

How to Launch Safe Routes to School

Increasing active transportation to school has clear benefits: improved student health, better student performance and focus in the classroom, and reduced traffic and air pollution. The City of Austin wants to make it easy for your school to **implement a vibrant, sustainable Safe Routes to School Program.**

Walk/Bike to School Day Event

A one-time event is easy to put together and an ideal strategy to introduce your school community to Safe Routes and to generate excitement for active transportation. It can also be the launching point for a long-term Safe Routes initiative on your campus.

Resources required:

- Approval & support from school administration
- Outreach & marketing to ensure participation
- Safe gathering location & mapped safe route (distance of about ½ mile recommended)
- Volunteers to supervise (1 adult per 6-10 children)

City of Austin Safe Routes to School can provide:

- Assistance with safe route planning/mapping
- Training for organizers/volunteers
- Templates for flyers/educational materials

Classroom Walking Competitions

This simple encouragement strategy keeps active transportation on students' minds each day. Individual students or entire classrooms can compete for the most active commutes.

Resources required:

- Approval & support from school administration
- Daily teacher participation (morning hand tally)
- Incentives (stickers, classroom privileges, a trophy)

City of Austin Safe Routes to School can provide:

- Guidance on developing contests
- Training for teachers/school staff
- Templates for flyers/educational materials

Walking School Buses/Bike Trains

This is a more complex, deeper impact strategy. Walking School Buses (WSB) can be a daily or weekly program, led by volunteers or paid staff, with a single route or multiple "buses" from different locations.

Resources required:

- Approval & support from school administration
- Team of dedicated volunteers with committed WSB coordinator or funding for paid WSB monitor
- Outreach & marketing to ensure participation
- Defined starting point, bus stops, and mapped route
- Incentives for participation (volunteer t-shirts, snacks, stickers, etc.)

City of Austin Safe Routes to School can provide:

- Assistance with safe route planning/mapping
- Training for organizers/volunteers
- Templates for flyers/educational materials



For more information, more program ideas, or assistance launching Safe Routes at your school, contact:

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