs. WCI can assist communities and school districts applying for federal TA and SRTS infrastructure funds.

STATE

In 2014, the Minnesota Legislature allocated $1 million from the general fund from that fiscal year’s budget to the SRTS Program as proclaimed by Minnesota Statute 174.40. MnDOT was tasked with administering the program and allocating the funding to communities. Under the 2014 state program, requested funds could be used only for construction costs, which must be clearly identified in the SRTS budget proposal. Applications could have been submitted for projects with a total cost as low as $50,000, which made them useful for spot improvements. Regardless, it was still recommended that the minimum project cost at least $100,000 to make efficient use of the funds and limited amount of administrative time at the local level. It is uncertain if this program will receive funding again in the future.

MINNESOTA SCHOOLS STATEWIDE ENROLLMENT OPTIONS AND THE IMPACT ON SRTS

Minnesota law allows parents whose children are Minnesota residents the choice to enroll their children in a regular public school district other than the one in which they reside. While not required to provide transportation, school districts will often send buses into the immediate neighboring districts with the practical and alluring promise of front-door pickups. To compete, local school districts have then felt compelled to offer equivalent transportation services, even for students living within immediate proximity of the local school. This has had the unintended consequence of undermining many SRTS efforts. In communities where WCI has completed SRTS plans, the SRTS team had observed students being picked up by the local district bus only to be transported to the school a block away, a distance walked in no more than a minute. However, some school districts have eliminated busing for students within the Walk / Bike Zone without hazardous traffic barriers after WCI made the policy recommendations to do just that in their respective SRTS plans.

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CHAPTER 3: VISION AND GOALS

The SRTS team created a unique vision for New York Mills and the New York Mills Elementary School. This vision is what the team imagines what their community will look like in five to ten years after the successful and complete implementation of the New York Mills SRTS Plan. In order to make the vision a reality, the team set goals to attain and barriers to overcome in pursuit of opportunities to increase walking and bicycling to and from school. The goals outlined below are that of the SRTS team. These goals are attainable through the Action Plan Recommendations section which can be found in the beginning of this document. The recommendations were not developed to address these goals as an itemized list.

VISION

The New York Mills School District and City of New York Mills envision a community that is connected, educated and encouraged to pursue active forms of transportation, as well as one where students can safely walk or bike to and from school.

GOALS

1. Improve the connectivity of the community through infrastructure improvements, prioritizing Miller Street and the sidewalks that lead to the school.

2. Continue to support law enforcement and their programs to improve safety by dedicating time, labor or planning assistance at least twice per year.

3. Increase community awareness of the benefits associated with walking and bicycling to and from school.

4. Plan for and implement annual evaluation methods, such as student tallies, to measure the progress of SRTS programs, modifying the plan and programs, as needed.

5. Seek out two annual encouragement activities to foster a sense of pride in the active contributions to the community.

6. Develop programs focused on mitigating the numerous barriers to active transportation in the City of New York Mills.

NOTE: The recommendations in this plan address all 6 goals identified by the New York Mills SRTS Team.
The City of New York Mills is located in northeast Otter Tail County on the eastern fringes of the Lakes Region of west central Minnesota. New York Mills is 154 miles northwest of the state capitol in Saint Paul. While the area is the ancestral lands of the Dakota Sioux and the Ojibwa or Anishinaabe, the city was founded in 1884 by Finnish immigrants who first came to the region a decade earlier. Founded originally as a rural agrarian and timber community, today New York Mills is best known as the home of the Lund Boat Company which has its offices and factory right in town. Agriculture still makes up a large portion of the land use around the city with resorts and vacation homes dotting the lakes to the west. New York Mills sits almost perfectly on the border between the Eastern Deciduous Forest Biome and the Coniferous Forest Biome which dominates northeastern Minnesota. Fittingly New York Mills also sits upon the Gulf of Mexico / Hudson Bay Continental Divide. The Class I BNSF-North Pacific Railroad Line traverses through the center of New York Mills while U.S. Highway 10 has been routed around the core of the city to the north.
According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City of New York Mills has a population of 1,199 people, 533 households, and 287 families, all living within the 1.30 square miles. This gives the City a population density of 922 residents per square mile. The median age in the city was 38.9 years. 23.9 percent of residents were under the age of 18. The racial makeup of the city was 94.8 percent White, 0.3 percent African American, 1.8 percent Native American, zero percent Asian and 2.8 percent from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 1.8 percent of the population. As of 2014, the top five industries in Otter Tail County by the number of persons employed in order are “Education and Health Services”, “Trade, Transportation and Utilities”, “Manufacturing”, “Leisure and Hospitality”, “Professional and Business Services”.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PROFILE

The New York Mills Elementary School is located at 209 Hayes Avenue, in New York Mills, MN. It is located on the northwest edge of New York Mills, contiguous with the old city core and the surrounding residential development in the city (Figure 20). The elementary school shares the same building as the New York Mills High School and serves students grades Pre-Kindergarten through 6th. On the first day of school in September 2015, the school had an enrollment of 184 students. The breakdown of students per grade is shown in Table 1. 44.3 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced cost meals.

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Table 1: Number of Students per Grade (First day - School Year 2015-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The New York Mills School District itself is large: encompassing approximately 183 square miles. It is located mostly in northwestern Otter Tail County but extends into a portion of southeast Becker County. The district extends approximately 16 miles north, 8 miles south, 9 miles east and 7 miles west from the school. Roughly three-fifths of the district is north and east of New York Mills and the U.S. Highway 10 corridor that traverses the district. The furthest corner of the district is roughly 17 bee-line miles north of the school in Evergreen Township in neighboring Becker County (Figure 21).

NEW YORK MILLS INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Motto
Preparing Students for Life

Mission Statement
It is our mission to provide opportunities for students to achieve their personal best, become responsible and productive citizens, and embrace lifelong learning in a safe and positive environment. We believe all children can learn and excel with developmentally appropriate materials, practices, and strategies. School is not just about children: it encompasses families, parents, community, stakeholders, society, the environment and beyond.

Source – New York Mills Independent School District website
Figure 20: The New York Mills city limits and school location.
Figure 21: The New York Mills School District, New York Mills City Limits, New York Mills Elementary School location and concentric radii from the school location.
NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

The New York Mills School District has two transportation policies deemed directly relevant to SRTS. Reviewed for this plan were policy “707L Transportation of Public School Students” and policy “709L Student Transportation Safety Policy” both originally adopted in 1996 and last revised in 2012.

Policy 707L Transportation of Public School Students is a general policy stating the ground rules governing which students are eligible for school district funded motorized transportation to and from school and other school functions and services consistent with the requirements of the law. It “recognizes that transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right for an eligible student.” Of note in this policy is that the school district will provide transportation “for all resident students who reside two miles or more from the school” as per state statute Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 1. However, the policy does provide exceptions to transport students due to “various hazard situations, i.e. railroads, highways, etc.” Also, “School buses will pick up and deliver country students to their residence if the lane is one-half mile or more in length” with the possibility of reasonable exceptions due to health concerns. If these policy guidelines are followed (the policy does grant the school district the discretion to bus any and all students), then the policy is consistent with the goals of SRTS planning and the MnDOT Walk / Bike Zone concept.

The “709L Student Transportation Safety Policy,” like most other 709L policies in the State of Minnesota, is primarily focused on transporting students to school via school buses. The policy states, “The purpose of this policy is to provide safe transportation for students and to educate students on safety issues and the responsibilities of school bus ridership.” However, it does include several lines regarding and even promoting walking and biking. The policy states that, “The school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades K through 5” (note the word “may”). And that “Parents/Guardians are responsible to ... support safe riding and walking practices, and recognize that students are responsible for their actions.” While again the policy states that “riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right,” it does not offer specific guidelines for students living within safe walking and biking distance to school as defined by MnDOT’s Walk / Bike Zone concept (See Chapter 2). Beside these brief mentions, there are no specific guidelines for students, parents, teachers and administrators for those students who choose to walk and/or bike to and from school. For example, there are no guidelines for when and where crossing guards are warranted, nor are there guidelines for crossing guard qualifications and training. By comparison, there are multiple pages detailing the qualifications and training of school bus drivers, their duties and responsibilities, operating rules, as well as school vehicle maintenance standards amongst many other details regarding school bus operations.

The complete New York Mills 707L Transportation of Public School Students policy can be found in Appendix F and the 709L Student Transportation Safety Policy in Appendix G.
NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

The New York Mills School District “533L Wellness” policy was originally adopted in 2006 and then last revised in 2010. “The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.”

The wellness policy specifically acknowledges that, “students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior,” and that “Students will be given age-appropriate opportunities for physical activity before and after school.” However, there are no specific mentions of promoting or encouraging walking and/or biking to and from school as part of a comprehensive strategy to promote student wellness and/or encourage and promote lifelong healthy behaviors and lifestyles in students.

The complete New York Mills School District “533L Wellness” policy can be found in Appendix H.

NEW YORK MILLS CITY SIDEWALK ORDINANCE / REGULATIONS

The City of New York Mills’ website only hosts a handful of the city’s ordinances with only those thought to be of likely use to city residents found online. Of those hosted on the website, Ordinance 47 requires the clearance of snow and ice on the public sidewalk by the adjacent property owners with 24 hours. No specific ordinances requiring the maintenance, repair or replacement of sidewalks within the city right-of-way were found on the city website but may be in the city archives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy recommendations to improve SRTS can be found in the beginning of this document in the subchapter titled “Action Plan Recommendations” in the “Encouragement” and “Other” sections, with further policy recommendations found in Appendices D and E.
A strengths, barriers and opportunities analysis of existing policies and programs related to walking and bicycling to school was also performed. This is similar to a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) but tailored for use in SRTS planning. The comments in the following tables are not edited and are not listed in any priority order. Recommendations to improve SRTS found in the sub-chapter titled “Action Plan Recommendations” at the beginning of this document have taken into consideration New York Mills’ unique strengths, barriers and opportunities.

**STRENGTHS**

The City of New York Mills and the New York Mills Elementary School have many strengths to work with that are similar to many other communities in west central Minnesota. Identifying and understanding those strengths are key in regard to any SRTS plan. The strengths listed in detail (see Table 2) below were gathered by the New York Mills SRTS Team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Four parks and one playground area within City limits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School location in the City of New York Mills, connection to the sidewalk network and close proximity to residences and downtown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Support from the school and community (example is raising money to help pay for children’s school supplies).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Population is increasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fitness center is available at the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fresh produce is used whenever possible within the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lions club is a big supporter helping to donate money, work, labor and time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In all new construction projects, ADA compliant curb cuts are being installed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. DARE officer: Elliot Stoll.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 Bike racks available/present on school grounds and pool is nearby.

BARRIERS

To successfully develop and implement SRTS activities and programs, it was important for the SRTS Team to identify and understand the existing barriers within the community that are preventing children from walking and bicycling to school. These barriers, listed in detail in Table 3 below, are an accumulation of information received from the SRTS team.

Table 3: Community and School District Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Children cross major roads to get to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There are no paths under the bridge along North Broadway Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Currently there is no safe or easy way to access to the parks from the school and other areas of town. In general the parks are not connected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. No trail system currently available in the area. The community wants to be connected to the county trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Newton Township streets (abutting NY Mills City Limits) are not within the city limits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Funding opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Annexation is a barrier because there is no identifiable area(s) for the city to grow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Miller St. has no sidewalks and many children walk on this street to get to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Main St. is the major barrier due to lack of width consistency, road markings, parking etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. An industrial park (Lund Boat Co. located on Gilman parallel &amp; perpendicular to school) creates hazards for children walking/biking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPPORTUNITIES

The SRTS Team identified opportunities to improve walking and bicycling to school that are not currently being acted upon. The list of opportunities in Table 4 is not exhaustive but is an accumulation of ideas and action steps to help achieve the overall vision.

Table 4: Community and School District Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Population is increasing and the housing stock will need to be increased to accommodate the population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 If a pathway can be built along North Broadway Ave under U.S. Highway 10 then there is an opportunity for students living north of the highway to walk and/or bike to and from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Encourage employees to walk or bike to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Encouragement opportunity – If trails, parks sidewalks etc. are built then the students using them will come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Encouragement – Continue to support smart walking/biking behaviors of children (Involves local law enforcement and other businesses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Six Bicycle Boats – could be used for different events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Getting people to use the built environment and walk / bike to school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The SRTS team conducted school observations, a community walking audit and a neighborhood assessment. This was done to identify the existing conditions at the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools, as well as those within the city and neighborhoods immediately adjacent to city limits. Traffic volume and crash data were also retrieved from MnDOT’s databases for the roads in and around New York Mills. And while the SRTS team is a core group of individuals who are very familiar with New York Mills, its schools, and SRTS and active transportation planning, broader community input is always helpful to create a comprehensive list of existing conditions and concerns. To aid with this, a community open house was held on Monday, January 19, 2015, to collect additional community input (See Chapter 7). Having information on existing conditions is critical in making strategic decisions that support wise and fiscally-sound future SRTS programing and activities.

**NEW YORK MILLS WALK / BICYCLE ZONES**

As discussed in Chapter 2, MnDOT guidelines generally assume that students can realistically walk and / or bike to and from school up to a distance of 0.5 mile for children in grades PreK-5, 1 mile for grades 6-8, and 1.5 miles for grades 9-12. The one-half and one mile “Walk / Bicycle Zones” are shown in Figure 22, and are measured using bee-line radii from the center of the school. Roughly 40 percent of the residences of New York Mills fell within the half-mile zone (PreK-5) Walk / Bike Zone, while all of urbanized New York Mills fell within the one-mile (Grades 6-8) zone.

**WALK AUDIT**

A walk-audit of the community was conducted in September of 2014 and again in March and June of 2016. This was done to gather data related to major streets, intersections and sidewalk conditions impeding or facilitating pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Factors that were documented include sidewalk width and condition, possible ADA PROWAG (Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines) violations, traffic volume, terrain, threatening features (dogs, perception of criminal activity, highways and busy intersections), trash, speed limits and general safety. The audit provided an opportunity for the team to identify where the community is walkable and where there are opportunities for improvement. The results of the sidewalk survey can be found in Figures 22 and 23, and is also discussed throughout the narrative of this section of the report. The street and intersection observations from the walk-audit are described in the report narrative with major streets and intersections listed in Table 5 at the end of this subchapter.
Figure 22: New York Mills School Vicinity Map with existing sidewalk inventory with 1/2 and 1 mile Walk / Bike Zone radii.
School Location
The New York Mills Elementary and High Schools are located within the same building at 209 Hayes Avenue North, which is the northwest corner of Hayes Avenue and Gilman Street. This location is contiguous with residential neighborhoods and school grounds are fairly well-connected to the city sidewalk network. The school is on the northern edge of the old city core, about a quarter mile walk to the center of downtown. As mentioned earlier, approximately 40 percent of residences are within a half-mile of the center of the school and all of urbanized New York Mills is within a mile. While located close to downtown and residences, the school also sits directly adjacent to the very active Lund Boat factory with facilities a few hundred feet to the west and south across Gilman Street. The school is also bordered by Lund Park to the north and west which is used by the school for recess, physical education classes and organized interscholastic sports. 300 feet to the north of the northern edge of the high school is U.S. Highway 10, a four-lane divided highway which creates an impermeable walking and biking barrier to all destinations north beyond Lund Park.

School Grounds
While the school is well-sited within the City of New York Mills and is contiguous with neighborhoods and the sidewalk network, there are some safety concerns between where students arrive on school property and where they enter at the two main entrances. It is regularly noted amongst SRTS experts that the area closest to schools can be the most dangerous place for children to walk and bike due to a multitude of traffic modes converging on and then delivering or picking up students to and from the school. School grounds more focused on the circulation of motor vehicle traffic flow with an emphasis on front door pick-up and drop-off can sometimes exacerbate these hazards.

The entrance of the elementary school is on the south side of the school building complex and faces directly on a parent drop-off loop area that sees a continuous stream of traffic in the morning. Conversations with school staff indicate that prior to and during student dismissal in the afternoon, the area gets extremely crowded as parents jockey for the best spots to pick up their children. Elementary school children walking to and from school, as well as many of those getting dropped off and/or picked up by parents, must traverse through the area that is congested with motor vehicles, coming and going.

Of equal concern is the student entrance to the high school portion of the school complex. This entrance, approximately 400 feet north of the elementary school entrance, leads directly out onto the parking lot on the east side of the school. While there is a sidewalk running due south of the entrance directly adjacent to the parking lot heading to Gilman Street, there is no clear logical sidewalk heading due east through the
parking lot to route pedestrians to destinations east of school like the Kelava Apartments on Walker Avenue or the apartments and other popular student destinations on Miller Street. It should also be noted that Hayes Avenue north of Gilman Street serves the school and its parking lot almost exclusively and has even been vacated by the city and is now school property. It is not a public right-of-way. Hayes Avenue terminates in the parking lot but motor traffic can still navigate through the lot and access Walker Avenue and Miller Street to the east.

Also, there are two bicycle racks serving the school. One is located on the island formed by the drop-off “U” in front of the elementary school entrance approximately 80 feet from the entrance and another is located on a traffic island 110 feet southeast of the high school entrance. Neither the location of the bicycle racks nor the bicycle rack design complies with the bicycle parking standards established by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

Finally, contrary to the September 2014 observations, departing motor vehicle traffic at dismissal was noted to be rather fast, likely exceeding legal limits when the author was making observations in March of 2016. Driving behaviors that are less than ideal are unfortunately all too common, particularly among young drivers of high school age.
Figure 23: A close-up of the New York Mills Elementary / High School, grounds, and its immediate surroundings.
The Lund Boat Company

The Lund Boat Company is located at 318 West Gilman Street. Lund has been a part of New York Mills for decades and is the city’s primary employer. Lund builds world-renowned premium aluminum fishing boats, fiberglass fishing boats, fish and ski boats, bass boats and hunting/utility boats. With shifts six days a week, the Lund factory is a driving economic force in New York Mills and Otter Tail County, providing several hundred, skilled, well-paying, manufacturing jobs. However, all this manufacturing and economic activity produces a great deal of traffic in close proximity to the school. Not only do hundreds of factory workers commute to their jobs by automobile and compete for on-street parking spaces directly adjacent to the school, but bulk raw materials need to be shipped into the factory and finished boats shipped out via heavy commercial trucks.

