

# Safe Routes to School: Creating an Action Plan

## Instructions

Please read these instructions before completing the Action Plan (Template Begins on Page 9).

**Creating the Action Plan is the first step in the application process** for Oregon Safe Routes to School funding, for both Infrastructure (engineering) and Non-Infrastructure (education and outreach, enforcement and evaluation) projects and activities for schools serving any grades from kindergarten up to 8th grade.

Please review the following websites for helpful resources

<https://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/>

<https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>

<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/>

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/community/to\\_school.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/community/to_school.cfm)

### Who develops the Action Plan?

The Action Plan is created through a team-based process. With the conclusions drawn from the collected information, the team will be able to recommend priority projects and activities that the school, municipality and community can advance to promote safe walking and bicycling to school.

The template begins on Page 9.

### SECTION 1: School information (for schools K-8)

The Plan is site-specific for your project. This section includes basic information about the school, including location, enrollment, and contact information for the Safe Routes to School Action Plan.

### SECTION 2: Forming the School Team

The team is made up of a minimum of *three key partners*: the school principal; a parent who represents or has the endorsement of the school parent organization; and city, county or state staff representing the local road authority. An additional member should be a member of the local traffic safety committee, if one exists.

Additional community partners, whose backgrounds and affiliations represent a wide range of interests and expertise related to SRTS, should be included later in the planning process:

School representatives – PTA/PTO/site council member; principal and/or other school staff such as nurse and/or PE teacher; students; district transportation coordinator; district facilities management *especially* if school property/buildings/maintenance will be an issue; school board member; safety patrol coordinator; bus driver; school crossing guard; etc.

Local government -- Council or commission member; transportation or traffic engineer; public works representative; traffic safety committee member; local planner; law enforcement, emergency medical services or fire department; bicycle/pedestrian advisory committee; municipal or regional transit agency if applicable; etc.

Community representatives -- neighborhood or community association members; chamber of commerce or business associations; bicycle/pedestrian advocates; public health professionals; local stakeholder community groups and non-profit organizations; rail, trucking industry

representatives, if applicable; media or marketing representative; etc

### SECTION 3: Assessing the modes of student travel

There are a variety of possible activities that have provided past grant recipients with valuable information about the ability of students to walk and bike to and from school. These are the assessments required for the Oregon process:

- Mapping
- Walking and biking the routes within 1 mile of the elementary school (1.5 miles of the middle school)
- Surveying students and parents

Note: additional support information may be needed to support the projects proposed in your Infrastructure Application (e.g., traffic counts, crash data, speed studies, etc). The team should rely upon the recommendations of local experts to determine what information may be needed.

#### Mapping

To understand the conditions around or on the school property, bring the team together to a mapping and brainstorming session where they can give input on conditions and possible solutions, in addition to helping to determine the best current and/or future routes (within one mile walking distance from residential neighborhoods to the elementary school, 1.5 miles of the middle school).

In preparation for the session, work with your school district and/or the local public works department to create **scatter maps** that indicate concentrations of where students live. Scatter maps provide useful information about the numbers of students living within the quarter-mile, half-mile, one-mile, and two-mile distances from the school site. They also bring forward where students live in relation to physical barriers (e.g., state highway, local roads, bridges, train tracks), shopping and food outlets, playing fields and community centers.

You may wish to include others who understand the travel habits of the students, such as the school crossing guards, law enforcement, school bus drivers, and other parents and students.

City maps may be found at: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TDATA/gis/CityMaps.shtml>

Maps may also be found at your school district website; Google.com; earth.google.com; Yahoo.com; Mapquest.com; or from your local public works department. **Please include copies of the maps as a supplement to this Plan.**

#### Walk and Bike Assessment

Once the team completes the mapping exercise, the team should walk and/or bike the routes to identify physical barriers. The team may want to follow their own format in assessing the “walkability” and the “bikeability” of the immediate school neighborhoods, or they may wish to use the linked checklists:

##### Walkability Checklist

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/collateral/PSAP%20Training/gettraining\\_references\\_walkabilitychecklist.pdf](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/collateral/PSAP%20Training/gettraining_references_walkabilitychecklist.pdf)

##### Bikability Checklist

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/bikeability\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/bikeability_checklist.pdf)

Concentrate on streets you believe are critical to walking or bicycling to school, including parks, bike lanes, walkways or trails, and other public right-of-way facilities if they are or could

be used by students to travel to and from school.

