

8604 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

SUPPORT FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Support for Active Transportation: The Rumson School District (“District”) supports active transportation, including walking and bicycling, to and from school. Walking, bicycling and other forms of active transportation not only save costs related to busing students, but they also allow students to engage in physical activity, which reduces the risk of obesity and related chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Physical activity also improves mental health, attendance, and academic performance. Further, replacing automobile trips with active commutes reduces one’s carbon footprint and decreases traffic congestion and air pollution, which is of particular benefit to students with asthma. Fewer automobile trips also reduce the risk of injury to students from collisions with automobiles.

SUPPORT FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

District supports Safe Routes to School programs and activities because active transportation can:

- Increase physical activity levels for students,
- Improve student health,
- Decrease automobile congestion related danger of injury to students,
- Reduce air pollution and related greenhouse gas emissions,
- Reduce costs related to busing, and
- Improve attendance rates and student achievement

District further supports efforts to increase participation in Safe Routes to School programs and activities in those schools with the fewest resources, and among low-income students, students with health challenges, and those with physical and mental disabilities.

ROLES OF DISTRICTS, SCHOOLS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS, AND STUDENTS

The roles of District, families, and students regarding travel to and from school are as follows:

- a. District/Schools.
The role of District and individual schools is to encourage safe travel to and from school, and particularly to encourage active transportation. Notwithstanding certain exceptions, District and individual schools assume no liability for injuries or other damages, including property damage, that may occur while a student is in transit to and from school.



b. Parents and Guardians.

The role of parents and guardians is to make informed decisions about which mode of transportation best suits their student in light of (i) the student's personality, age, maturity, physical and cognitive development, and decision-making abilities, and (ii) the street, traffic, crime, and other relevant conditions likely to be encountered by the student when traveling to and from school. Parents and guardians are legally responsible and otherwise accountable for their student's safety and well-being when the student is traveling to and from school.

c. Students.

The role of students is to be safe and responsible while traveling to and from school, following state and local law and the rules established by their families, and obeying school rules while traveling on school campus. Students should act as good role models for their peers by observing traffic and safety rules, caring for property, and being courteous to others.

MINIMIZING DRIVING

Because automobile collisions are a leading cause of death among school-age children, District supports efforts to increase traffic safety by minimizing driving to and from school. District respects the many constraints on families' time and budgets and recognizes that driving is sometimes a necessary or practical alternative to active transportation. Yet, in light of automobile collision data and the numerous benefits of active transportation, District commits to working with all stakeholders, including school administrators, students, families, public safety personnel, and relevant government agencies, to minimize driving to and from school. Decreasing the number of automobile trips, whether by engaging in active transportation, taking public transportation, or carpooling, will reduce congestion and related collisions and create a safer environment for active transportation.

FOLLOWING THE LAW

District strongly encourages school personnel, students, and families to follow all state and local traffic laws and related safety guidelines while traveling to and from school.

DISTRICT TASK FORCE

District shall establish a Safe Routes to School District Task Force ("Task Force") to develop and implement strategies grounded in the "Five E's" (education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation) that address Safe Routes to School planning, funding, and policies. Specifically, the Task Force shall undertake the following:

- Evaluate the current policies and resources that support or inhibit safe and convenient active transportation to or from school;



- Ensure that Safe Routes to School resources are distributed equitably across District schools and that any prioritization takes into account, among other things, personal and traffic safety concerns, crash data, infrastructure deficiencies, equity issues such as free/reduced lunch status, and existing and potential patterns of students walking and bicycling to school;
- Promote Safe Routes to School throughout District;
- Identify and pursue available funding (federal/state grants and other sources) to support Safe Routes to School; and
- Evaluate the efficacy of District's Safe Routes to School policies, programs and activities.

TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION

District supports the provision of traffic safety education and trainings on active transportation skills to all students and teachers.

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

District supports events that encourage students to engage in active transportation to and from school and they promote active, healthy lifestyles for the community at large. Events may include Walk to School Days, Bike to School Days and School Walk-a-Thons.

ENFORCEMENT

On an annual basis, District shall assess (i) whether this Policy is being fully implemented, (ii) how to improve implementation; and (iii) what amendments are needed to improve the Policy's success. District shall prepare a report detailing its findings and proposals to enact any necessary amendments. The report shall be made available to the public.

INCORPORATION INTO STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOKS

All schools shall incorporate this Safe Routes to Schools Policy into their Student and Parent Handbooks.

Adopted: 15 March 2017