Figure 24: The sign for Lund boats in front of the main office advertising the need for more workers and an example of the boats they build proudly displayed behind.
BNSF Railway, Northern Pacific Main Line.

Approximately a block and a half away from the school and traversing the center of New York Mills is a BNSF Railway line, which was part of the original Northern Pacific Main Line. Like many towns in rural Minnesota, the line is the reason for New York Mills’ existence at this location. While railroad activity has seen a reduction in 2016, in the years just prior, the rail line was running close to capacity 24 hours a day hauling primarily coal and oil from western North Dakota. It is also the route taken by Amtrak’s Empire Builder, servicing Chicago, St. Paul/Minneapolis, Fargo, Spokane, Portland and Seattle. There is only one eastbound and one westbound Empire Builder train passing through New York Mills each day and both trains do so in the early morning hours between 2:00 AM and 3:30 AM. The Empire Builder does not stop in New York Mills; the closest stops are an equidistant 30 miles away in Detroit Lakes to the northwest and Staples to the east southeast.

Figure 25: A coal train rolls through Glyndon, MN on the same BNSF rail line.
With history of very high rail traffic volume, the rail line creates a significant, but not impermeable barrier for students who wish to walk and/or bike to and from school but reside on the south side of town. There are signal and gate-protected crossings at both Main and Walker Avenues with Main having sidewalk crossings on both sides of the street and Walker just on the west. There are no gates to try and prevent pedestrians from crossing while a train is passing. While the sidewalk across the tracks is very smooth, the crossing likely does not meet current ADA PROWAG guidelines for such crossings due to the lack of tactile strips on the sidewalks on either side of the crossing. There is also very little extra-lateral operating space at all three sidewalk crossings of the railroad. As such, the additional potential exists for a wheelchair user to - fall off the edge of the crossing which would almost certainly require the assistance of one or two able-bodied persons to rectify. There are also no fences anywhere within New York Mills to try and restrict pedestrian trespass onto the BNSF right-of-way.

Also, just north of the tracks at the southwest corner of Centennial 84 Drive and Walker Avenue is a small grain elevator. It has the potential to be served by the railroad siding that terminates just west of, but not across Walker Avenue. While hopefully not a regular occurrence, during the September 2014 observation day, the elevator was being served by a truck that was parked across the Walker Avenue sidewalk.
Sidewalks and Crosswalks

New York Mills has a good, well-maintained network of sidewalks particularly near the school and in the core portions of town. In 2015, many of the sidewalks, curbs and crosswalks between downtown and the school were replaced as part of a major street reconstruction throughout a large part of New York Mills (additional walking audits were conducted in March and June of 2016 to document these changes.) However, some of the new curb ramps built as part of this sidewalk reconstruction may not meet contemporary ADA PROWAG guidelines as written in MnDOT Curb Ramp Guidelines from October 2010. The “Diagonal Ramp” used at many intersections in New York Mills and seen in Figure 27 is the least preferred alternative in the hierarchy of ramp designs and should only be used if other designs like the “Combined Perpendicular Ramps” are not feasible.

Figure 27: New sidewalks, crosswalks and street lighting at the corner of Main Ave and Park Street which is part of the downtown streetscape and reconstruction.
While the new sidewalks are of an appropriate width, well-constructed and often set back from the street by a good-sized tree boulevard, there are intersections near the school where curb ramps and crosswalks seem oddly missing. A prime example of this is the intersection of Main Avenue and Gilman Street where no crosswalk nor curb ramp is provided for pedestrians walking north on the west side of Main Avenue. To continue west toward the school on Gilman Street, pedestrians, according to the built sidewalk and curb ramp design, would have to first cross Main Avenue toward the east then cross to the north side of Gilman Street to where a sidewalk continues west. There may have been design constraints that prevented the construction of a contemporary ADA crosswalk at this location but such limitations were not apparent to the author.

Noticeably absent are sidewalks on Miller Street that leads directly east of the school grounds towards Broadway Avenue. On the east end of Miller Street, there are a number of food service and convenience stores popular with older students after school. Miller Street is also the logical route for children who may be walking to the residences in the northeast corner of the city which lie north of U.S. Highway 10 and east of Broadway Avenue.
Street, Lane, and (if present) Shoulder Widths

Street design and lane width can provide subtle clues to drivers as to the safe operating speed on a particular stretch of roadway. Recent thinking today is that bigger is not always safer and that wide road and lane widths can encourage drivers to speed, even unintentionally. They also require pedestrians to spend more time in the roadways when crossing, extending the time that they are exposed to potentially hazardous motor traffic. Wide streets and lanes, however, can provide the space needed within the right-of-way to retrofit bike lanes, sidewalks, wider sidewalks, tree boulevards, etc.

Many of the streets in New York Mills are the standard 36 and 42 foot widths. Gilman Street is 36 feet. Centennial 84 Drive at Walker and Main Avenues is an exception at 62 and 64 feet wide at the respective pedestrian crossings. Main Avenue is also very wide at Centennial 84 Drive with crosswalks 58 feet in length curb to curb. However, the angled parking can reduce the perceived street width but that narrowing effect only happens when cars are parked on the street. Shoulders, where they exist on Centennial 84 Drive and on Broadway Avenue, are 10 feet in width.

Speed and Speed Limits

High vehicle speeds have been long known to be a significant safety hazard to pedestrians and bicyclists. According to the AAA in the U.S., if a pedestrian gets hit by a car traveling at 20 mph, there is approximately a 7% chance of death. The fatality rate climbs to 90% for a pedestrian struck at 60 mph. The greatest rate of fatality risk increase happens between 25 and 45 mph, increasing from 12% to 60%, according to AAA.\footnote{AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. \textit{Impact Speed and a Pedestrian’s Risk of Severe Injury or Death.} September, 2011. Available at https://www.aaafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2011PedestrianRiskVsSpeed.pdf. Accessed on May 23, 2016.} Other studies have the 45 mph speed limit as the dividing point for maximum fatality risk.

![Figure 29: The new sidewalks on Gilman Street east of the school. Gilman is marked at 20 mph its entire length.](image-url)
pedestrian fatality rate at 85%. High-speed traffic also creates noise and induces stress on pedestrians, making even wide, well-designed sidewalks unappealing places to walk.

Besides U.S. Highway 10, which is posted at 65 mph and is grade-separated as it passes through New York Mills city limits, Centennial 84 Drive (County Highway 84) is posted at 45 mph from the eastern city limit at Cornwell Avenue until a point approximately 1,500 feet west of Cornwell. All county highways within the city are the Minnesota default limit of 30 mph for urban areas. However, most if not all city streets within New York Mills are marked at 20 mph. This includes the entire length of Gilman Street, which passes in front of the school, as well and Miller Street from the school parking lot to Broadway Avenue.

**Notables and Concerns**

Table 5: Major and Notable Street and Intersection Conditions in New York Mills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street or Intersection</th>
<th>Posted Speed Limit</th>
<th>Conditions Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 (Rural – Grade Separated)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>10-foot wide shoulders, 12-foot travel lanes. High volume of truck traffic and high vehicle speeds. Acts as an impermeable barrier to walking and biking to the north of the school and center of town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway Ave at U.S. Highway 10 Bridge</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ten-foot wide shoulders, 12-foot travel lanes. High volume of truck traffic and moderate vehicle speeds. No sidewalks through interchange to points north of U.S. Highway 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Street between School and Broadway</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Has no curbs or sidewalks which are typical of urban streets in Minnesota. Popular walking route for students after school headed to food stores. Students currently walking in street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilman Street west of school</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Industrial activities including heavy trucks and other equipment at Lund factory create concerns for students possibly walking or biking to/from homes west of school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive within city limits</td>
<td>45 &amp; 30</td>
<td>Roadway is exceptionally wide (64 feet) between Hayes and Broadway Aves, 74 feet in front of Central Park. Wide roadway encourages speeding and creates barriers to pedestrians crossing. There are also no sidewalks on the south side of the roadway and none on either side east of Broadway Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNSF Railroad ROW and crossings at Walker and Main Aves</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>While surface conditions over the tracks may meet current ADA guidelines, there is very little extra lateral operating space at all three sidewalk crossings which could pose a hazard to wheelchair bound pedestrians. There are no gates to prevent pedestrians from attempting to cross the tracks when trains are present nor are there any fences to prevent pedestrian trespass onto tracks within town.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OBSERVATION RESULTS

To gain a better understanding of the current conditions at and around the New York Mills School, on Tuesday, September 30, 2014, the SRTS team conducted field observations of students’ travel behaviors, patterns and mode choices during morning arrival and afternoon departure. Team members were strategically-positioned around the school and in the City of New York Mills. They counted the number of pedestrians and bicyclists accessing school grounds and which routes the students took. They also observed whether students were using good techniques when crossing the street and how motorists behaved in relation to pedestrians and bicyclists on the streets and on school grounds.

**Morning Observations**

- Weather at Wadena Municipal Airport, Bluffton, MN: 7:35 AM – 53.6 °F. Clear. Wind – WNW, 5.8 mph.19

Observations began at 7:25 AM with school starting at 8:30 AM.

**Judith Brockway and Marsha Maki – Front of school**

- No parking signs and crosswalks clearly marked.
- Vehicles slow down in car loop but park in no parking area.
- Kids getting out on both sides of vehicle, not just side with sidewalk.

**Patrick Hollister – Walker Ave and Gilman Street**

- Pedestrians: 15.
- Cyclists: Six.
- Six kids went north on Walker across Gilman on foot.
- Two kids went north on Walker across Gilman on bikes.
- Three kids went west on Gilman across Walker on foot.
- Three kids went west on Gilman and north on Walker on foot.
- Three kids went west on Gilman and north on Walker on bikes.
- One kid walked his bike west on Gilman and north on Walker.
- Three kids walked north on Walker and west on Gilman.

---

- Buses go north on Walker.
- Students using crosswalks
- Speeds seem okay

Emily Ambrosy – Miller Street and Broadway Avenue
- Pedestrians: Four
- Cyclists: One.
- Biker on east side of Broadway and walkers on west.

Afternoon Observations
- Weather at Wadena Municipal Airport, Bluffton, MN:
  3:14 PM – 64.4 °F. Rain, Thunderstorm. Wind – West, 10.0 mph.¹⁹
  Note – The thunderstorm observed at Bluffton did not impact conditions at New York Mills.

Observations began at 3:00 PM and ended at 3:30 PM with the elementary school dismissing at 3:10 PM and the high school at 3:18 PM.

Patrick Hollister – Gilman Street and Hayes Avenue: Front of elementary school
- Pedestrians: 18.
- Cyclists: Two.
- Six kids crossed Gilman.
- Two biked along Gilman.
- Six kids walked east along Gilman.
- Two kids walked kitty corner southeast across Hayes Avenue and Gilman.
- Two kids walked north on Hayes across Gilman.
- One kid walked south on Hayes and east on Gilman.
- One kid walked south on Hayes Avenue crossed Gilman.
- 50% students using crosswalks.

Michelle Lecoustre-Young – Front of entrance to high school
- Students crossing diagonally across entire parking lot.
Judith Brockway – Gilman Street and Walker Avenue

- Pedestrians: Nine.
- Cyclists: Three.
- Some students using good techniques to cross street.
- Some crossed where shouldn’t.
- Bicyclist didn’t stop at stop sign but looked both ways.
- Another bike did not look before going through intersection.
- Traffic speed was okay, all stopped at signs.

Emily Ambrosy – Miller Street and Walker Avenue

- By the time buses loaded and leaving, the walkers and bikers were gone.

James Gritz – Miller Street and Broadway Avenue

- Pedestrians: Three.
- Cyclists: Four.
- Miller and Broadway – one pedestrian and one biker.
- Gilman and Broadway – two pedestrians and three bikers.
- Kids are not watching when crossing.
- Only one student walked on correct side of roadway.
- Miller Street and Gilman Street are unsafe to walk on.
TRAFFIC VOLUME DATA

While speed limits/traffic speed, street form (street width, number of lanes, lane width, presence of street trees, etc.) and the presence of sidewalks can have a great deal of impact on the safety of a street for pedestrians and bicyclists, traffic volume is also a highly-important factor. It goes without saying that streets with heavy traffic are often more dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians due to increased exposure to potential conflicts. Traffic volumes are also the ultimate factor with regard to the stress experienced due to passing motor traffic while walking or biking (No traffic. No stress.). Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) is a relatively new term in the active transportation field, which looks to replace or supplement the Level of Service (LOS) measure of facilitation for bicycles and pedestrians. High traffic stress environments can dissuade people from walking and biking despite the presence of facilities that have a high LOS. This report, however, does not attempt to measure LTS but provides traffic volumes to help understand current conditions and justify and prioritize future investments.

A common measure of traffic volume is “Annual Average Daily Traffic,” abbreviated AADT. According to MnDOT, AADT “is the theoretical estimate of the total number of vehicles using a specific segment of roadway (in both directions) on any given day of the year. This estimate represents the total number of cars per year divided by 365 and is developed using factors to adjust for season, day of the week, and vehicle type.” “Heavy Commercial Annual Average Daily Traffic” (HCAADT) is a subset of AADT of only heavy commercial truck traffic. MnDOT defines “Heavy Commercial Traffic” as “traffic from all trucks with at least 2 axles and 6 tires.” It is important to have a measure of HCAADT when available because heavy commercial vehicles are more cumbersome to operate and the increased mass of these vehicles is likely to cause more serious injuries and/or fatalities when involved in any type of crash. Heavy commercial traffic also has a greater impact on LTS per vehicle observed.

Even though New York Mills is a small rural factory town, it is traversed just to the north of its original core by U.S. Highway 10 which is a divided, surface highway with 4 travel lanes in and outside of New York Mills city limits. It has high traffic speeds (65 mph posted speed limit), high traffic volumes and a high number of trucks and commercial vehicles. Figures 30 and 31 are maps of the AADT and HCAADT from data collected by MnDOT of the more significant roads in the immediate vicinity of New York Mills. Table 6 is a breakdown of both AADT and HCAADT (where available) within an approximate 1.5 mile radius of the New York Mills Elementary School. MnDOT traffic volume data comes from the MnDOT Basemap (Available at: http://mndotgis.dot.state.mn.us/basemap/) and was accessed on June 3rd, 2016.
Figure 30: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for more significant roads in and around New York Mills.
Figure 31: Heavy Commercial Annual Average Daily Traffic (HCAADT) for more significant roads in and around New York Mills.
Table 6: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for state system highways in and around New York Mills and Heavy Commercial Average Annual Daily Traffic (HCAADT) on select highways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highway Name and Location</th>
<th>Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 between the east and west junctions of Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>6,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 east of the east junction Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>7,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 east of the east junction Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>7,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Broadway Ave north of County 56</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Broadway Ave between County 56 and U.S. Highway 10</td>
<td>3,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Broadway Ave between U.S. Highway 10 and Centennial 84 Drive (County 84)</td>
<td>3,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 56 east of North Broadway Ave</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) between U.S. Highway 10 and Cornwell Ave</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) between Cornwell Ave and North Broadway Ave</td>
<td>1,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) between North Broadway Ave and Main Ave</td>
<td>2,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) between Main Ave and Hayes Ave</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) between Hayes Ave and U.S. Highway 10</td>
<td>1,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Ave between Parke Street and Centennial 84 Drive (County 84)</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Ave between Centennial 84 Drive (County 84) and Nowell Street</td>
<td>2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Ave between Nowell Street and 370th Street</td>
<td>1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall Ave between Centennial 84 Drive and 370th Street</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highway Name and Location</th>
<th>Heavy Commercial AADT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 between the east and west junctions of Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 east of the east junction Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Highway 10 east of the east junction Centennial 84 Ave (County 84)</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CRASH DATA

Crash data with the greatest proximal significance to walking and biking to the New York Mills School was gathered using the online Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MCMAT) ([http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/crashmapping.html](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/crashmapping.html)). MCMAT is MnDOT's crash database that includes all crashes involving a motor vehicle where a crash report was filed. It includes only crash reports from the past ten years. However, a crash involving a solo cyclist, the most common type of bicycle crash, would not be recorded even if emergency services responded as long as the crash did not involve a motor vehicle. The MCMAT data for New York Mills was accessed, July 23rd 2016. As of that date, the dataset included crash reports from January 1st 2006 through December 31st 2015, all of which were included in this analysis. According to the MCMAT homepage, the lag time between crash occurrence and data entry into the MCMAT database can be approximately 2-3 months and the data is updated four times per year (approximately quarterly).

The staff at WCI felt that collecting crash data within a 1.25 mile radius from the intersection of Broadway Avenue and Gilman Street, roughly 1900 feet east of the school building, would provide the most utility. This is the approximate center of New York Mills, as well as relatively proximal to the school. From this center point, a 1.25 mile radius includes all lands within New York Mills city limits and all residences that are within the New York Mills School Walk / Bike Zone.

A circle formed by 1.25 mile radius from the above-mentioned center point returns 87 crash reports from the MCMAT dataset. Of the 87, 58 can be seen on the map (see Figure 32). It is not known why 19 crash sites are not shown on the MCMAT generated map. However, it is likely that some of these sites are obscured by other crash dots on the map. Of these 87 crashes, there were no fatalities. There was one crash with an incapacitating injury, six with non-incapacitating injuries, 21 with possible injuries, and 59 crashes involving property damage (see Figure 33). Of the “Crash Types,” 40 of those crashes involved a collision with another motor vehicle in transport, four with a parked motor vehicle, one with a bicycle (resulted in an incapacitating injury presumably to the cyclist - crash summary below), one with a pedestrian (also see crash summary below), 11 with a deer, one as non-fixed other, 14 with a fixed object (guardrail, three/shrub, mailbox, sign pole, light pole, etc.), 11 where a vehicle overturned and one classified as a “jackknife” (see Figure 34). 24 of the 87 crashes happened on U.S. Highway 10 with two more happening on Broadway Avenue but within the U.S. Highway 10 ROW. On average, there were 9 crashes in the selected area per year but only 6 per year off of U.S. Highway 10. There does not appear to be a trend of an increase or decrease in crashes in the study area from 2006 to 2015 (see Figure 35). There was also a noticeable spike of 10 crashes in the 10:00 hour (10AM to 11AM) and another at the 12:00 hour (12PM to 1PM) which seems to not correspond to periods with school traffic (see Figure 36). Finally, there was a noticeable
increase in crashes during the Winter months with December and January the most (13) followed by November (12) (See Figure 37).