**Walkability questions to consider:** Are the sidewalks, paths and/or trails on school property connected to logical residential neighborhood access points? Is there room to walk? Are there sidewalks, or shoulders where there were no sidewalks? Are you able to cross safely where you can see and be seen by drivers? Does it feel safe to walk? Can students safely and conveniently reach unlocked school entry doors from these locations?

### **SECTION 3: Assessing the modes of student travel, continued**

**Pedestrian safety questions to consider:** Does the school provide safety information and/or participate in events that promote safe walking and physical activity such as International Walk and Bike to School Day or walk-a-thons? Is there pedestrian safety guidance given to students who cross with the School Patrol or Adult Crossing Guard?

**Bikeability questions to consider:** Do you have safe bicycle routes? Are there paths, trails, wide sidewalks, low-traffic streets, bike lanes or good shoulders to ride safely with traffic? Does it feel safe riding with traffic? How was the surface that you rode on? How were the intersections that you rode through?

**Bike safety and security questions to consider:** Are visibly-placed bicycle racks available to students at the school? Are there enough to accommodate an increase in bicycles? Can students easily and safely access them? Are they sheltered from the weather? Are bikes in a secure location? Are there opportunities for students to learn about bicycle safety? Are students involved in after-school bike clubs or teams? Is helmet use encouraged?

### **Data Collection**

It is vital to understand the travel patterns of the students at the school. An initial step in the assessment process will be to query the students and their parents about how their students arrive and depart from school. In order to collect consistent data, the Oregon SRTS Program has adopted two forms from the National Center for Safe Routes to School, the Student Travel Tally and the Parent Survey.

Detailed information and instructions for using the forms are found at <http://saferoutesdata.org/>

#### **Student Tally**

Teachers or volunteers will use this form to record specific information about how children arrive and depart from school. It is a hand-raise tally, conducted in each classroom (takes about 5-7 minutes to complete) for two days within one week (not on a Monday or Friday). The form for the tally can be downloaded from the National SRTS Program website:

[http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/SRTS\\_Two\\_Day\\_Tally.pdf](http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/SRTS_Two_Day_Tally.pdf)

If you need assistance in setting up an account, contact Heidi Manlove, Oregon SRTS Non-Infrastructure Program Manager, 503-986-4196. Once data is entered, a downloadable summary report is immediately available at the same site.

#### **Parent Survey**

The Parent Survey collects information about factors, beliefs and attitudes that affect parents' decisions about their children walking and bicycling to school. The survey results will help your Team determine how to improve opportunities for children to walk or bike to school. Not only will the collected information allow comparison with the student tally results, but parent

comments and identified concerns can lead to more involved discussion (potentially through focus groups) and evaluation (utilizing school team members such as from public works, health department, neighborhood associations, law enforcement).

For online and downloadable options of the Parent Survey, visit [http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/Parent\\_Survey\\_English.pdf](http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/Parent_Survey_English.pdf) and Spanish [http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/Parent\\_Survey\\_Spanish.pdf](http://saferoutesdata.org/downloads/Parent_Survey_Spanish.pdf) . For parent surveys in other languages please see [http://saferoutesdata.org/parentsurvey\\_otherlanguages.cfm](http://saferoutesdata.org/parentsurvey_otherlanguages.cfm) . If you need assistance in setting up an account, contact Heidi Manlove, Oregon SRTS Non-Infrastructure Program Manager, 503-986-4196. Once data is entered, a downloadable summary report is immediately available at the same site.

## **SECTION 3: Assessing the modes of student travel, continued**

### **Optional work to Section 3:**

#### **Additional Data Collection Activities**

*The following list includes other activities that have provided past grant recipients with valuable information about the ability of students to walk and bike to and from school. Please provide the results of any optional assessments conducted for the Plan.*

**Photographs and / or videos** – tell the story that students do walk and/or bike to and from school. Take pictures or footage during BOTH arrival and departure times at the school. Decide in advance where the best vantage points will be to shoot the pictures to capture the representative images. Record locations and street directions, time of day, date. Present the pictures in an order that confirms your narrative and tells the story.