Figure 32: Map of the 58 out of 87 crash sites within a 1.25-mile radius axis indicated on the map that occurred between January 1st 2006 and December 31st 2015. Mapped crash sites are shown as red dots; crashes involving pedestrians and/or bicyclists (if occurring), turquoise blue. Map automatically generated online by MCMAT and then edited for clarity.
Figure 33: New York Mills Crash Severity - Severity Class and number of crashes in each class.
Graph automatically generated online by MCMAT.

Figure 34: New York Mills Crash Type - Crash type and number of each crash type.
Graph automatically generated online by MCMAT.
Figure 35: New York Mills crash rate per year. Graph automatically generated online by MCMAT.

Figure 36: New York Mills crashes per hour of the day (24 hour time). Graph automatically generated online by MCMAT.
Reported Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes

Based upon information provided by the MCMAT-generated crash detail report, on June 2, 2008 at 19:40 hours, under dry, daylight conditions, a 12-year-old male on a bicycle was struck on Walker Avenue approximately 175 feet south of Gilman Street by a 65-year-old male driving a passenger car. This is only 600 feet away from the school using the indirect roadway network. It was determined that the 12-year-old male on a bicycle was at fault as he darted out into traffic and failed to yield the right-of-way. It was reported that the 65-year-old male driver was not at fault and exhibited no improper driving.

Also, based upon the MCMAT-generated crash detail report, on June 1, 2011 at 09:03 hours at the intersection of Centennial 84 Drive and Main Avenue, a 66-year-old male pedestrian was struck while in the crosswalk by a 73-year-old male driver of a sport utility vehicle that was making a left turn. The driver was found to be at fault for failing to yield and the pedestrian suffered possible injuries. It is not clear, from the information provided, which of the four crosswalks the pedestrian was in when struck.

Crash Summary and Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Detail Reports

The crash summary report of all the pertinent crash statistics for the selected area around New York Mills is found on the next page of this chapter. The detail reports of the two crashes involving a pedestrian and a bicyclist is titled “New York Mills Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Detail Report” and is found on the last page of this chapter.
## New York Mills Crash Type Summary Report


### Crash Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number of Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K - Fatal</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A - Incapacitating</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - Non-Incapacitating</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C - Possible</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N - Property Damage</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X - Not Reported</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscoded</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Surface Condition Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 - Dry</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 - Wet</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 - Snow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 - Slush</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 - Ice/Packed Snow</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Not Specified</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscoded</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Diagram Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagram Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02 - Sideswipe - Same Dir</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 - Left Turn</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 - Ran Off Road - Left Side</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 - Right Angle</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 - Right Turn</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 - Ran Off Road - Right Side</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 - Head On</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 - Sideswipe - Opposing Dir</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Not Stated</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscoded</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
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### Intersection Relation Summary:

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<th>Relation Type</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 - Not at Intersection</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 - T Intersection</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 - Y Intersection</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 - 4 Legged Intersection</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 - 5 or more Leg Intersection</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 - Roundabout/Traffic Circle</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 - Intersection Related</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 - Alley or Driveway</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 - School Crossing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - RR Crossing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - Recreational Crossing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 22 - Interchange</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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### Accident Type Summary:

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<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>01 - Motor Vehicle in Transport</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 - Parked Vehicle</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-04 - Road Equipment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 - Train</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 - Bike</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 - Pedestrian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-09 - Deer/Animal</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 - Other/Unknown Collision</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-42 - Fixed Object</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - Overturn</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52-65 - Other Non-Collision</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Not Stated</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscoded</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
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### Light Condition Summary:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 - Daylight</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>02 - Before Sunrise</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 - After Sunset</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 - Dark (Street Lights On)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 - Dark (Street Lights Off)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 - Dark (No Street Lights)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 - Dark (Unknown Lighting)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Not Stated</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscoded</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Selection Filter:**

WORK AREA: COUNTY_CODE(96) - SPATIAL FILTER APPLIED

**Analyst:** Andrew Besold

**Notes:**
On Monday, January 19, 2015 from 6:00-7:00 pm, the New York Mills SRTS team held a community SRTS open house meeting at the Glyndon Community Center. Members of the community could meet the SRTS team, learn how SRTS works, and help envision what a more walkable, bikeable community could look like. Available to the community members at the open house were the results from the strengths, barriers and opportunities analysis seen in the previous chapter. Unfortunately there were no records from this meeting from the initial SRTS plan investigator, Emily Ambrosy as there was for the other plan she worked on. After further investigation it is assumed that no one attended the open house meeting to provide feedback.
CHAPTER 8: STANDARDIZED SRTS SURVEY ANALYSIS

A take-home, self-report parent survey and a teacher-administered in-class student travel tally were originally conducted in September, 2014 (with the student travel tallies repeated in February 2017). These surveys and survey documents have been designed by the National Centers for Safe Routes to School (National Centers) (http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/). These surveys and survey forms are the national standard for reporting SRTS data in the United States and help the National Centers keep track of walking and biking rates. As per the National Centers’ guidelines, both of these surveys are administered to gather data from students in grades K-8. However, since many school districts in rural Minnesota have only a K-12 school, some schools may have administered these surveys to students all the way up to grade 12. New York Mills decided to administer the surveys to students in all grades. When this happens, it is WCI policy to enter the data as the individual surveys have a place to indicate what grade the student is in and it would be very easy to deselect data from students grade 9-12, if so desired. The results analyzed are from both the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools, grades PreK through 12.

The parent survey questionnaire is a two-page form taken home by students for parents to complete. The survey asked about their child’s school travel behaviors and the parent’s perceptions regarding whether walking and biking to school is appropriate and fitting for their child. Besides English, the parent survey is available from the National Centers in Spanish, Arabic, Armenian, Mandarin Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. The parent survey can also be done by parents directly online, if school administrators and SRTS believe that doing so will provide a greater survey return rate (English and Spanish only). This also has the potential to increase survey response accuracy and saving administrative time doing data entry.

The student travel tally is administered by teachers and conducted over three days (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) in one single school week throughout the entire school. Teachers record weather conditions on each particular day, in the morning and afternoon. Then the teachers ask about students’ travel modes to school that particular day and how they plan on going home.

Once the paper forms were completed and collected for both surveys, the data is entered on-line into the National Centers’ database by staff at WCI. This is done to maintain data entry continuity and as a service to the school. After the survey data is entered, those with access to the National Centers’ database can produce automated individual reports from each school for both the parent survey and the student travel tally. These reports provide a breakdown of the basic statistics that first establish a baseline that progress can be measured against in the future. These reports are also the origin of most of the graphs and charts in this chapter and all those in Appendix A and B. The 2014 and 2017 surveys will be used to establish baseline
data for both the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools. Moving forward, the parent survey will be done once every two to three years and the teacher-administered student travel tally will be done at least once, but preferably twice per school year (Fall and Spring.) Follow-up surveying, with help from WCI, will be done so that local, state and national officials can monitor trends over time in the travel habits of students traveling to and from school.

**KEY FINDINGS – PARENT SURVEY**

Below are found the more significant highlights gleaned from the 2014 parent survey for students grades Prekindergarten (PreK) through 12. These results provide valuable information about parental attitudes and opinions relevant to SRTS at both the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools and create a benchmarking baseline by which future analysis can be compared. While the New York Mills Elementary School serves student PreK through Sixth, the Parent Survey was given to parents of students in all grades (PreK-12) and the results include all responses, regardless of student grade.

Of the children whose parents participated in the survey, three percent walked and one percent biked to school (four percent combined) while four percent walked and one percent biked from school (five percent combined.) These results aligned fairly well with the walking and biking mode share results from the February 2017 teacher-administered student travel tally (tallies were not properly completed in 2014). The elementary students had a combined mode share numbers of five percent walking or biking to school in the morning and four percent walking or biking from school in the afternoon. The secondary and high school students had a similar combined mode share numbers of three and two percent respectively. When compared to the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share numbers of 17.4 percent in the morning and 20.2 percent in the afternoon, the percentages of students walking and bicycling to and from the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools are below average.²⁰

Further WCI staff analysis investigated the travel habits of students who live within a distance that the MnDOT SRTS office considers walkable and / or bikeable. Since the travel habits of high school students were included in the survey results, a distance of one mile from the school was considered to be an appropriate combined “Walk / Bike Zone.” Of the students who live within one mile of the school, 15 percent of the students walk and/or bike to school and 15 percent walk and/or bike from school. This is not in keeping with the Walk / Bike Zone concept as defined and promoted by MnDOT. Clearly, there is room to increase walking and biking numbers. One mile is a 20-minute walk for an adult and no more than a 7 minute bike ride for a child.

Other results included:

- The school bus was the most frequently used mode of travel to and from school, followed by the family vehicle.
- Distance was the main reason parents do not allow their children to walk or bicycle to/from school.
- Safety factors, such as amount of traffic and speed of traffic, were cited more frequently by parents as barriers preventing their children walking or biking to school, more so than crime or violence.
- A vast majority of parents (71 percent) believe that New York Mills Schools neither support nor actively encourage children to walk and bike to and from school.
- A vast majority of parents (80 percent) believe that walking and biking to and from school is, in some degree, healthy for their child. 45 percent believe it to be healthy and 35 percent very healthy.

**PARENT SURVEY – SELECT QUESTIONS**

For the complete Parent Survey results, see Appendix A.

The New York Mills Elementary School serves grades PreK-6. In September 2014, 250 parent surveys were distributed, which exceeds the total school enrollment of 184 students at that time. Of that 250, 71 surveys were returned, met the criteria to be entered in the National Centers’ database, and are included in this report. Also, 50 parent surveys were distributed to students in grades 7-12 with 19 being returned and deemed eligible to be entered into the database. It should again be noted that the New York Mills Elementary and High Schools share the same location and building. Results of all 90 parent surveys from grades PreK-12 have been included in this one analysis.
Question – On most days, how does your child arrive and leave for school?

A comparison of a child’s typical travel mode of arrival at and departure from school, as reported by parents, is shown in Figure 38 and Table 8. The survey is structured so that parents can give an answer for both how their child arrives at school and then leaves from school. Based on the parent responses, the school bus was the most common mode of travel both to and from school representing 64 percent and 72 percent of all trips, respectively. The second most frequently chosen mode for travel to and from school was the family vehicle at 31 percent and 22 percent, followed by walking at three and four percent. Students riding a bike represented just one percent of the travel mode share in both the mornings and afternoons.

There is a slight change in travel modes chosen for school departure compared to arrival. There is a switch from the family vehicle to the school bus and walking in the afternoon. It is believed that this mode switch happens because it is easy for parents to drive children to school as they are headed to work. In the afternoon, parents are at work when students are dismissed and students can take their time getting home. Bike mode share for students does not vary between mornings and afternoons as it stands to reason that students will need to ride their bikes home if they wish to ride to school the next day. These mode share results with the switch away from family vehicle in the afternoon are typical of what has been observed at other schools and school districts in west central Minnesota.

When compared to the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share numbers of 15.2 percent in the morning and 18.4 percent in the afternoon, the percentages of elementary students walking and bicycling to and from the New York Mills School (four percent morning, five percent afternoon) are below the average. 21

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Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

Figure 38: Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school (Fall 2014)

Table 78: Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school (Fall 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Trip</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Response
Morning: 0 No Response
Afternoon: 1
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Question – How far does your child live from school?

Parents were asked to give the distance from their home to the school. This question is asked in a way so that parents likely estimate that distance. These results are shown in Table 9. This is recorded because parents’ estimation will have an effect on their mode choice for their child. Often parents will overestimate that distance and drive their child to school when walking and/or biking is a viable, safe and timely alternative.

Table 89: Parent estimate of distance from the child’s home to school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance between home and school</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Cross-reference – Distance, by arrival and departure modes

These estimated distances are then cross-referenced with actual arrival and departure mode choice (Tables 10 and 11).

Table 910: Parent estimate of the distance from child’s home to school and mode choice to school (Fall 2014).

School Arrival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
**Table 1011: Parent estimate of the distance from child’s home to school and mode choice from school (Fall 2014).**

**School Departure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Mode analysis within the Walk / Bike Zone, arrival and departure modes**

According to the MnDOT Walk / Bike Zone concept, one-half mile is considered an appropriate distance for students in grades PreK through Fifth to walk and/or bike to and from school, for grades 6-8, it is one mile and for grades 9-12, the acceptable distance is one and one-half miles. Even though these results are from parents with students in grades K-12, for the sake of this exercise, only those living within a perceived one mile will be considered within the Walk / Bike Zone. At least among the parents who returned the survey, no students living within a perceived one to two mile distance of the New York Mills schools walked or biked to or from school.

Further WCI staff analysis of the parent survey data shows that just 15 percent of children, who lived within one mile of the school, walked and/or biked to school in the morning (Table 12) and that rate remains the same in the afternoon (Table 13). For students living within one mile of the school, use of the school bus and family vehicle to travel to and from school was likely due to habit and convenience posed by both modes, the perceived and/or real dangers posed by automobile traffic on the streets of New York Mills, and/or the heavy amount of rail freight traffic on the BNSF railway. However this also reveals that there is a great deal of potential to get more students walking and biking to and from the New York Mills School.
Table 112: School arrival modes for K-12 students (raw numbers and percent) living within one mile of the New York Mills School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than ¼ mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ mile up to ½ mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>7 (50%)</td>
<td>7 (50%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total within 1 mile</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3 (11%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>15 (56%)</td>
<td>8 (30%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Walk / Bike within 1 mile: 4 (15%)

Total Motorized Modes within 1 mile: 23 (85%)

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 123: School departure modes for K-12 students (raw numbers and percent) living within one mile of the New York Mills School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than ¼ mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ mile up to ½ mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>13*</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (64%)*</td>
<td>4 (29%)*</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total within 1 mile</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3 (11%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>18 (66%)</td>
<td>4 (15%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Walk / Bike within 1 mile: 4 (15%)

Total Motorized Modes within 1 mile: 22 (81%)

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding and/or * reporting error.
Question – What of the following issues affected your decision to allow, or not allow, your child to walk or bike to/from school?

Parents were asked to identify issues affecting their decision to allow, or not allow, their child to walk or bike to and from school. Parents were given a list of options to choose from, with the ability to select as many reasons they felt applied. The results from this question were then split by whether parents did allow their child to walk or bike to and from school, or did not.

Figure 39 illustrates the issues affecting the decisions of the 75 parents that do not allow their child to walk or bike both to and from school. For those parents, the top four issues affecting their decision are “distance” (87 percent), “speed of traffic along route” (60 percent), “amount of traffic along route” (57 percent), and “sidewalks or pathways” (57 percent.) The four least frequently cited issues are the “convenience of driving” (35 percent), a lack of “crossing guards” (33 percent), “child’s participation in after school programs” (32 percent), and the lack of “adults to bike/walk with” (29 percent).

Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school

Figure 39: Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school (Fall 2014).
Figure 40 illustrates the results for the four parents who allow their children to walk or bicycle to and from school. The top two issues affecting their decisions (tied at 75 percent) are “distance” and “weather or climate,” followed these five reasons (tied at 50 percent) “amount of traffic along route,” “Child’s Participation in After School Programs,” “violence or crime,” “sidewalks or pathways” and “convenience of driving.” Finally, these five reasons were the least cited (tied at 25 percent), “speed of traffic along route,” “safety of intersections and crossings,” “time,” “adults to bike/walk with” and “crossing guards.”

Note: Because of the low response rate from parents that do allow their children to walk and bike to school (four), the results from this question are likely not statistically significant and should not be compared to the general population of parents that do allow their children to walk and bike to school.

Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Figure 40: Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school (Fall 2014).
### Parent Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Survey ID</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247604</td>
<td>We live too far in the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247633</td>
<td>A lot of this would be more of a concern if we lived closer. But I do want this to improve as we would like to move closer in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247649</td>
<td>We live in Bluffton, MN so my children live too far away to walk or bike. If we lived really close to school, they would/would.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247652</td>
<td>Would love to have her commute every day to and from school either bike or walk. However sidewalk is in bad shape and intersection is dangerous and with out a high schooler, I will not let her make trip by herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247835</td>
<td>Streets do not have sidewalks, which is the main reason my children do not walk to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247842</td>
<td>Mostly worried about the short section of HWY he would have to bike along (speed limit 55) second worry is the high school kids driving/texting on their way to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247846</td>
<td>Questions 9-14 I am not going to answer because he rides the bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247856</td>
<td>I am glad the school provides a bus. I would not let my children walk without one of us (parents) accompanying them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247862</td>
<td>If there was ever an event where time wasn't crucial, I would allow my children to have an opportunity to walk a few blocks to arrive at school if bus and school could nominate a location to drop off to or from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247867</td>
<td>K-2 is awful young to allow a child to walk to school, no matter what the distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247870</td>
<td>I live to far out in the country to even let my child do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253215</td>
<td>Multiple boxes marked on purpose, the kids have an hour bus ride both ways - don't allow younger kids to ride in car with older kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253220</td>
<td>Answers totally depend on distance from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253232</td>
<td>We live 5 miles from school so never would my kids walk or bike to school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY – SELECT QUESTIONS

For complete Student Travel Tally results, see Appendix B.

Note! The student travel tallies originally done in October 2014 only recorded morning travel modes which was inconsistent with the National Centers for SRTS tally protocols. Since production of this plan was delayed due to a change in staffing at WCI, it was felt that it would be best to delay the final production of this plan to include a proper administered student travel tally. The tally results below are from February 2017.

STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY: NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL – ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Question – How did you arrive at school today? How do you plan to leave for home after school?

The student travel tally for the elementary students recorded 1143 trips in the morning and 1081 in the afternoon. This is a large sample size that will have a degree of statistical significance. Travel mode results from the student travel tally match up fairly well with the travel mode results from the parent survey with the typical shift to the school bus in the afternoon from the family and walking to a lesser degree.

According to the tally results seen in Figure 41 the combined rate of walking and biking to school in the morning was five percent (three percent walking, two percent biking). This combined rate however then decreased to four percent in the afternoon (four percent walking, zero percent biking). These figures remains below the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share of 15.2 percent in the morning and 18.4 percent in the afternoon.

55 percent of students took the school bus in the morning and 65 percent in the afternoon, while 39 percent of students took the family vehicle to school in the morning and 29 percent in the afternoon. There is also a small percentage using a car pool (one percent morning and two in the afternoon) with no other modes being used. This mode shift towards the school bus, car pooling and walking in the afternoon is consistent with patterns seen at other schools. Greater use of a family vehicle in the morning is likely due to the convenience of dropping off students while parents are headed to work.
**STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY:**

**NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL – SECONDARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

*Question – How did you arrive at school today? How do you plan to leave for home after school?*

The student travel tally for the secondary and high school students recorded 639 trips in the morning and 580 in the afternoon. This is a large sample size that will have a degree of statistical significance. Travel mode results from the student travel tally do not match up well with the travel mode results from the parent survey which is likely a reflection of the more advanced maturity level of these students. All modes keep essentially the same shares between morning and afternoons with no shift from the family vehicle in the morning to other modes in the afternoon as is typically seen in other schools often with younger students.

According to the tally results seen in Figure 42 the combined rate of walking and biking to school in the morning was three percent (three percent walking, zero percent biking). This combined rate however then decreased to just two percent in the afternoon (two percent walking, zero percent biking). These figures

---

**Figure 41: Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison. Numbers above the bars show percentages of each mode.**
remain below the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share of 15.2 percent in the morning and 18.4 percent in the afternoon.

24 percent of students took the school bus in the morning and 23 percent in the afternoon, while 66 percent of students took the family vehicle to school in the morning and 67 percent in the afternoon. There is also a larger percentage using a car pool (seven percent morning and eight in the afternoon) with no other modes used. This lack of a shift between modes in the afternoon is likely a result of the maturity levels of secondary and high school students. The much higher use of the family vehicle in both the morning and afternoon is again likely the result of a greater percentage of high school students driving themselves and possibly friends and siblings to and from school.

Figure 42: Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison. Numbers above the bars show percentages of each mode.
DISCUSSION / COMPARISON

Results from both the parent surveys and student tallies are comparable for the most part, with only the tally from the secondary and high school students contradicting the other results. This is likely due to the maturity levels of secondary and high school students. Unfortunately a very small percentage of students of all age groups are walking / biking to and from school (between three and five percent) which is well below the 2013 national SRTS combined walk and bike mode share of 15.2 percent in the morning and 18.4 percent in the afternoon. Even when just students living within the perceived one-mile Walk / Bike Zone are considered, only 15 percent of students walk / bike to and from school. There is clearly great room for improvement but that is exactly what this SRTS Plan is here to address.

Distance from home to school, followed by weather appear to be the predominant two factors as to whether students either walk or bike, or take a motorized mode to and from school. Distance was also the main barrier cited by parents who currently do not allow their children to walk or bicycle to and from school. After distance, safety factors such as traffic speed and traffic volume were chosen more frequently as barriers, more so than crime or violence. The real and/or perceived safety concerns with walking and biking to school should not be dismissed. However for those that live within the Walk / Bike Zone of New York Mills School, these concerns are not insurmountable barriers.

While the results from the parent surveys and student travel tallies provide valuable baseline data, several limitations exist. The parent survey was self-reported information, which may self-select and bias the results to a socially-desirable response. Furthermore, the three-day time frame for student travel tallies, taken only during one school week out of the entire year, limits the likelihood of collecting data in all weather conditions. Additional analysis, particularly a second student travel tally at a different time of the year, would be helpful to better understand student travel behaviors and how the weather influences travel mode decisions.
For a comprehensive set of recommendations, please see the “Action Plan” in the “Executive Summary, Significant Findings and Action Plan” at the beginning of this document.
CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

This Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan is intended to guide the New York Mills School District, New York Mills Elementary School and the City of New York Mills towards their collective goal of making it safer, more convenient and more fun for students to walk and bicycle to and from school. Where it is already safe, encourage students to walk and bicycle to school. Where it is less than ideally safe, improve the existing conditions to make it as safe as practically possible with an eye towards walking and bicycling comfort. When children get exercise on their way to and from school they:

- Arrive more alert and able to focus,
- Get a large portion of their recommended daily physical activity,
- Are more likely to be a healthy weight,
- Demonstrate improved test scores,
- Are less likely to suffer from anxiety, and
- Build healthy habits and practices they can bring with them into adulthood.

The SRTS recommendations in the Action Plan at the beginning of this document address the “5 Es” and recognize the “6th E” of Equity. They were created to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, encourage students to consider walking or bicycling, and instill an active lifestyle. The recommendations in this plan were formed based on professional analysis of the existing conditions around the school and in the community, direct observation, input from members of the community, MnDOT assembled crash and traffic data, and results from standardized parent surveys and student travel tallies. SRTS plans are the most successful when programs involve the entire community and when they are integrated into current and future policies. If, at any time, the New York Mills School District, New York Mills Elementary School and the City of New York Mills have any questions of how to best enact the recommendations in this report, whether that be funding sources, best policies and practices, etc., they are encouraged to contact the staff at West Central Initiative and/or PartnerSHIP 4 Health.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Parent Survey Report: One School in One Data Collection Period

Program Name:

Date range: Fall 2014 (July - December 2014)

Date Report Generated: 10/30/2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name(s):</th>
<th>Month &amp; Year Collected &amp; (Set ID)</th>
<th>School Enrollment:</th>
<th>Enrollment in Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:</th>
<th>Number of Questionnaires Distributed:</th>
<th>Number of Questionnaires Included in Report:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>September 2014 (12331)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>September 2014 (12450)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This report contains information from parents about their children's trip to and from school. The report also reflects parents' perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. The data used in this report were collected using the Survey about Walking and Biking to School for Parents from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.
Sex of children for parents that provided information

Grade levels of children represented in survey
Grade levels of children represented in survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade in School</th>
<th>Responses per grade</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Parent Survey Aggregate Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance between home and school</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Trip</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Response
Morning: 0 No Response
Afternoon: 1
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school
Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school

School Arrival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

School Departure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number within Distance</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1/4 mile</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mile up to 2 miles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 miles</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance between Home and School</th>
<th>Percent of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1/4 mile</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 to 1/2 mile</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 to 1 mile</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 miles</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 2 miles</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asked Permission?</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Less than 1/4 mile</th>
<th>1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile</th>
<th>1/2 mile up to 1 mile</th>
<th>1 mile up to 2 miles</th>
<th>More than 2 miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know or No response: 0
Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school

Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school
Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Child does not walk/bike to school</th>
<th>Child walks/bikes to school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of Traffic Along Route</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Traffic Along Route</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks or Pathways</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather or climate</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Intersections and Crossings</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence or Crime</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience of Driving</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Guards</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s Participation in After School Programs</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults to Bike/Walk With</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Respondents per Category

| Child does not walk/bike to school | 75 |
| Child walks/bikes to school       | 4  |

No response: 11

Note:
--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.
--Each column may sum to > 100% because respondent could select more than issue.
--The calculation used to determine the percentage for each issue is based on the 'Number of Respondents per Category' within the respective columns (Child does not walk/bike to school and Child walks/bikes to school.) If comparing percentages between the two columns, please pay particular attention to each column's number of respondents because the two numbers can differ dramatically.
Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school

Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child
Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Survey ID</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247604</td>
<td>We live too far in the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247633</td>
<td>A lot of this would be more of a concern if we lived closer. But I do want this to improve as we would like to move closer in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247649</td>
<td>We live in Bluffton, MN so my children live too far away to walk or bike. If we lived really close to school, they would/would.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247652</td>
<td>Would love to have her commute every day to and from school either bike or walk. However sidewalk is in bad shape and intersection is dangerous and with out a high schooler, I will not let her make trip by herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247835</td>
<td>Streets do not have sidewalks, which is the main reason my children do not walk to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247842</td>
<td>Mostly worried about the short section of HWY he would have to bike along (speed limit 55) second worry is the high school kids driving/texting on their way to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247846</td>
<td>Questions 9-14 I am not going to answer because he rides the bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247856</td>
<td>I am glad the school provides a bus. I would not let my children walk without one of us (parents) accompanying them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247862</td>
<td>If there was ever an event where time wasn't crucial, I would allow my children to have an opportunity to walk a few blocks to arrive at school if bus and school could nominate a location to drop off to or from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247867</td>
<td>K-2 is awful young to allow a child to walk to school, no matter what the distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Elementary School</td>
<td>1247870</td>
<td>I live to far out in the country to even let my child do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253215</td>
<td>Multiple boxes marked on purpose, the kids have an hour bus ride both ways - don't allow younger kids to ride in car with older kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253220</td>
<td>Answers totally depend on distance from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Mills Secondary</td>
<td>1253232</td>
<td>We live 5 miles from school so never would my kids walk or bike to school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY:
NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL – ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Student Travel Tally Report: One School in One Data Collection Period

School Name: New York Mills Elementary School
School Group: West Central Minnesota / MnDOT D4
School Enrollment: 0
% of Students reached by SRTS activities: Don't Know
Number of Classrooms Included in Report: 20

Set ID: 22782
Month and Year Collected: February 2017
Date Report Generated: 06/16/2017
Tags: SRTS Planning Team

This report contains information from your school's classrooms about students' trip to and from school. The data used in this report were collected using the in-class Student Travel Tally questionnaire from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.
### Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

#### Bar Graph

The bar graph shows the comparison of travel modes between the morning and afternoon. The graph indicates the following:

- **Walk:** Morning = 3, Afternoon = 4
- **Bike:** Morning = 2, Afternoon = 0
- **School Bus:** Morning = 55, Afternoon = 65
- **Family Vehicle:** Morning = 39, Afternoon = 29
- **Carpool:** Morning = 1, Afternoon = 2
- **Transit:** Morning = 0, Afternoon = 0
- **Other:** Morning = 0, Afternoon = 0

#### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday AM</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday PM</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday AM</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday PM</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday AM</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday PM</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
## Travel Mode by Weather Conditions

![Travel Mode by Weather Conditions](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weather Condition</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcast</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
**STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY:**
**NEW YORK MILLS SCHOOL – SECONDARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Student Travel Tally Report: One School in One Data Collection Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>New York Mills Secondary</th>
<th>Set ID: 22783</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Group</td>
<td>West Central Minnesota / MnDOT D4</td>
<td>Month and Year Collected: February 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Enrollment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Date Report Generated: 06/16/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students reached by SRTS activities</td>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>Tags: SRTS Planning Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Classrooms Included in Report</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This report contains information from your school's classrooms about students' trip to and from school. The data used in this report were collected using the in-class Student Travel Tally questionnaire from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.
Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bus</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Vehicle</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday AM</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday PM</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday AM</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday PM</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday AM</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday PM</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Travel Mode by Weather Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weather Condition</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcast</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
## Parent Survey About Walking and Biking to School

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Your child's school wants to learn your thoughts about children walking and biking to school. This survey will take about 5 - 10 minutes to complete. We ask that each family complete only one survey per school your children attend. If more than one child from a school brings a survey home, please fill out the survey for the child with the next birthday from today's date.

After you have completed this survey, send it back to the school with your child or give it to the teacher. Your responses will be kept confidential and neither your name nor your child’s name will be associated with any results.

Thank you for participating in this survey!

### CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY – BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What is the grade of the child who brought home this survey? [ ] Grade (PK, K, 1-3)

2. Is the child who brought home this survey male or female? [ ] Male [ ] Female

3. How many children do you have in Kindergarten through 8th grade? [ ]

4. What is the street intersection nearest your home? (Provide the names of two intersecting streets)

   [ ] and [ ]

5. How far does your child live from school?

   - [ ] Less than ¼ mile
   - [ ] ¼ mile up to ½ mile
   - [ ] ½ mile up to 1 mile
   - [ ] 1 mile up to 2 miles
   - [ ] More than 2 miles
   - [ ] Don’t know

6. On most days, how does your child arrive and leave for school? (Select one choice per column, mark box with X)

   **Arrive at school**
   - [ ] Walk
   - [ ] Bike
   - [ ] School Bus
   - [ ] Family vehicle (only children in your family)
   - [ ] Carpool (Children from other families)
   - [ ] Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)
   - [ ] Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)

   **Leave from school**
   - [ ] Walk
   - [ ] Bike
   - [ ] School Bus
   - [ ] Family vehicle (only children in your family)
   - [ ] Carpool (Children from other families)
   - [ ] Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)
   - [ ] Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)

7. How long does it normally take your child to get to/from school? (Select one choice per column, mark box with X)

   **Travel time to school**
   - [ ] Less than 5 minutes
   - [ ] 5 – 10 minutes
   - [ ] 11 – 20 minutes
   - [ ] More than 20 minutes
   - [ ] Don’t know / Not sure

   **Travel time from school**
   - [ ] Less than 5 minutes
   - [ ] 5 – 10 minutes
   - [ ] 11 – 20 minutes
   - [ ] More than 20 minutes
   - [ ] Don’t know / Not sure
### Parent Survey: English – Page 2

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

9. At what grade would you allow your child to walk or bike to/from school without an adult?  
   (Select a grade between K, 1, 2, 3...)  
   - [ ] grade  
   - [ ] I would not feel comfortable at any grade  

10. What of the following issues affected your decision to allow, or not allow, your child to walk or bike to/from school? (Select ALL that apply)  
   - [ ] Distance  
   - [ ] Convenience of driving  
   - [ ] Time  
   - [ ] Child’s before or after-school activities  
   - [ ] Speed of traffic along route  
   - [ ] Amount of traffic along route  
   - [ ] Adults to walk or bike with  
   - [ ] Sidewalks or pathways  
   - [ ] Safety of intersections and crossings  
   - [ ] Crossing guards  
   - [ ] Violence or crime  
   - [ ] Weather or climate  

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

12. In your opinion, how much does your child’s school encourage or discourage walking and biking to/from school?  
   - [ ] Strongly Encourages  
   - [ ] Encourages  
   - [ ] Neither  
   - [ ] Discourages  
   - [ ] Strongly Discourages  

13. How much fun is walking or biking to/from school for your child?  
   - [ ] Very Fun  
   - [ ] Fun  
   - [ ] Neutral  
   - [ ] Boring  
   - [ ] Very Boring  

14. How healthy is walking or biking to/from school for your child?  
   - [ ] Very Healthy  
   - [ ] Healthy  
   - [ ] Neutral  
   - [ ] Unhealthy  
   - [ ] Very Unhealthy  

15. What is the highest grade or year of school you completed?  
   - [ ] Grades 1 through 8 (Elementary)  
   - [ ] Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school)  
   - [ ] Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate)  
   - [ ] College 1 to 3 years (Some college or technical school)  
   - [ ] College 4 years or more (College graduate)  
   - [ ] Prefer not to answer  

16. Please provide any additional comments below.  

A high-quality and text readable original version of this document can be found at:  
### Encuesta sobre ir caminando o andando en bicicleta a la escuela - PARA PADRES -

Estimado Padre o Encargado,

La escuela donde su hijo/hija asiste desea saber sus opiniones sobre niños caminando y andando en bicicleta a la escuela. Esta encuesta tomará entre 5 y 10 minutos para completar. Le pedimos a las familias que completen sólo una encuesta por escuela a la que asisten sus niños. Si recibe más de un formulario de la misma escuela, por favor complete sólo una encuesta, la del niño que cumpla años en la fecha más próxima al día de hoy.

Después de completar esta encuesta, devuélvala a la escuela a través de su hijo o entreguesela a la maestra. Sus respuestas se mantendrán confidenciales y no se asociará su nombre ni el de su hijo a ningún resultado.

**¡Gracias por participar en esta encuesta!**

1. ¿En qué grado está el niño que trajo esta encuesta al hogar?
   - [ ] Grado (PK,K,1,2,3...)

2. ¿El niño que trajo a casa la encuesta es niño o niña?
   - [ ] Niño
   - [ ] Niña

3. ¿Cuántos niños tiene usted entre Kindergarten y el 8vo grado?

4. ¿Cuál es la intersección más cerca de su casa? (el cruce de las dos calles)

5. ¿Cómo llenar este formulario?: Escriba en letras MAYÚSCULAS. Marque las cajas con "X"

6. La mayoría de los días, ¿cómo va su niño a la escuela y cómo regresa a la casa después de la escuela?
   - **Llega a la escuela**
     - [ ] Caminando
     - [ ] Bicicleta
     - [ ] Autobús escolar
     - [ ] Vehículo de la familia (solo con niños de la familia)
     - [ ] Compartiendo el viaje en auto con niños de otras familias
     - [ ] Tránsito (autobús de la ciudad, subterráneo, etc.)
     - [ ] Otro (patineta, monopatín, patines, etc.)
   - **Regresa a casa**
     - [ ] Caminando
     - [ ] Bicicleta
     - [ ] Autobús escolar
     - [ ] Vehículo de la familia (solo con niños de la familia)
     - [ ] Compartiendo el viaje en auto con niños de otras familias
     - [ ] Tránsito (autobús de la ciudad, subterráneo, etc.)
     - [ ] Otro (patineta, monopatín, patines, etc.)