#### **Interviews**

School patrol or adult crossing guards; pupil transportation providers (school bus drivers, bus dispatchers); local law enforcement; local traffic or roadway engineer's familiar with the transportation system around the school

#### **Observational survey**

The School Team may wish to confirm the results of the Student Tally or may wish to do actual on-site observations of how students arrive and leave school.

This is a simple “tick mark” tally done by volunteer observers with clipboard and survey sheet at these areas:

- the school's bike rack area, if one exists
- at the crosswalks or pathways adjacent to the school
- at the bus and/or auto pick-up/drop-off area.

It is recommended that observations be made at least 15 minutes before the start of school until ten minutes after the bell rings. Reverse the process for after school. The observers record tick marks for each student observed as a Walker, Bicyclist, Other (for scooter, skateboard, in-line skates, wheelchairs), school or public bus rider, or motor vehicle rider. This should be repeated the same day at the end of school when children are leaving. Make sure the survey is dated, location noted, weather conditions noted, and the time periods of the survey.

This could be conducted for at least two days during a single week, not on Monday or Friday. The street assessments may bring up questions about the motoring environment on certain streets.

**Traffic volume counts, posted speeds and actual speeds** may be obtained from law enforcement or the local public works department to track motorist speeds and monitor traffic volume counts.

**Traffic crash data** may be obtained from your local public works department or the ODOT Transportation Safety Division Traffic Records Program. Crash data may also be available from your local law enforcement agency.

**Crosswalk information** may also be obtained from the School Safety Supervisor, school patrol members or adult crossing guards.

## SECTION 4: Summarizing the findings

Using the information gathered in Section 3, it is now time for the School Team to analyze the collected maps, walking and biking audits and survey evaluation results to identify the barriers and hazards to children walking and bicycling to the school. Include:

- A list of physical barriers and hazards. (Examples: broken and uneven sidewalks; overgrown vegetation; narrow gravel shoulders and no bike lane or sidewalk on approach to school; in crosswalk from school, left or right-turn conflicts when pedestrians have the signal; school parking lot needs better pedestrian flow; bike racks in bad shape, not enough...)
- Evidence that there are households with students enrolled at the school who live within the mile walking distance for elementary school, or the 1.5 mile distance for middle school, who will benefit from proposed infrastructure enhancements. (Examples: printed scatter map, a map with hand-applied stickers showing enrolled students, correspondence from Pupil Transportation regarding households within the catchment area of school, etc.)
- A list of education/encouragement/enforcement barriers and hazards. (Examples: no crossing guard or school patrol at crosswalk across busy street; traffic exceeds 20 mph of school zone; walkable neighborhoods but parents prefer to drive students to school; no pedestrian safety information provided at school; no local enforcement.)

## SECTION 5: Identifying the solutions and creating the Action Plan

Now that the issues have been identified, the School Team is ready to recommend solutions that make up the Action Plan. The expertise of the different School Team members and other interested parties and stakeholders will be especially valuable.

Careful consideration must be given for each SRTS component:

- *Engineering* – Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways. Engineering strategies are best used in conjunction with the remaining E's. Engineers typically like problem statements, not solutions. Your team identifies the problems; let the professionals suggest operational fixes.

*Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center*

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pdf/Community\\_SRTSstate\\_SafetyBasedPrioritization.PDF](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pdf/Community_SRTSstate_SafetyBasedPrioritization.PDF)

*Safe Routes to School National Partnership*

<https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/resources/browse/active-transportation>



<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/index.cfm>

- *Education* – Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, proper walking and bicycling behaviors, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.  
(Resource: the Oregon Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/> and the National Center for Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>.  
<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/education/index.cfm>
- *Encouragement* – Creating events, activities and ongoing programs to promote walking and bicycling and providing safe opportunities for parents and students to travel together and inspire each other.  
(Resource: the Oregon SRTS webpage, [www.oregonsaferoutes.org](http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/) ; at the national level, the National Center for Safe Routes to School  
<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/encouragement/index.cfm> and Safe Routes to School National Partnership <https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>

*Enforcement* – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed within the 2-mile vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians and bicyclists on the road and in crossings) and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.