7. ¿Cuánto tiempo le toma a su niño para ir y regresar de la escuela? (una respuesta por columna con una "X" en la caja)
   - **Tiempo del recorrido a la escuela**
     - [ ] Menos de 5 minutos
     - [ ] 5 a 10 minutos
     - [ ] 11 a 20 minutos
     - [ ] Más de 20 minutos
     - [ ] No lo sé / No estoy seguro/a
   - **Tiempo del recorrido para llegar a casa**
     - [ ] Menos de 5 minutos
     - [ ] 5 a 10 minutos
     - [ ] 11 a 20 minutos
     - [ ] Más de 20 minutos
     - [ ] No lo sé / No estoy seguro/a
8. ¿En el último año, le ha pedido permiso su hijo para caminar o andar en bicicleta hacia o desde la escuela?  
☐ Sí  ☐ No

9. ¿En qué grado permitiría que su hijo camine o ande en bicicleta solo/a de la escuela?  
(seleccione un grado entre PK,K,1,2,3,...)  
☐ grado  ☐ No me sentiría cómodo/a en ningún grado

¿Cómo llenar este formulario?: Escribe en letras MAYÚSCULAS. Marque las cajas con "X"

10. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes situaciones afectaron su decisión de permitir, o no permitir, que su niño camine o ande en bicicleta hacia o desde la escuela? (marque todas las que correspondan)  
☐ Distancia……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Conveniencia de manejar…………………………………………………………………………………………………………….  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Tiempo…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Actividades antes o después de la escuela…………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Velocidad del tránsito en la ruta…………………………………………………………………………………………………….  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Cantidad de tránsito en la ruta…………………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Adultos que acompañen a su niño……………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Aceras o caminos………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Seguridad de las intersecciones y cruces………………………………………………………………………………………….  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Guardias de cruce peatonal………………………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Violencia o crimen…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a
☐ Tiempo o clima………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..  
☐ Sí  ☐ No  ☐ No estoy seguro/a

¿Cómo llenar este formulario?: Escribe en letras MAYÚSCULAS. Marque las cajas con "X"

12. En su opinión, ¿cuánto apoya provéee la escuela de su hijo a caminar y usar la bicicleta para ir o regresar de la escuela?  
☐ Anima Fuertemente  ☐ Anima  ☐ Ni uno ni otro  ☐ Desalienta  ☐ Desalienta Fuertemente

13. ¿Qué tan DIVERTIDO es caminar o andar en bicicleta hacia o desde la escuela para su niño?  
☐ Muy Divertido  ☐ Divertido  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Aburrido  ☐ Muy Aburrido

14. ¿Qué tan SANO es caminar o andar en bicicleta hacia o desde la escuela para su niño?  
☐ Muy Sano  ☐ Sano  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Malsano  ☐ Muy Malsano

¿Cómo llenar este formulario?: Escribe en letras MAYÚSCULAS. Marque las cajas con "X"

15. ¿Cuál es el grado o el año más alto de educación que usted terminó?  
☐ Grados 1 a 8 (Escuela primaria)  ☐ Universidad 1 a 3 años (alguna universidad o escuela técnica)  
☐ Grados 9 a 11 (alguna High School/secundaria)  ☐ Universidad 4 años o más (graduado de la universidad)  
☐ Grado 12 o GED (graduado High School/secundaria)  ☐ Prefiero no contestar

16. Por favor proporcione comentarios adicionales:

A high-quality and text readable original version of this document can be found at:  
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/Parent_Survey_Spanish.pdf
# STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY

## Safe Routes to School Students Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital Letters Only – Blue or Black Ink Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Name:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher’s First Name:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher’s Last Name:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade:</strong> (PK, K, 1, 2, 3...), <strong>Monday’s Date:</strong> (Week count was conducted), <strong>Number of Students Enrolled in Class:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Please conduct these counts on two of the following three days Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. (Three days would provide better data if counted)
- Please do not conduct these counts on Mondays or Fridays.
- Before asking your students to raise their hands, please read through all possible answer choices so they will know their choices. Each student may only answer once.
- Ask your students as a group the question “How did you arrive at school today?”
- Then, re-read each answer choice and record the number of students that raised their hands for each. Place just one character or number in each box.
- Follow the same procedure for the question “How do you plan to leave for home after school?”
- You can conduct the counts once per day but during the count please ask students both the school arrival and departure questions.
- Please conduct this count regardless of weather conditions (i.e., ask these questions on rainy days, too).

### Step 1.
Fill in the weather conditions and number of students in each class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Weather</th>
<th>Student Tally</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>sunny</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Only with children from your family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>rainy</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Riding with children from other families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>overcast</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>City bus, subway, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
<td>snow</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Skate-board, scooter, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Sample AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weather</th>
<th>Student Tally</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample AM</td>
<td>S N</td>
<td>2 0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Tues. AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weather</th>
<th>Student Tally</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Transit</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Tues. PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weather</th>
<th>Student Tally</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>School Bus</th>
<th>Family Vehicle</th>
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Please list any disruptions to these counts or any unusual travel conditions to/from the school on the days of the tally.

A high-quality and text readable original version of this document can be found at: [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/SRTS_Two_Day_Tally.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/SRTS_Two_Day_Tally.pdf)
Promoting Health in Minnesota Schools:

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

As society becomes more aware of and concerned with children’s health issues, communities are turning to their schools to provide an environment that promotes both healthy eating and physical activity. Schools policies supporting healthy eating and physical activity are an important component of school efforts to promote the health and wellbeing of school children. Good nutrition and physical activity help “contribute to improved academic performance, attendance rates, behavior, and lifelong health and well-being.” Policies supporting Safe Routes to School can encourage children to be more physically active by encouraging active transportation to and from school through biking and walking.

What is Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a movement focused on increasing the number of children who walk or bike to school. Safe Routes to School initiatives can include both policies and programs that support safe, efficient, and enjoyable opportunities for children to walk or bike to and from school.

Local policies supporting SRTS may include:

- School wellness policies.
- Speed zone limits around schools.
- Local land use planning and zoning requirements that address school siting, crosswalks, and street design.
- Active School Day policies.
- Safe Routes to School plan.

A school’s SRTS programs may include:

- Designated team of stakeholders.
- Bicycle parking.
- Hand tallies to assess usage of various modes of student transportation.
- Hazard or zero-mile busing to transport children past areas unsafe for walking or biking.
- Walking and/or biking maps.
- Consolidated bus pick-up points.
- Remote pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Bike and pedestrian curriculum.
- Walking school bus.
- Safe Routes to School Day.
Safe Routes to School policies and programs are often designed to remove barriers that may prevent children from walking or biking to and from school, including:

- A lack of safe infrastructure (such as sidewalks, cross-walks, or crossing guards) and other safety issues.
- A lack of programs that promote walking and biking through education and encouragement programs aimed at children, parents, and the community.
- A lack of cooperation between local stakeholders (school districts, cities, counties, or townships).
- A general fear of “liability” for injuries or other unwanted incidents.

**Why is Safe Routes to School important?**

Safe Routes to School can play a critical role in reversing the nationwide trend of childhood inactivity. In addition, SRTS efforts can help relieve traffic congestion around school zones, improve air quality, reduce accidents, and help improve a community’s quality of life. Safe Routes to School initiatives benefit local neighborhoods by supporting the health and well-being of children, parents, neighbors, plants, animals, and the environment.

**Do any federal or Minnesota laws require a Safe Routes to School initiative?**

No. However, while neither federal nor Minnesota law require SRTS, both provide support for SRTS initiatives. Federal support for SRTS initiatives includes funding for state departments of transportation to develop SRTS programs. Financial assistance is then awarded to schools by a state department of transportation through a competitive grant program.

A separate Minnesota SRTS program was created to provide additional “assistance in capital investments for safe and appealing non-motorized transportation to and from a school.” Financial assistance from Minnesota’s SRTS Program is intended to supplement or replace aid for infrastructure projects funded through the federal program. This program is in development; it first received funding from the Minnesota bonding bill that was passed in May 2013. The Minnesota Department of Health also supports SRTS by providing funding through its Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) Active Living Strategy. In the first three years of SHIP, 215 schools that serve 143,000 students created SRTS programs.

**Does the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) Model Wellness Policy address Safe Routes to School?**

No, not specifically.

**Could existing MSBA policies be used to support the creation and management of Safe Routes to School?**

Yes. The MSBA has several model policies that could be used to support the creation and management of a Safe Routes to School program, such as:

- 707 (Transportation of Public School Students)
- 708 (Transportation of Nonpublic School Students)
- 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy & Notification Forms)
- 710 (Extracurricular Transportation)
How can Minnesota schools incorporate Safe Routes to School into a school wellness policy?
The following language can be incorporated into a school board policy that follows the MSBA’s model. This language can also be individually tailored to fit into a school board policy that does not follow the MSBA model policy.

Addition to the MSBA School Wellness Policy

533. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide the criteria that students, parents/guardians, and employees need to follow when biking, walking, or using other forms of active transportation to and from school. Biking, walking, and other forms of active transportation promote student and adult well-being by integrating more physical activity into a daily routine and provide active living skills and healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

In supporting active transportation to and from school:

- The district supports biking and walking as transportation as long as students and employees can do so safely.
- Students, parents/guardians, and employees have a responsibility to follow the laws and rules for safe walking, biking, and driving to ensure the safety of all road users - pedestrians, bikers, and motorists.
- The school district assumes no liability for injury or damage resulting from individuals biking or walking to school.

II. GUIDELINES

A. General

1. The school district will facilitate all schools developing a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan that incorporates action items from all “5 E’s” (evaluation, engineering, education, encouragement, and enforcement).16

2. The school district will integrate SRTS strategies into district-wide and individual school wellness policies.

3. The school district will assess and, to the extent possible, make any necessary improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to and from school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal and state funds to finance such improvements.

4. The school district will form a school-community planning team that includes students, parent-teacher organizations, local public health representatives, school administrators, law enforcement representatives, city and/or county transportation engineers, city and/or county planners, city and/or county elected officials, fire/EMS representatives, neighborhood association representatives, and parents or other community volunteers.

5. The school district will encourage health and wellness councils at the school district and school level to advance SRTS goals and support successful, ongoing implementation.

6. The school district will encourage walking and biking to and from school based on age-appropriate standards for students living within certain distances of the school.

7. The school district will provide parents with information on the health benefits of walking and biking to and from school.
8. The school district will work with the appropriate local government authorities to ensure that sidewalks and/or bike paths exist to provide connectivity among neighborhoods and to allow safe access to recreation centers, libraries, and other after-school destinations.

9. The school district assumes no responsibility to ensure that students are trained in pedestrian or bike safety. Parents and guardians are expected to teach students the traffic safety laws and school district rules outlined in this policy.

B. Biking
   1. The school district supports students, parents/guardians, and employees using biking as transportation as long as the bikers live within a comfortable biking distance for their level of skill, follow traffic safety laws, and use appropriate safety equipment, including a properly fitted helmet.
   2. Children in 3rd grade and below are unlikely to have the developmental and judgment skills for unsupervised biking. These children should be accompanied by an adult when biking to or from school.
   3. While on school grounds with a bike, students must comply with traffic safety laws and the following rules:
      a. Bikers must exercise caution around motor vehicles and pedestrian students. Bikers must walk bikes on school sidewalks when others are present.
      b. Bikes must be parked in the racks provided.
      c. Students are encouraged to bring and use bike locks.
      d. Helmets must be stored in a locker or backpack, or locked to a bike.
      e. Students must respect the personal property of others and not interfere with other bikes. This includes storing bikes or equipment, unlocking quick releases, touching helmets locked to bikes, or any other action that would damage property.

C. Walking
   1. The school district supports students, parents/guardians, and employees walking to and from school, as long as the individuals live within a comfortable walking distance.
   2. The school district recommends that students in 3rd grade and below walk with adult supervision.
   3. Walkers must obey traffic safety laws and always use their common sense and good judgment.
      a. If available, students, parents/guardians, and employees should use cross walks where painted.
      b. Before crossing, look left, right, and left again to make sure the road is clear. Continue looking while you cross and listen for traffic.
      c. Walkers should not cross the street from between parked cars.

What other ways can schools support Safe Routes to School initiatives?

In Minnesota, the superintendent is responsible for implementing and enforcing school board policy. Superintendents issue protocols, procedures, and guidelines to help implement the school board’s policies. The following language can be incorporated into existing guidelines. However, as school boards and superintendents may adopt more specific or general guidelines based on their needs and goals, policy language can be interchangeable with the guidelines listed below.
Safe Routes to School Guidelines

- Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged and supported to safely walk or bike to and from school as often as possible.\textsuperscript{17}
- Elementary schools will provide crossing guards near the school.\textsuperscript{18}
- Schools will work with the community, including school board members, parents, and local public works, community planning, and public safety agencies, to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade, or skateboard safely to and from school.\textsuperscript{19}
- All schools will provide biking and walking safety education to students, parents, and faculty.\textsuperscript{20}
- Basic biking and walking safety will be taught when bus safety is taught.
- The school district will participate in national activity campaigns, like Kids Walk to School, Screen-Free Week, Bike to School Day, and International Walk to School Day.
- All schools will provide bike racks on the school campus.\textsuperscript{21} Bikes must be locked to school-provided racks when left unattended.\textsuperscript{22}
- The school district will develop a walking school bus and remote drop-off program at the elementary level.
- All schools will provide maps showing safe routes for students to walk and bike to and from school.\textsuperscript{23}
- Elementary school students living less than ___ mile(s) away from the closest school in their district, and middle and high school students living less than ___ mile(s) from the closest school in their district, will be encouraged to walk or bike to and from school.\textsuperscript{24}
- Transportation or an adult escort will be provided to students whose route to school has been surveyed and determined not to be reasonably safe for walking or biking.\textsuperscript{25}
- All persons on school grounds riding a bike, other pedal-powered vehicle, scooter, or any other device associated with a significant risk of causing a head injury will wear a safety helmet that meets the standards of the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission.\textsuperscript{26}
- Health education and physical education curricula will include topics of pedestrian and biker safety and traffic rules at appropriate grade levels.\textsuperscript{27}
- Schools will conduct hand tallies to measure the number of students biking, walking, and arriving in motor vehicle transit for assessment purposes.

Are there any other resources that may be helpful in implementing Safe Routes to School?

Yes. Several resources are available that can assist with implementing an SRTS program. These include:

- Public Health Law Center
  - Liability Concerns in Minnesota: Recreational Maps, [http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/ship-fs-communitymappingliability-2010_0.pdf](http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/ship-fs-communitymappingliability-2010_0.pdf)
• Minnesota Department of Transportation, Safe Routes to School Program, http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/

• Minnesota Department of Health, Safe Routes to School Program, http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/srta/

• National Center for Safe Routes to School

• Plan the Event, http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/get-set/plan-the-event

• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Walk-to-School Programs, http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidwalk/pdf/kidwalk_programs_3-31_06.pdf


Last updated June 2013.
This publication was prepared by the Public Health Law Center at William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, made possible with funding from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Public Health Law Center provides information and technical assistance on issues related to public health. The Public Health Law Center does not provide legal representation or advice. This document should not be considered legal advice. For specific legal questions, consult with an attorney.

Public Health Law Center

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For related publications, visit www.publichealthlawcenter.org

Endnotes


5 What is Safe Routes to School?, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NAT’L. PARTNERSHIP, http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/about/history/what-is-safe-routes-to-school (last visited Apr. 29, 2013). See also David Bassett
et al., Estimated Energy Expenditures for School-Based Policies and Active Living, 44 AM. J. PREV. MED. 108, 112 (2013) (reviewing scientific literature to conclude that walking or biking to school has “the potential to meaningfully increase children’s physical activity”).


9 Safe Routes to School Programs: Safe Routes to School Funding and Special Requirements, MINN. DEP’T OF TRANS. (last modified 2012), http://www.dot.state.mn.us/safetoroutes/funding.html.


14 League of Minnesota Cities, Handbook for Minnesota Cities 17-14 (2012), available at http://www.lmc.org/media/document/1/chapter17.pdf (“The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) supports, promotes and enhances the work of public school boards. MSBA is a private nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, cost-saving programs; and advocacy, training, research, and referral services for all of Minnesota’s public [school members]. Membership in MSBA is voluntary.”).


21 Id. at 20.

22 Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn, supra note 17, at 39.

23 Id.

24 Id.

25 Id.

26 Id.

27 Id.
Appendix E: Minnesota SRTS Model Policies Tip Sheet

**TIPSHEET MODEL POLICIES**

**WHY WRITE POLICIES?** - Written policies help SRTS programs evolve into more permanent change. Policies may also lead to more support for programs and more funding opportunities. Strong policies build the foundations for sustainable SRTS programs to exist throughout the future.

**INSTRUCTIONS** - See the model policies below and customize them for your school, school district, agency, municipality, or department.

---

**EDUCATION**

**BEGINNER**

**Safety Education**

Our school requires a comprehensive education curriculum with a focus on traffic safety education and active transportation skills. The curriculum shall include:

- Implementing the Minnesota Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Curriculum for all students age 5-13
- Conducting pedestrian safety workshops for all students in grades K-2nd
- Hosting bicycle skills and safety workshops for all students in 5th grade
- Holding ‘How to use public transit’ classes in 6th grade
- Promoting safe-driving skills to 10th graders, with an emphasis on avoiding injuries to pedestrian and bicyclists

**LOCAL EDUCATION SUCCESS:** The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) implemented the Helmet Hero program in 2007. 3rd grade students throughout northeast Minnesota receive 30-45 minutes of in-class instruction on bicycle safety, as well as receive a helmet at no charge. Rewards are then given to students seen using their helmets.

**INTERMEDIATE**

**Safety Education**

In addition to the policy above, our school shall host a traffic safety education and active transportation skills workshop with the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota at the beginning of each school year to train and educate teachers and school personnel on using the Minnesota Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Curriculum.

---

**MN SRTS MODEL POLICIES | PHONE: 651-366-4180 | www.mnsaferoutestoschool.org**
EVALUATION

Beginner

Establishing a School Team

Our school shall establish a Safe Routes to School Task Force to develop and implement strategies grounded in the "Five E's" that address Safe Routes to School planning, funding, and policies. Specifically, the Task Force shall:

- Evaluate current SRTS policies to determine 1) whether they are being fully implemented, 2) how to improve implementation, and 3) what is needed to improve the policies’ success
- Ensure that Safe Routes to School resources are distributed equitably in the school
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities.

In the first year of its formation, the Task Force shall meet every two months. Thereafter, it shall meet quarterly.

Data Collection

The Task Force shall coordinate annual SRTS data collection. This collection process may include:

- SRTS Student Travel Mode Tallies
- SRTS Parent Surveys on Transportation Preferences and Concerns
- Walk Audits and Maps of Active Transportation Routes
- Plotting student addresses with assistance from local GIS departments
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**Minimize Driving**
Because automobile collisions are a leading cause of death among school-aged children, we support efforts to increase traffic safety by minimizing driving to and from school. Decreasing the number of automobile trips, whether by engaging active transportation, taking public transportation, or carpooling, will reduce automobile congestion and create a safer environment for active transportation.

**Walking School Bus and Bike Trains**
Our school will establish and promote regular Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train programs. Such programs shall occur on a regular basis, at least once per week.

**Arrival and Dismissal**
Our school recognizes that promoting student safety is especially critical during arrival and dismissal times due to 1) increased automobile and bus traffic volume, and 2) the potential for conflicts between different modes of transportation. Accordingly, our school will separate active transportation from the other forms of transportation, to the extent possible. To achieve this end, one or more of the following strategies must be adopted:

- Remote drop-off locations
- Car-free zones
- Carpool lanes for drop-offs and pick-ups
- Early dismissal for active transporters

**Busing**
Our school acknowledges that busing may play a significant role in supporting student learning and meeting educational and equity objectives. However, we also support integrating active transportation into our existing busing policies. Options may include:

- Voluntary or mandatory remote drop-offs for buses
- Safe Routes to Bus Stops programs
- Training for bus drivers on how to drive safely on routes frequented by users of active transportation (e.g., biking, walking)

---

**LOCAL ENCOURAGEMENT SUCCESS:** Minneapolis Public Schools are encouraged to implement **Bus Stop & Walk programs.** With Bus Stop & Walk, school buses unload away from the school campus and walk along a designated route to school together to complete their trip. Learn about **Loring Community School’s** Bus Stop & Walk program [here](#).

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*MN SRTS Model Policies | Phone: 651-366-4180 | www.mnsaferroutestoschool.org*
## ENFORCEMENT

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<td>On an annual basis, our school provide our SRTS Plan and policies to our local public safety and police departments. Our school shall partner with these agencies to ensure that they 1) understand the details of this policy, 2) provide rigorous traffic safety enforcement in the vicinity of schools, and 3) understand the rights and responsibilities of those engaging in active transportation.</td>
<td>Our school, in partnership with the administrator of the crossing guard program, shall work together to implement an effective process for hiring, funding, training, locating, supervising, and properly equipping crossing guards. If the number of crossing guards at our school is insufficient, we shall, in partnership with the crossing guard agency, seek additional funding or resources to increase the number of crossing guards.</td>
<td>Our school acknowledges that motor vehicles idling on or near campus increase air pollution, negatively affecting the health of everyone in the vicinity of the school. Accordingly, our school prohibits all motor vehicles from idling on campus. “No Idling” signs shall be posted on campus to alert drivers of this policy. In extreme weather, bus drivers will be allowed to wait in a temperature-controlled room until students are dismissed.</td>
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### LOCAL ENFORCEMENT SUCCESS:
The Minneapolis City Council adopted an Anti-Idling Vehicle Ordinance for the city in June 2008. The ordinance is enforced with educational warning tickets and flyers disseminated to families through the local schools. The local Metro Transit agency stated that the new ordinance will save the public transit buses nearly 66,000 gallons of gasoline each year.

### LOCAL ENFORCEMENT SUCCESS:
In 2008, The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) worked with the Duluth Police Department to conduct a training session for Duluth school staff on how to properly issue parking tickets to motor vehicles parked illegally in bus zones.
**ENGINEERING**

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<td>Our school will perform an annual walk audit to 1) assess traffic and safety conditions in the vicinity of the school, 2) identify safety conditions needing mitigation, and, based on these assessments, 3) begin to identify recommended active transportation routes to school. Findings will be shared with the appropriate entities to mitigate concerns and hazards. Maps will be produced that 1) identify the hazards or travel conditions needing mitigation, and 2) show recommended routes from surrounding neighborhoods.</td>
<td>Our school shall provide sufficient storage facilities for bicycles, scooters, skateboards, or similar devices to encourage active transportation. The quantity of storage facilities will increase in proportion to demand, and we will seek input from active transportation advocates to ensure that the quality and quantity of facilities is satisfactory. To ensure convenience and protection from theft or vandalism, storage facilities shall be located in visible areas, near school entrances, and when deemed appropriate, in locked facilities. All storage facilities shall provide protection from the elements. Our school will also provide repair tools such as air pumps and other common tools to help students repair minor equipment failures.</td>
<td>Our school will adopt a School Travel Plan that addresses all modes of active transportation and related safety, access, and parking issues. The plans shall also include goals, strategies, and objectives for increasing active transportation among students and staff, including those with disabilities. At a minimum, the School Travel Plan shall contain a map identifying the school, streets surrounding the school, existing traffic controls, established pedestrian and bicycle routes, pedestrian crossings, school and municipal bus routes and bus stops, with the goal of minimizing risk of injury and maximizing safety and convenience for active transportation. School travel plans shall be updated regularly with input from various stakeholders and should seek opportunities to incorporate the Travel Plan into local municipalities’ comprehensive plans.</td>
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**LOCAL ENGINEERING SUCCESS:** In 2009, the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) worked with the Fond du Lac Reservation and the Ojibwe School to develop a SRTS Travel Plan. In 2010, The Fond du Lac Reservation incorporated the Travel Plan into their comprehensive plan, and secured funding for a multi-use path in 2013. According to Jason Holliday, the Director of Planning at ARDC, the SRTS planning process was an important factor in being awarded the Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds to implement the trail project.

**LOCAL ENGINEERING SUCCESS:** In 2012, the City of Brooklyn Center received a grant to create a SRTS Plan. The Plan established prioritized routes and engineering recommendations. The City of Brooklyn Center incorporated some of the upgrades and improvements into plans for reconstruction projects. The City’s Public Works Director and City Engineer, Steve Lillehaug, has since successfully used the Plan to receive Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding from the Metropolitan Council.

Resources:
- [http://changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/welcome](http://changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/welcome)
- [http://saferoutepartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Primer_to_Understanding_the_Role_of_School_Boards_and_Parents.pdf](http://saferoutepartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Primer_to_Understanding_the_Role_of_School_Boards_and_Parents.pdf)
- [http://saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts/minnesota](http://saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts/minnesota)
APPENDIX F: 707L TRANSPORTATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS POLICY

Adopted: 4/96
Revised: 5/12

707L TRANSPORTATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

[Note: The obligations stated in this policy are substantial and are virtually all governed by statute. Accordingly, you will see statutory references throughout the policy. Obviously a school district may choose to add obligations by policy.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the transportation of students consistent with the requirements of law.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The policy of the school district is to provide for the transportation of students in a manner which will protect their health, welfare, and safety.

B. The school district recognizes that transportation is an essential part of the school district services to students and parents but further recognizes that transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right for an eligible student.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. “Student with a disability” includes every child identified under federal and state special education law as deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, deafblind, or having a speech or language impairment, a physical impairment, other health disability, developmental cognitive disability, an emotional or behavioral disorder, specific learning disability, autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injury, or severe multiple impairments, and who needs special education and related services, as determined by the rules of the Commissioner of Education. A licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse, or a licensed psychologist is qualified to make a diagnosis and determination of attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder for purposes of identifying a child with a disability. In addition, every child under age three, and at the school district’s discretion from age three to seven, who needs special instruction and services, as determined by the rules of the Commissioner, because the child has a substantial delay or has an identifiable physical or mental condition known to hinder normal development is a child with a disability. A child with a short-term or
temporary physical or emotional illness or disability, as determined by the rules of the Commissioner, is not a child with a disability. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.02)

B. “Home” is the legal residence of the child. In the discretion of the school district, “home” also may be defined as a licensed day care facility, school day care facility, a respite care facility, the residence of a relative, or the residence of a person chosen by the student’s parent or guardian as the home of a student for part or all of the day, if requested by the student’s parent or guardian, or an afterschool program for children operated by a political subdivision of the state, if the facility, residence, or program is within the attendance area of the school the student attends. Unless otherwise specifically provided by law, a homeless student is a resident of the school district if enrolled in the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.92, Subd. 1(b)(1); Minn. Stat. § 127A.47, Subd. 2)

C. “Homeless student” means a student, including a migratory student, who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes: students who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; are awaiting foster care placement; have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings, and migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in any of the preceding listed circumstances. (42 U.S.C. § 11434a)

D. “Nonpublic school” means any school, church, or religious organization, or home school wherein a resident of Minnesota may legally fulfill the compulsory instruction requirements of Minn. Stat. §120A.22, which is located within the state, and which meets the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d, et seq.). (Minn. Stat. §123B.41, Subd. 9)

E. “Nonresident student” is a student who attends school in the school district and resides in another district, defined as the “nonresident district.” In those instances when the divorced or legally separated parents or parents residing separately share joint physical custody of a student and the parents reside in different school districts, the student shall be a resident of the school district designated by the student’s parents. When parental rights have been terminated by court order, the legal residence of a student placed in a residential or foster facility for care and treatment is the district in which the student resides. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 6; Minn. Stat. § 125A.51; Minn. Stat. § 127A.47, Subd. 3)
F. “Pupil support services” are health, counseling, and guidance services provided by the public school in the same district where the nonpublic school is located. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.41, Subd. 4)

G. “School of origin,” for purposes of determining the residence of a homeless student, is the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(G))

H. “Shared time basis” is a program where students attend public school for part of the regular school day and who otherwise fulfill the requirements of Minn. Stat. §120A.22 by attendance at a nonpublic school. (Minn. Stat. § 126C.01, Subd. 8)

I. “Student” means any student or child attending or required to attend any school as provided in Minnesota law and who is a resident or child of a resident of Minnesota. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.41, Subd. 11)

IV. ELIGIBILITY

A. Upon the request of a parent or guardian, the school district shall provide transportation to and from school, at the expense of the school district, for all resident students who reside two miles or more from the school, except for those students whose transportation privileges have been revoked or have been voluntarily surrendered by the student’s parent or guardian. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 1)

B. The school district may, in its discretion, also provide transportation to any student to and from school, at the expense of the school district, for any other purpose deemed appropriate by the school board.

Students residing less than two miles from the school, in areas that may be designated by the District as various hazard situations, i.e. railroads, highways, etc., may be provided transportation to and from assigned bus stops. The location of these bus stops will be printed annually in the fall newsletter/bus schedule.

C. In the discretion of the school district, transportation along regular school bus routes may also be provided, where space is available, to any person where such use of a bus does not interfere with the transportation of students. The cost of providing such transportation must be paid by those individuals using these services or some third-party payor. Bus transportation also may be provided along school bus routes when space is available for participants in early childhood family education programs and school readiness programs if these services do not result in an increase in the school district’s expenditures for transportation. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 10, 11, 12, and 13) School
districts are not required to provide such transportation. Rather, they now may exercise broader discretion in determining who will be provided transportation, at their own expense and on a space-available basis, along regular school bus routes. The legislative change provides school districts with broader discretion but careful consideration should be given to potential liability issues when exercising this discretion to provide transportation along regular school bus routes to new classes of persons.

D. School buses will pick up and deliver country students to their residence if the lane is one-half mile or more in length. The School Board in unique health circumstances may make exceptions. All exceptions/variances will be understood to have current school year expiration, or less, date.

E. For purposes of stabilizing enrollment and reducing mobility, the school district may, in its discretion, establish a full-service school zone and may provide transportation for students attending a school in that full-service school zone. A full-service school zone may be established for a school that is located in an area with higher than average crime or other social and economic challenges and that provides education, health or human services, or other parental support in collaboration with a city, county, state, or nonprofit agency.

V. TRANSPORTATION OF NONRESIDENT STUDENTS

A. If requested by the parent of a nonresident student, the school district shall provide transportation to a nonresident student within its borders at the same level of service that is provided to resident students. (Minn. Stat. § 124D.04, Subd. 7; Minn. Stat. § 123B.92, Subd. 3)

B. If the school district decides to transport a nonresident student within the student’s resident district, the school district will notify the student’s resident district of its decision, in writing, prior to providing transportation. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 6)

C. When divorced or legally separated parents or parents residing separately reside in different school districts and share physical custody of a student, the parents shall be responsible for the transportation of the student to the border of the school district during those times when the student is residing with the parent in the nonresident school district. (Minn. Stat. § 127A.47, Subd. 3(b))
D. The school district may provide transportation to allow a student who attends a high-need English language learner program and who resides within the transportation attendance area of the program to continue in the program until the student completes the highest grade level offered by the program. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.92, Subd. 3(b))

VI. TRANSPORTATION OF RESIDENT STUDENTS TO NONDISTRICT SCHOOLS

A. In general, the school district shall not provide transportation between a resident student’s home and the border of a nonresident district where the student attends school under the Enrollment Options Program. A parent may be reimbursed by the nonresident district for the costs of transportation from the pupil’s residence to the border of the nonresident district if the student is from a family whose income is at or below the poverty level, as determined by the federal government. The reimbursement may not exceed the pupil’s actual cost of transportation or 15 cents per mile traveled, whichever is less. Reimbursement may not be paid for more than 250 miles per week. (Minn. Stat. § 124D.03, Subd. 8)

B. Resident students shall be eligible for transportation to and from a nonresident school district at the expense of the school district, if in the discretion of the school district, inadequate room, distance to school, unfavorable road conditions, or other facts or conditions make attendance in the resident student’s own district unreasonably difficult or impracticable. The school district, in its discretion, may also provide for transportation of resident students to schools in other districts for grades and departments not maintained in the district, including high school, for the whole or a part of the year or for resident students who attend school in a building rented or leased by the school district in an adjacent district. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subds. 1 and 4)

C. In general, the school district is not responsible for transportation for any resident student attending school in an adjoining state under a reciprocity agreement but may provide such transportation services at its discretion. (Minn. Stat. § 124D.041)

VII. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS/STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY/STUDENTS WITH TEMPORARY DISABILITIES

A. Upon a request of a parent or guardian, a resident student with a disability who is not yet enrolled in kindergarten, who requires special education services in a location other than the student’s home, shall be provided transportation to and from the student’s home at the expense of the school district and shall not be subject to any distance requirement. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 1)
B. Resident students with a disability whose handicapped conditions are such that the student cannot be safely transported on the regular school bus and/or school bus route and/or when the student is transported on a special route for the purpose of attending an approved special education program shall be entitled to special transportation at the expense of the school district or the day training and habilitation program attended by the student. The school district shall determine the type of vehicle used to transport students with a disability on the basis of the handicapping condition and applicable laws. This provision shall not be applicable to parents who transport their own child under a contract with the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 19; Minn. Rules Part 7470.1600)

C. Resident students with a disability who are boarded and lodged at Minnesota state academies for educational purposes, but who also are enrolled in a public school within the school district, shall be provided transportation, by the school district to and from said board and lodging facilities, at the expense of the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.65)

D. If a resident student with a disability attends a public school located in a contiguous school district and the school district of attendance does not provide special instruction and services, the school district shall provide necessary transportation for the student between the school district boundary and the educational facility where special instruction and services are provided within the school district. The school district may provide necessary transportation of the student between its boundary and the school attended in the contiguous district, but shall not pay the cost of transportation provided outside the school district boundary. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.12)

E. When a student with a disability or a student with a short-term or temporary disability is temporarily placed for care and treatment in a day program located in another school district and the student continues to live within the school district during the care and treatment, the school district shall provide the transportation, at the expense of the school district, to that student. The school district may establish reasonable restrictions on transportation, except if a Minnesota court or agency orders the child placed at a day care and treatment program and the school district receives a copy of the order, then the school district must provide transportation to and from the program unless the court or agency orders otherwise. Transportation shall only be provided by the school district during regular operating hours of the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.15(b); Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(d))

F. When a nonresident student with a disability or a student with a short-term or temporary disability is temporarily placed in a residential program within the school district, including correctional facilities operated on a fee-for-service basis and state institutions, for care and treatment, the school district shall provide the necessary transportation at the expense of the school district.
Where a joint powers entity enters into a contract with a privately owned and operated residential facility for the provision of education programs for special education students, the joint powers entity shall provide the necessary transportation. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.15(c) and (d); Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(e))

G. Each driver and aide assigned to a vehicle transporting students with a disability will be provided with appropriate training for the students in their care, will assist students with their safe ingress and egress from the bus, will ensure the proper use of protective safety devices, and will be provided with access to emergency health care information as required by law. (Minn. Rules Part 7470.1700)

H. Any parent of a student with a disability who believes that the transportation services provided for that child are not in compliance with the applicable law may utilize the alternative dispute resolution and due process procedures provided for in Minn. Stat. Ch. 125A. (Minn. Rules Part 7470.1600, Subd. 2)

VIII. HOMELESS STUDENTS

A. Homeless students shall be provided with transportation services comparable to other students in the school district. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(e)(3)(C)(i)(III)(cc) and (g)(4)(A))

B. Upon request by the student’s parent, guardian, or homeless education liaison, the school district shall provide transportation for a homeless student as follows:

1. A resident student who becomes homeless and is residing in a public or private shelter location or has other non-shelter living arrangements within the school district shall be provided transportation to and from the student’s school of origin and the shelter or other non-shelter location if the shelter or non-shelter location is two or more miles from the school of origin and the student’s transportation privileges have not been revoked. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)(I))

2. A resident student who becomes homeless and is residing in a public or private shelter location or has other non-shelter living arrangements outside of the school district shall be provided transportation to and from the student’s school of origin and the shelter or other non-shelter location if the shelter or non-shelter location is two or more miles from the school of origin and the student’s transportation privileges have not been revoked, unless the school district and the school district in which the student is temporarily placed agree that the school district
in which the student is temporarily placed shall provide transportation. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(f); 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)(II))

3. If a nonresident student is homeless and is residing in a public or private homeless shelter or has other non-shelter living arrangements within the school district, the school district may provide transportation services between the shelter or non-shelter location and the student’s school of origin outside of the school district upon agreement with the school district in which the school of origin is located. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(f))

4. A homeless nonresident student enrolled under Minn. Stat. § 124D.08, Subd. 2a, must be provided transportation from the student’s district of residence to and from the school of enrollment. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.92, Subd. 3(c)).