(Resource: visit the Oregon Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/> for local examples; visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School webpage, <http://apps.saferoutesinfo.org/lawenforcement/> .  
<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/enforcement/index.cfm>

- *Evaluation* – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s).  
(Resource: visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School website  
<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/evaluation/index.cfm>

Guidance on the 5 E's is available online from the National Center for Safe Routes to School, <a href="http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm">http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm</a>
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## SECTION 6: Submitting the Action Plan

Submit this completed document and all supplemental materials along with the Application for the Oregon Safe Routes to School Funding.

### Implementation

Now that the School Team has completed and submitted the Action Plan, it is time to take action.

The process through which the Action Plan was created has given your new Safe Routes to School Task Force a chance to find out what resources and stakeholders are available to help achieve success. Even before your application is reviewed and possibly funded, there are undoubtedly activities that can begin immediately using existing staff, volunteers and resources.

In addition, the Safe Routes to School funds currently available from the federal government are most likely not enough by themselves to solve all of the needs of every Oregon community. They are intended to be a catalyst to build relationships, complete demonstration projects and show success, which will then inspire communities to find other resources.

Below are some of the tactics other communities have used to start a program without a large budget, or before acquiring dedicated Safe Routes to School funding:

### **Engineering**

While there may be large projects that need to be funded, there are certainly smaller projects and activities that can be done without major funding. In fact, Safe Routes to School practitioners have found that it is often the smaller projects that can lead to early success, since they do not require lengthy planning and design phases, and can be integrated into a short program timeline.

Examples include: curb and crosswalk striping, minor repairs, pruning, signage, walking/biking route maps, arrival/departure improvements, bike racks, advanced limit lines, school zone changes, etc.

Various resources may already be accessible through local and state agencies. If agency staff are members of the School Team, they may have already offered help with certain projects.

Sometimes it is a matter of the “squeaky wheel getting the grease.” Some projects may have already been planned, but just need to be fast-tracked.

*(Resource: visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/search-resources> and search the keyword, “engineering.”)*

### **Encouragement**

If physical improvements are needed before children can safely walk or bike to school on a particular route, promote and/or organize fun walking and biking activities before, during or after school right on the school grounds or to/from an area nearby. These events and activities will help build excitement for walking and biking, so that when physical improvements are completed, there will be a ready audience of users.

Encouragement events will provide opportunities for students, parents and others to better understand local conditions, and to experiment with route options. This information can be used to develop a system of routes which can help define where engineering and enforcement work should take place. Maps can be created and made public when improvements are made.

Many parent barriers to walking and biking are based on personal safety, convenience and time. Also, with the rise in childhood obesity, walking and biking to school can be promoted as a solution to an inactive lifestyle. Encouragement activities are ideal for addressing these issues, in addition to creating community cohesiveness by bringing parents and neighbors together to help walk or bike kids to and from school. There is safety in numbers, especially when kids are accompanied by a trusted parent or other adult volunteer.

*(Resource: for examples of local encouragement, visit the Oregon SRTS webpage, [www.oregonsaferoutes.org](http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org) , and at the national level, visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/search-resources> and search under the keyword, “encouragement.”)*

### **Education**

Classes or safety events such as bike rodeos, Safety Town, etc. are relatively inexpensive, and can be provided by school teachers, local volunteers or community groups such as bike clubs or university students, and by agencies such as police, health and fire departments.

Education events can also encourage students and parents to walk and bike to school.

(Resource: Oregon Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/> ; National Center for Safe Routes to School website, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>.)

### **Enforcement**

Local police officials who are members of the School Team may be able to provide police services, or even additional services to help the Safe Routes to School effort. They may also be able to tell you how to get services from their department, or may advocate for services on behalf of the School Team.

Police services may not need to be funded through the Oregon Safe Routes to School program, since they may already have a local dedicated funding source.

More information on the Safe Routes to School and the 5E's of Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation can be found on the National Safe Routes to School website: <http://apps.saferoutesinfo.org/lawenforcement/>



# Safe Routes to School: Creating an Action Plan Template

Note: This document can be protected to prevent unintended changes to the form. If you wish to protect the template, go to the Forms toolbar (under VIEW, Toolbars, check the Forms toolbar). On the Forms toolbar, click on the LOCK symbol to enable protection. Click on the LOCK symbol to remove the protection.

Date of Action Plan: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

## SECTION 1: School information

School name:					
Street address:					
City:		State:		ZIP:	
County:		School district:			
Type of school:	<input type="checkbox"/> Public school <input type="checkbox"/> Private school <input type="checkbox"/> Charter school				
School Web site (if any):					
Total student enrollment:		Grades served:			
Percentage of total enrollment for each grade:					
Contact for Action Plan:		Phone:			
E-mail:					

## SECTION 2: Forming the School Team

1. The key partners of the School Team are (Instructions, Page 1):

• School principal or designated school staff representative endorsed by the school district:	
• A parent who represents or has the endorsement of a recognized school/parent organization or site council:	
• City or county staff or representative endorsed by the local road authority: public works, planner, roadway engineer, etc.	
• Member of the local traffic safety committee (if one exists):	

2. Identify all other participants of the School Team (Instructions, Page 1):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School or district representation: facilities, maintenance, pupil transportation, etc.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local government representation: council, commission, planner, law enforcement, EMS or fire department, bike/pedestrian advisory committee, transit agency, etc.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community representation: neighborhood association, chamber of commerce or business association, bike/ped advocates, public health, community groups, non-profit organizations, rail, trucking industry, media, marketing, etc.</li></ul>	

**SECTION 3: Assessing the modes of student travel**

1. Briefly describe the school attendance area. Boundary maps may be available from the school district or can be downloaded and printed from the school website. If available, please include as supplemental information:

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2. What is the school or the school district policy regarding students' mode of travel to school? Is there a "preferred method of travel" recommended by the school or the district's pupil transportation office? Are there any travel modes not allowed? Why?

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3. Does the school have a Supplemental Plan in place that allows students to be bused to school who live within the mile walking distance of the elementary school, or 1.5 miles for the middle school? If so, what are the health or safety reasons for the Plan?

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4. ☐ Mapping and brainstorming session held. Include copies of maps, including Scatter Maps, with Action Plan write-up.

We identified (check the statements that apply):

- ☐ the residential areas where students are known to walk and/or bike, within the one mile walking distance for elementary students or 1.5 mile distance for middle school students.
- ☐ the routes taken by students to and from school.
- ☐ the difficult street crossings and discussed possible alternate routes.
- ☐ off-road paths that are available for walking/biking to school.
- ☐ areas where School Patrol or Adult Crossing Guard assistance occurs or where it could be beneficial if provided.
- ☐ streets where heavy traffic congestion may be hazardous to walking and/or biking.
- ☐ the areas where School Bus transportation is available.
- ☐ the areas where Supplemental Busing for hazardous busing is available.
- ☐ the arrival/departure zone (for bus, staff and parent vehicles) and how the flow of traffic influenced the safety and convenience of students walking and biking to school.

5. We walked (or biked) around the routes students take to and from school (see Instructions, Page 3.):

- a. What generalizations may be drawn from the information gathered on the “walkability” of the area around the school site?

- b. In what ways does the school promote pedestrian safety?

- c. What generalizations may be drawn from the information gathered on the “bikeability” of the area around the school site?.

- d. Evaluate the bicycle facilities provided for the students’ use:

- e. In what ways does the school promote bicycle safety?