IX. AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES

Transportation shall be provided on all regularly scheduled school days or make-up days. Transportation will not be provided during the summer school break. Transportation may be provided for summer instructional programs for students with a disability or in conjunction with a learning year program. Transportation between home and school may also be provided, in the discretion of the school district, on staff development days. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 21)

X. MANNER OF TRANSPORTATION

The scheduling of routes, establishment of the location of bus stops, manner and method of transportation, control and discipline of school children, the determination of fees, and any other matter relating thereto shall be within the sole discretion, control and management of the school board. The school district may, in its discretion, provide room and board, in lieu of transportation, to a student who may be more economically and conveniently provided for by that means. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.88, Subd. 1)

XI. RESTRICTIONS

Transportation by the school district is a privilege and not a right for an eligible student. A student’s eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies, or violation of any other law governing student conduct on a school bus pursuant to the school district’s discipline policy. Revocation of a student’s bus riding privilege is not an exclusion, expulsion, or suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. Revocation procedures for a student who is an individual with a disability under 20 U.S.C. § 1415 (Individuals with Disabilities Act), 29 U.S.C. § 794 (the Rehabilitation Act), and 42 U.S.C. § 12132, (Americans with
Disabilities Act) are governed by these provisions. (Minn. Stat. § 121A.59)

It is the policy of the school district to attempt to provide resident students total bus riding time that does not exceed one hour and forty-five minute per day. It is also the policy of the district to not load students before seven a.m. each morning. The a.m. arrival time is understood to be 8:15 a.m. and the p.m. departure time is understood to be 3:30 p.m. (Effective: Sept. 97) (Revised: Nov. 1998)

XII. FEES

A. In its discretion, the school district may charge fees for transportation of students to and from extracurricular activities conducted at locations other than school, where attendance is optional. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Subd. 1(10))

B. The school district may charge fees for transportation of students to and from school when authorized by law. If the school district charges fees for transportation of students to and from school, guidelines shall be established for that transportation to ensure that no student is denied transportation solely because of inability to pay. The school district also may waive fees for transportation if the student’s parent is serving in, or within the past year has served in, active military service as defined in Minn. Stat. § 190.05. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Subds. 1(11) and 6)

C. The school district may charge reasonable fees for transportation of students to and from post-secondary institutions for students enrolled under the post-secondary enrollment options program. Families who qualify for mileage reimbursement may use their state mileage reimbursement to pay this fee. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Subd. 1(13))

D. Where, in its discretion, the school district provides transportation to and from an instructional community-based employment station that is part of an approved occupational experience vocational program, the school district may require the payment of reasonable fees for transportation from students who receive remuneration for their participation in these programs. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.36, Subd. 3)

Legal References:  
Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)  
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)  
Minn. Stat. § 121A.59 (Bus Transportation is a Privilege Not a Right)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.36 (Authorized Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.41 (Educational Aids for Nonpublic School Children; Definitions)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.44 (Provision of Pupil Support Services)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.88 (Independent School Districts, Transportation)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.92 (Transportation Aid Entitlement)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.03 (Enrollment Options Program)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.04 (Enrollment Options Programs in Border States)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.041 (Reciprocity with Adjoining States)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.08 (School Board’s Approval to Enroll in Nonresident District)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 125A (Children With a Disability)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.02 (Children With a Disability, Defined)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.12 (Attendance in Another District)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.15 (Placement in Another District; Responsibility)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.51 (Placement of Children Without Disabilities; Education and Transportation)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.515 (Placement of Students; Approval of Education Program)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.65 (Attendance at Academies for the Deaf and Blind)
Minn. Stat. § 126C.01 (General Education Revenue - Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 127A.47 (Payments to Resident and Nonresident Districts) Minn. Stat. § 190.05 (Definitions)
Minn. Rules Part 7470.1600 (Transporting Pupils with Disability)
Minn. Rules Part 7470.1700 (Drivers and Aides for Pupils with Disabilities)
20 U.S.C. § 1415 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004)
42 U.S.C. § 2000d (Prohibition Against Exclusion from Participation in, Denial of Benefits of, and Discrimination under Federally Assisted Programs on Ground of Race, Color, or National Origin)

**Cross References:**
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 708 (Transportation of Nonpublic School Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy) MSBA/MASA Model Policy 710 (Extracurricular Transportation) MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 2, Transportation
I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide safe transportation for students and to educate students on safety issues and the responsibilities of school bus ridership.

II. PLAN FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY TRAINING

A. School Bus Safety Week

The school district may designate a school bus safety week. The National School Bus Safety Week is the third week in October.

B. Student Training

1. The school district shall provide students enrolled in grades kindergarten (K) through 10 with age-appropriate school bus safety training of the following concepts:
   a. transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right;
   b. school district policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
   c. appropriate conduct while on the bus;
   d. the danger zones surrounding a school bus;
   e. procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
   f. procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
   g. school bus evacuation and other emergency procedures.

2. All students in grades K through 6 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive the
school bus safety training by the end of the third week of school. All students in grades 7 through 10 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive the school bus safety training or receive bus safety instruction materials by the end of the sixth week of school, if they have not previously received school bus training. Students in grades K through 10 who enroll in a school after the second week of school, are transported by school bus, and have not received training in their previous school districts shall undergo school bus safety training or receive bus safety instructional materials within 4 weeks of their first day of attendance.

3. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must provide students enrolled in grades K through 3 school bus safety training twice during the school year.

4. Students taking driver’s training instructional classes must receive training in the laws and proper procedures for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of a school bus as required by Minn. Stat. § 169.446, Subd. 2.

5. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must conduct a school bus evacuation drill at least once during the school year.

6. The school district will make reasonable accommodations in training for students known to speak English as a second language and students with disabilities.

7. The school district may provide kindergarten students with school bus safety training before the first day of school.

8. The school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades K through 5.

9. The school district shall adopt and make available for public review a curriculum for transportation safety education.

10. Nonpublic school students transported by the school district will receive school bus safety training by their nonpublic school. The nonpublic schools may use the school district’s school transportation safety education curriculum. Upon request by the school district superintendent, the nonpublic school must certify to the school district’s school transportation safety director that all students enrolled in grades K through 10 have received the appropriate training.
III. **CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR**

A. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district’s general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses, including nonpublic and charter school students, for any route, school trip, or extracurricular trip.

B. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district’s transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

1. **School Bus and Bus Stop Rules.** The school district school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the school district’s discipline procedures are to be followed. In most circumstances, consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. It is the school bus driver’s responsibility to report unacceptable behavior to the school district’s Transportation Office/School Office.

2. **Rules at the Bus Stop**

   a. Get to your bus stop 5 minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.

   b. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.

   c. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.

   d. Use appropriate language.

   e. Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.

   f. Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.

   g. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.

   h. If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.

   i. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.

   j. No use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
3. **Rules on the Bus**

a. Immediately follow the directions of the driver.

b. Sit in your seat facing forward.

c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.

d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.

e. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.

f. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.

g. Do not throw any object.

h. No eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

i. Do not bring any weapons or dangerous objects on the school bus.

j. Do not damage the school bus.

4. **Consequences**

a. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to all regular and late routes. Decisions regarding a student’s ability to ride the bus in connection with cocurricular and extracurricular events (for example, field trips or competitions) will be in the sole discretion of the school district. Parents or guardians will be notified of any suspension of bus privileges.

   (1) **Elementary (K-6)**

   1st offense – warning
   2nd offense – 3 school-day suspension from riding the bus
   3rd offense – 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
   4th offense – 10 school-day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent

   Further offenses – individually considered. Students may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the school year.

   (2) **Secondary (7-12)**

   1st offense – warning
2nd offense – 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
3rd offense – 10 school-day suspension from riding the bus
4th offense – 20 school-day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent
5th offense – suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year

Note: When any student goes 60 transportation days without a report, the student’s consequences may start over at the first offense.

(3) Other Discipline

Based on the severity of a student’s conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school also may result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

(4) Records

Records of school bus/bus stop misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and will be retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of student misbehavior on a school bus or in a bus-loading or unloading area that are reasonably believed to cause an immediate and substantial danger to the student or surrounding persons or property shall be provided by the school district to local law enforcement and the Department of Public Safety in accordance with state and federal law.

(5) Vandalism/Bus Damage

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages (or make arrangements to pay) within 2 weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.
(6) **Notice**

School bus and bus stop rules and consequences for violations of these rules will be reviewed with students annually and copies of these rules will be made available to students. School bus rules are to be posted on each school bus.

(7) **Criminal Conduct**

In cases involving criminal conduct (for example, assault, weapons, drug possession, or vandalism), the appropriate school district personnel and local law enforcement officials will be informed.

IV. **PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

A. **Parent and Guardian Notification**

The school district school bus and bus stop rules will be provided to each family. Parents and guardians are asked to review the rules with their children.

B. **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities for Transportation Safety**

Parents/Guardians are responsible to:

1. Become familiar with school district rules, policies, regulations, and the principles of school bus safety, and thoroughly review them with their children;

2. Support safe riding and walking practices, and recognize that students are responsible for their actions;

3. Communicate safety concerns to their school administrators;

4. Monitor bus stops, if possible;

5. Have their children to the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives;

6. Have their children properly dressed for the weather; and

7. Have a plan in case the bus is late.

V. **SCHOOL BUS DRIVER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
A. School bus drivers shall have a valid Class A, B, or C Minnesota driver’s license with a school bus endorsement. A person possessing a valid driver’s license, without a school bus endorsement, may drive a type III vehicle set forth in Sections VII.B. and VII.C., below. Drivers with a valid Class D driver’s license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a “type A-I” school bus as set forth in Section VII.D., below.

B. The school district shall conduct mandatory drug and alcohol testing of all school district bus drivers and bus driver applicants in accordance with state and federal law and school district policy.

C. A school bus driver, with the exception of a driver operating a type A-I school bus or type III vehicle, who has a commercial driver’s license and who is convicted of a criminal offense, a serious traffic violation, or of violating any other state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control, other than a parking violation, in any type of motor vehicle in a state or jurisdiction other than Minnesota, shall notify the Minnesota Division of Driver and Vehicle Services (Division) of the conviction within 30 days of the conviction. For purposes of this paragraph, a “serious traffic violation” means a conviction of any of the following offenses:

1. excessive speeding, involving any single offense for any speed of 15 miles per hour or more above the posted speed limit;
2. reckless driving;
3. improper or erratic traffic lane changes;
4. following the vehicle ahead too closely;
5. a violation of state or local law, relating to motor vehicle traffic control, arising in connection with a fatal accident;
6. driving a commercial vehicle without obtaining a commercial driver’s license or without having a commercial driver’s license in the driver’s possession.

D. A school bus driver, with the exception of a driver operating a type A-I school bus or type III vehicle, who has a commercial driver’s license and who is convicted of violating, in any type of motor vehicle, a Minnesota state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control, other than a parking violation, shall notify the person’s employer of the conviction within 30 days of conviction. The notification shall be in writing and shall contain all the information set forth in Attachment A accompanying this policy.

E. A school bus driver, with the exception of a driver operating a type A-I school bus
or type III vehicle, who has a Minnesota commercial driver’s license suspended, revoked, or cancelled by the state of Minnesota or any other state or jurisdiction and who loses the right to operate a commercial vehicle for any period or who is disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle for any period shall notify the person’s employer of the suspension, revocation, cancellation, lost privilege, or disqualification. Such notification shall be made before the end of the business day following the day the employee received notice of the suspension, revocation, cancellation, lost privilege, or disqualification. The notification shall be in writing and shall contain all the information set forth in Attachment B accompanying this policy.

F. A person who operates a type III vehicle and who sustains a conviction as described in Section VII.C.1.g. (i.e., driving while impaired offenses), VII.C.1.h. (i.e., felony, controlled substance, criminal sexual conduct offenses, or offenses for surreptitious observation, indecent exposure, use of minor in a sexual performance, or possession of child pornography or display of pornography to a minor), or VII.C.1.i. (multiple moving violations) while employed by the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the school bus, shall report the conviction to the person’s employer within 10 days of the date of the conviction. The notification shall be in writing and shall contain all the information set forth in Attachment C accompanying this policy.

G. Route Assignments

The school district may assign or reassign a bus driver to any routes the district so determines.

VI. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

A. Training

1. All new school bus drivers shall be provided with pre-service training, including in-vehicle (actual driving) instruction, before transporting students and shall meet the competency testing specified in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual. All school bus drivers shall receive in-service training annually. For purposes of this section, “annually” means at least once every 380 days from the initial or previous evaluation and at least once every 380 days from the initial or previous license verification. The school district shall retain on file an annual individual school bus driver “evaluation certification” form for each school district driver as contained in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.

[Note: The Model School Bus Driver Training Manual is available online through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Patrol web page.]
2. All bus drivers operating a type III vehicle will be provided with annual training and certification as set forth in Section VII.C.1.b., below, by either the school district or the entity from whom such services are contracted by the school district.

B. **Evaluation**

School bus drivers with a Class D license will be evaluated annually and all other bus drivers will be assessed periodically for the following competencies:

1. Safely operate the type of school bus the driver will be driving;

2. Understand student behavior, including issues relating to students with disabilities;

3. Ensure orderly conduct of students on the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately;

4. Know and understand relevant laws, rules of the road, and local school bus safety policies;

5. Handle emergency situations; and

6. Safely load and unload students.

The evaluation must include completion of an individual “school bus driver evaluation form” (road test evaluation) as contained in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.

[Note: The school district may use alternative assessments rather than those set forth in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual for bus driver training competencies with the approval of the Commissioner of Public Safety. A driver also may receive at least 8 hours of school bus in-service training in any year as an alternative to being assessed for bus driver competencies after the initial year of being assessed for bus driver competencies.]

**VII. OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES**

A. **General Operating Rules**

1. School buses shall be operated in accordance with state traffic and school bus safety laws and the procedures contained in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.

[Note: The Model School Bus Driver Training Manual is available online through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Patrol web page.]
2. Only students assigned to the school bus by the school district shall be transported. The number of students or other authorized passengers transported in a school bus shall not be more than the legal capacity for the bus. No person shall be allowed to stand when the bus is in motion.

3. The parent/guardian may designate, pursuant to school district policy, a day care facility, respite care facility, the residence of a relative, or the residence of a person chosen by the parent or guardian as the address of the student for transportation purposes. The address must be in the attendance area of the assigned school and meet all other eligibility requirements.

4. Bus drivers must minimize, to the extent practical, the idling of school bus engines and exposure of children to diesel exhaust fumes.

5. To the extent practical, the school district will designate school bus loading/unloading zones at a sufficient distance from school air-intake systems to avoid diesel fumes from being drawn into the systems.

   [Note: A school district is not required to comply with Section VII.A.5. if the school board determines that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety, or are not cost effective.]

6. A bus driver may not operate a school bus while communicating over, or otherwise operating, a cellular phone for personal reasons, whether hand-held or hands free, when the vehicle is in motion. For purposes of this paragraph, “school bus” has the meaning given in Minn. Stat. § 169.011, Subd. 71. In addition, “school bus” also includes type III vehicles when driven by employees or agents of the school district. “Cellular phone” means a cellular, analog, wireless, or digital telephone capable of sending or receiving telephone or text messages without an access line for service.

B. Type III Vehicles

1. Type III vehicles are restricted to passenger cars, station wagons, vans, and buses having a maximum manufacturer’s rated seating capacity of 10 or fewer people including the driver and a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less. A van or bus converted to a seating capacity of 10 or fewer and placed in service on or after August 1, 1999, must have been originally manufactured to comply with the passenger safety standards.

2. Type III vehicles must be painted a color other than national school bus yellow.

3. Type III vehicles shall be state inspected in accordance with legal requirements.
4. A type III vehicle cannot be older than 12 years old unless excepted by state and federal law.

5. If a type III vehicle is school district owned, the school district name will be clearly marked on the side of the vehicle. The type III vehicle must not have the words “school bus” in any location on the exterior of the vehicle or in any interior location visible to a motorist.

6. A “type III vehicle” must not be outwardly equipped and identified as a type A, B, C, or D bus.

7. Eight-lamp warning systems and stop arms must not be installed or used on type III vehicles.

8. Type III vehicles must be equipped with mirrors as required by law.

9. Any type III vehicle may not stop traffic and may not load or unload before making a complete stop and disengaging gears by shifting into neutral or park. Any type III vehicle used to transport students must not load or unload so that a student has to cross the road, except where not possible or impractical, then the driver or assistant must escort a student across the road. If the driver escorts the student across the road, then the motor must be stopped, the ignition key removed, the brakes set, and the vehicle otherwise rendered immobile.

10. Any type III vehicle used to transport students must carry emergency equipment including:

   a. Fire extinguisher. A minimum of one 10BC rated dry chemical type fire extinguisher is required. The extinguisher must be mounted in a bracket, and must be located in the driver’s compartment and be readily accessible to the driver and passengers. A pressure indicator is required and must be easily read without removing the extinguisher from its mounted position.

   b. First aid kit and body fluids cleanup kit. A minimum of a 10-unit first aid kit and a body fluids cleanup kit is required. They must be contained in removable, moisture- and dust-proof containers mounted in an accessible place within the driver’s compartment and must be marked to indicate their identity and location.

   c. Passenger cars and station wagons may carry a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, and warning triangles in the trunk or trunk area of the vehicle if a label in the driver and front passenger area clearly indicates the location of these items.
11. Students will not be regularly transported in private vehicles that are not state inspected as type III vehicles. Only emergency, unscheduled transportation may be conducted in vehicles with a seating capacity of 10 or fewer without meeting the requirements for a type III vehicle. Also, parents may use a private vehicle to transport their own children under a contract with the district. The school district has no system of inspection for private vehicles.