6. We conducted the In-Class Student Tally (see page 3 of Instructions) and this is how our students travel to and from school:

Travel Mode	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Public Transit	Other
% of Students							

7. We conducted the Parent Survey (see page 3 of Instructions).

Of the surveys that were returned, these are the TOP 5 Issues of parents whose students do NOT walk/bike to school:

- ☐ Distance
- ☐ Convenience of driving
- ☐ Time
- ☐ Before / after-school activities
- ☐ Traffic speed along route to school
- ☐ Traffic volume along route
- ☐ Adults to walk / bike with
- ☐ Sidewalks or pathways
- ☐ Safety of intersections & crossings
- ☐ Crossing guards
- ☐ Violence or crime
- ☐ Weather or climate

#### **Section 4: Summarizing the findings**

1. List the physical environmental barriers and hazards. (See Instructions, Page 5.)

2. List the education/encouragement/enforcement barriers and hazards.  
(See Instructions, Page 5.)

#### **Section 5: Identifying the solutions and making the Action Plan**

See Instructions, Pages 5-6, for details on how to complete this section, and consider the “Five E’s” in your response.

- A. List the physical improvements and possible strategies for implementation. Provide evidence that there are students who live within the proposed project area who will benefit from proposed improvements

- B. List the needed safety enforcement/educational/encouragement programs and possible strategies for improvement:

- C. Prioritize the strategies. Assign a time schedule for implementing these strategies. If there are areas earmarked for improvements, include maps identifying those areas:

## Section 6: Submitting the Action Plan

Submit this completed Action Plan Template and all supplemental materials including any optional collected information, along with the Safe Routes to School Application.

### Optional Assessments Page – Not Required

You may use this page to record additional information for the school team's use.

1. ☐ Pictures and/or video footage were taken to document the barriers and hazards.
2. If information was gathered by interviewing additional sources, check all that apply:
  - ☐ school patrol or crossing guard or safety supervisor
  - ☐ law enforcement
  - ☐ school bus driver or dispatcher
  - ☐ local roadway or traffic safety engineer
  - ☐ city or county planner

Highlight information learned:

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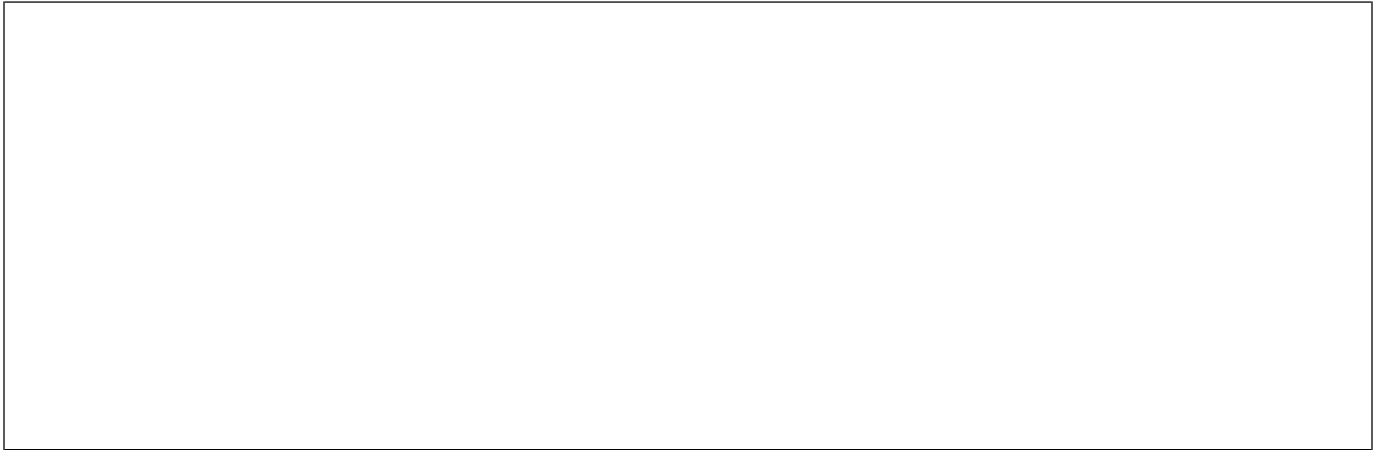
3. ☐ Check here if Observational Survey was completed.

This is how our students travel to and from school:

Travel Mode	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Public Transit	Other
# of Students							



4. Record any additional information gathered, such as traffic volume data, speed study data, etc.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for recording additional information gathered during a study, such as traffic volume data or speed study data.