12. All drivers of type III vehicles will be licensed drivers and will be familiar with the use of required emergency equipment. The school district will not knowingly allow a person to operate a type III vehicle if the person has been convicted of an offense that disqualifies the person from operating a school bus.

13. Type III vehicles will be equipped with child passenger restraints, and child passenger restraints will be utilized to the extent required by law.

C. Type III Vehicle Driven by Employees with a Driver’s License Without a School Bus Endorsement

1. The holder of a Class A, B, C, or D driver’s license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a type III vehicle, described above, under the following conditions:

   a. The operator is an employee of the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the school bus, which may include the school district.

   b. The operator’s employer, which may include the school district, has adopted and implemented a policy that provides for annual training and certification of the operator in:

      (1) safe operation of a type III vehicle;

      (2) understanding student behavior, including issues relating to students with disabilities;

      (3) encouraging orderly conduct of students on the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately;
knowing and understanding relevant laws, rules of the road, and local school bus safety policies;

handling emergency situations;

proper use of seat belts and child safety restraints;

performance of pretrip vehicle inspections;

safe loading and unloading of students, including, but not limited to:

(a) utilizing a safe location for loading and unloading students at the curb, on the nontraffic side of the roadway, or at off-street loading areas, driveways, yards, and other areas to enable the student to avoid hazardous conditions;

(b) refraining from loading and unloading students in a vehicular traffic lane, on the shoulder, in a designated turn lane, or a lane adjacent to a designated turn lane;

(c) avoiding a loading or unloading location that would require a student to cross a road, or ensuring that the driver or an aide personally escort the student across the road if it is not reasonably feasible to avoid such a location;

(d) placing the type III vehicle in “park” during loading and unloading;

(e) escorting a student across the road under clause (c) only after the motor is stopped, the ignition key is removed, the brakes are set, and the vehicle is otherwise rendered immobile; and

compliance with paragraph V.F. concerning reporting convictions to the employer within 10 days of the date of conviction.

c. A background check or background investigation of the operator has been conducted that meets the requirements under Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, Subd. 8, or Minn. Stat. § 123B.03 for school district employees; Minn. Stat. § 144.057 or Minn. Stat. Ch. 245C for daycare employees; or Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 3, for all
Appendix G: 709L Student Transportation Safety Policy | Page 167

other persons operating a type III vehicle under this section.

d. Operators shall submit to a physical examination as required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 2.

e. The operator’s employer requires preemployment drug testing of applicants for operator positions. Current operators must comply with the employer’s policy under Minn. Stat. § 181.951, Subds. 2, 4, and 5. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the operator’s employer may use a breathalyzer or similar device to fulfill random alcohol testing requirements.

f. The operator’s driver’s license is verified annually by the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the type III vehicle as required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 5.

g. A person who sustains a conviction, as defined under Minn. Stat. § 609.02, of violating Minn. Stat. § 169A.25, § 169A.26, § 169A.27 (driving while impaired offenses), or § 169A.31 (alcohol-related school bus driver offenses), or whose driver’s license is revoked under Minn. Stat. §§ 169A.50 to 169A.53 of the implied consent law, or who is convicted of violating or whose driver’s license is revoked under a similar statute or ordinance of another state, is precluded from operating a type III vehicle for 5 years from the date of conviction.

h. A person who has ever been convicted of a disqualifying offense as defined in Minn. Stat. § 171.3215, Subd.1(c), (i.e., felony, controlled substance, criminal sexual conduct offenses, or offenses for surreptitious observation, indecent exposure, use of minor in a sexual performance, or possession of child pornography or display of pornography to a minor) may not operate a type III vehicle.

i. A person who sustains a conviction, as defined under Minn. Stat. § 609.02, of a moving offense in violation of Minn. Stat. Ch. 169 within 3 years of the first of 3 other moving offenses is precluded from operating a type III vehicle for 1 year from the date of the last conviction.

j. Students riding the type III vehicle must have training required under Minn. Stat. § 123B.90, Subd. 2 (See Section II.B., above).

k. Documentation of meeting the requirements listed in this section must be maintained under separate file at the business location for each type III vehicle operator. The school district or any other entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the type III vehicle
operating under this section is responsible for maintaining these files for inspection.


3. An employee of the school district who is not employed for the sole purpose of operating a type III vehicle may, in the discretion of the school district, be exempt from paragraphs VII.C.1.d. (physical examination) and VII.C.1.e. (drug testing), above.

D. Type A-I “Activity” Buses Driven by Employees with a Driver’s License Without a School Bus Endorsement

1. The holder of a Class D driver’s license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a type A-I school bus or a Multifunction School Activity Bus (MFSAB) under the following conditions:
   a. The operator is an employee of the school district or an independent contractor with whom the school district contracts for the school bus and is not solely hired to provide transportation services under this paragraph.
   b. The operator drives the school bus only from points of origin to points of destination, not including home-to-school trips to pick up or drop off students.
   c. The operator is prohibited from using the 8-light system if the vehicle is so equipped.
   d. The operator has submitted to a background check and physical examination as required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 2.
   e. The operator has a valid driver’s license and has not sustained a conviction of a disqualifying offense as set forth in Minn. Stat. § 171.02, Subd. 2a(h) - 2a(j).
   f. The operator has been trained in the proper use of child safety restraints as set forth in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s “Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses,” if child safety restraints are used by passengers, in addition to the training required in Section VI., above.
   g. The bus has a gross vehicle weight rating of 14,500 pounds or less and is designed to transport 15 or fewer passengers, including the
driver.

2. The school district shall maintain annual certification of the requirements listed in this section for each Class D license operator.

3. A school bus operated under this section must bear a current certificate of inspection.

4. The word “School” on the front and rear of the bus must be covered by a sign that reads “Activities” when the bus is being operated under authority of this section.

VIII. SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A. If possible, school bus drivers or their supervisors shall call “911” or the local emergency phone number in the event of a serious emergency.

B. School bus drivers shall meet the emergency training requirements contained in Unit III “Crash & Emergency Preparedness” of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual. This includes procedures in the event of a crash (accident).

[Note: The Model School Bus Driver Training Manual is available online through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Patrol web page.]

C. School bus drivers and bus assistants for special education students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition shall be trained in basic first aid procedures, shall within 1 month after the effective date of assignment participate in a program of in-service training on the proper methods for dealing with the specific needs and problems of students with disabilities, assist students with disabilities on and off the bus when necessary for their safe ingress and egress from the bus; and ensure that protective safety devices are in use and fastened properly.

D. Emergency Health Information shall be maintained on the school bus for students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition. The information shall state:

1. the student’s name and address;

2. the nature of the student’s disabilities;

3. emergency health care information; and

4. the names and telephone numbers of the student’s physician, parents, guardians, or custodians, and some person other than the student’s parents
or custodians who can be contacted in case of an emergency.

IX. SCHOOL DISTRICT VEHICLE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

A. All school vehicles shall be maintained in safe operating conditions through a systematic preventive maintenance and inspection program adopted or approved by the school district.

B. All school vehicles shall be state inspected in accordance with legal requirements.

C. A copy of the current daily pre-trip inspection report must be carried in the bus. Daily pre-trip inspections shall be maintained on file in accordance with the school district’s record retention schedule. Prompt reports of defects to be immediately corrected will be submitted.

D. Daily post-trip inspections shall be performed to check for any children or lost items remaining on the bus and for vandalism.

X. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DIRECTOR

The school board has designated an individual to serve as the school district’s school transportation safety director. The school transportation safety director shall have day-to-day responsibility for student transportation safety, including transportation of nonpublic school children when provided by the school district. The school transportation safety director will assure that this policy is periodically reviewed to ensure that it conforms to law. The school transportation safety director shall certify annually to the school board that each school bus driver meets the school bus driver training competencies required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 4. The transportation safety director also shall annually verify or ensure that the private contractor utilized by the school has verified the validity of the driver’s license of each employee who regularly transports students for the school district in a type A, B, C, or D school bus, type III vehicle, or MFSAB with the National Driver Register or the Department of Public Safety. Upon request of the school district superintendent or the superintendent of the school district where nonpublic students are transported, the school transportation safety director also shall certify to the superintendent that students have received school bus safety training in accordance with state law. The name, address and telephone number of the school transportation safety director are on file in the school district office. Any questions regarding student transportation or this policy may be addressed to the school transportation safety director.
XI. STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE

The school board may establish a student transportation safety committee. The chair of the student transportation safety committee is the school district’s school transportation safety director. The school board shall appoint the other members of the student transportation safety committee. Membership may include parents, school bus drivers, representatives of school bus companies, local law enforcement officials, other school district staff, and representatives from other units of local government.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, Subd. 8 (Board to Issue Licenses)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.03 (Background Check)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.42 (Textbooks; Individual Instructor or Cooperative Learning Material; Standard Tests)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.88 (Independent School Districts; Transportation)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.885 (Diesel School Buses; Operation of Engine; Parking)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.90 (School Bus Safety Training)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.91 (School District Bus Safety Responsibilities)
- Minn. Stat. § 144.057 (Background Studies on Licensees and Other Personnel)
- Minn. Stat. Ch. 169 (Traffic Regulations)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.011, Subds. 15, 16, and 71 (Definitions)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.02 (Scope)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.443 (Safety of School Children; Bus Driver’s Duties)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.446, Subd. 2 (Driver Training Programs)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.451 (Inspecting School and Head Start Buses; Rules; Misdemeanor)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.454 (Type III Vehicle Standards)
- Minn. Stat. § 169.4582 (Reportable Offense on School Buses)
- Minn. Stat. §§ 169A.25-169A.27 (Driving While Impaired)
- Minn. Stat. § 169A.31 (Alcohol-Related School Bus or Head Start Bus Driving)
- Minn. Stat. § 171.02, Subds. 2, 2a, and 2b (Licenses; Types, Endorsements, Restrictions)
- Minn. Stat. § 171.168 (Notification of Conviction for Violation by a Commercial Driver)
- Minn. Stat. § 171.169 (Notification of Suspension of License of Commercial Driver)
- Minn. Stat. § 171.321 (Qualifications of School Bus Driver)
- Minn. Stat. § 171.3215, Subd. 1(c) (Canceling Bus Endorsement for Certain Offenses)
Minn. Stat. §181.951 (Authorized Drug and Alcohol Testing) Minn. Stat. Ch. 245C (Human Services Background Studies) Minn. Stat. § 609.02 (Definitions) 
Minn. Rules Parts 7470.1000-7470.1700 (School Bus Inspection) 
49 C.F.R. § 383.31 (Notification of Convictions for Driver Violations) 
49 C.F.R. § 383.33 (Notification of Driver’s License Suspensions) 
49 C.F.R. § 383.5 (Transportation Definitions) 

Cross References: 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 416 (Drug and Alcohol Testing) 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline) 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records) 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 707 (Transportation of Public Students) 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 708 (Transportation of Nonpublic Students) 
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 710 (Extracurricular Transportation)
533L WELLNESS

[Note: All school districts that receive funding from the federal school lunch program are required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (“the Act”) to have a Wellness Policy that includes nutrition guidelines, goals for nutrition education, and physical activity to promote student wellness. The Act requires the involvement of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the wellness policy. The Act also requires a plan for measuring implementation of the policy and the designation of at least one person charged with operational responsibility for ensuring the school district is in compliance with the policy. The Act provides for technical assistance and information from the Secretary of Agriculture to aid state and local educational agencies and school food authorities in establishing healthy school nutrition environments, reducing childhood obesity, and preventing diet-related chronic diseases.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The school board recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.

B. The school environment should promote and protect students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.

C. The school district encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.

D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
E. All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

1. Most foods and beverages made available on campus (including concessions and a la carte cafeteria items) will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines. The school food service staff will work to:
   - Attractively offer fruits and vegetables daily
   - Limit “seconds” on entrees and encourage consumption of fruits, vegetables and breads
   - Offer a variety of choices with an emphasis on healthier options
   - Include more whole grain foods
   - Make available a healthy afternoon snack for purchase by students before sports events

3. The New York Mills School District will adhere to the following specific guidelines for foods and beverages sold or provided separately from the reimbursable school lunch program:

   **Food:**
   Foods and beverages offered over the course of a school week should be nutrient-dense, including whole grain products and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables to provide students a variety of choices to maintain a balanced diet.

   If a la carte foods are available, they will include a variety of choices of nutritious foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat or non-fat dairy foods.

   Foods with a high sugar content (candies, desserts) or with high fat (fried foods, fatty meats, cheeses) content will be available on a limited basis and will be limited in portion size (see appendix A).
The New York Mills School District will encourage healthy choices as classroom snacks. A list of healthy snack choices will be made available to all staff and parents.

**Beverages:**
Milk (preferable low-fat), flavored milk, water, beverages containing 100% fruit juice, and sports drinks may be sold or provided on school grounds both immediately prior to and throughout the instructional day. Carbonated soda beverages will not be available to elementary school students during the instructional day except under special circumstances.

**Concessions:**
Concessions are encouraged to review their food choices on a regular basis. Where possible, healthier options will be added to the menu. Concessions will work to:
- Use more whole grain breads (bun, pizza crusts)
- Replace fried chips with baked chips
- Minimize the sale of candy by adjusting offerings and price
- Encourage the sale of water by adjusting price
- Add healthier options such as trail mix
- Lower the fat content by adjusting portion size or type of offering

**Vending:**
No carbonated beverage vending machines will be on before or during the instructional day. Carbonated beverage machines will be turned on after school. Vending machines containing water, juice, milk and sports drinks will be available all day.

The school district will work towards eliminating the candy vending machine by replacing it with a second healthy snack machine.

**Fundraising:**
The New York Mills School District will encourage the use of non-food items or nutritious foods as fund-raising choices.

4. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.

5. The school district will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

6. The school district will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
7. **All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food borne illness in school. For the safety and security of the food and staff, access to the food service operations are limited to food service staff and authorized personnel.**

8. **Advertising of foods or beverages in the areas accessible to students during meal times must be consistent with established nutrition environment standards.**

9. The school district will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat **in a pleasant dining environment. The minimum eating time will be 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch. Lunch periods are scheduled as close to the middle of the school day as possible.**

10. The school district will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

B. **School Food Service Program/Personnel**

1. The school district will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.

2. The school district shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school district’s food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

3. As part of the school district’s responsibility to operate a food service program, the school district will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools.

4. **For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations is limited to food service staff and authorized personnel.**
C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school district will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:

   a. offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

   b. part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and

   c. enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.

2. The New York Mills School District follows the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and Graduation Requirements that state that “… in grades K-8 health instruction must be given each year or by district-determined grade bands. Grades 9-12 instruction must be provided to all students at least once in both areas (health and phys ed.).”

3. The New York Mills School District will implement a comprehensive curriculum approach to nutrition in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. All instructional staff will be encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into lesson plans where appropriate. These nutritional themes include, but are not limited to:

   *Knowledge of the Food Guide Pyramid  *Dietary Guidelines for Americans
   *Sources & Variety of Foods  *Reading Food Labels
   *Diet and Disease  *Understanding Calories
   *Healthy Snacks  *Food Safety/Sanitation
   *Identifying Foods of Low Nutrient Density  *Major Nutrients
   *Serving Sizes  *Healthy Heart Choices

4. The New York Mills School District will encourage the use of nutrition-related posters, cartoons, printed educational materials and multi-media educational materials throughout the school campus to promote and educate students on healthy eating choices.

5. The New York Mills School District will ensure that students receive nutrition messages throughout the school that are consistent and reinforce each other.
6. The New York Mills School District will encourage all students to make age-appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, fundraising events, concession stands, and student stores.

7. Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;

2. Supervised unstructured active play, commonly referred to as recess is offered daily for all students Pre-K–6. Recess is in addition to a student's physical education class and not substituted for physical education class. Recess and other physical activity shall not be routinely taken away as a form of discipline unless doing so is directly related to a student's behavior. Proper equipment and a safe area are designated for recess.

3. School personnel will not use physical activity as a punishment (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold physical education class from students as a punishment during the instructional day.

4. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and

5. Physical Education staff will be encouraged to begin fitness or activity logging to assist students in interpreting their personal attainments and compare them to national physical activity recommendations.

6. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

7. Students will be given age-appropriate opportunities for physical activity before and after school by making available the weight/exercise room and the gym as appropriate.
8. The New York Mills School District will encourage parents to support their children’s participation in physical activity.

E. Communications with Parents

1. The school district recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children’s health and well-being.

2. The New York Mills School District will encourage parents’ efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for children by providing nutrition educational materials to parents. Materials may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the district website, articles and information provided in school newsletters and any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.

3. The New York Mills School District will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value. A copy of the nutritional guidelines developed in this policy will be made available to parents on the district website and in a printed format.

4. The school district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents’ efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

5. Healthy eating and physical activity will be actively promoted to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at registration, parent meetings, Open Houses, Health Fairs, teacher in-services, etc.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

A. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school district. The Wellness committee will be responsible for implementing the plan.

B. School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance within the school’s food service areas and will report to the food service program administrator, the building principal, or the superintendent’s designee, as appropriate.

C. The school district’s food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the superintendent setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures
for selection of all foods made available through the reimbursable school lunch (and Breakfast) program on campus.

D. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and will provide an annual report of the school district’s compliance with the policy to the school board.

E. The school district will post this wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.

Legal References:
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.215 (Local School District Wellness Policy)
- 7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
- 7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
- 7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources:
- Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
- Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
- County Health Departments
- Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org