

Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee Meeting held online

April 16, 2021 Minutes

STSC Attendees

- X Richard Staudt (SPS)
- X Lee Bruch
- X Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
- X Jennie Meulenberg (SDOT, corridors and Ped transportation planner)
- X Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- X Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- X Charlie Simpson (bicycle advocate)
- X Hunter Maltais (SPS Transportation Manager)
Peaches Thomas (safe streets advocate)
Richard Best
- X Jeanne Suleiman, KC Metro customer relationship manager in mobility division, ORCA passport program, will be part of Metro's presence

Other Presenters/Public

- X Clara Cantor (Seattle Neighborhood Greenways)
- X Brian Dougherty (SDOT)

Public Comment

No comment.

Last Month's Minutes

Approved.

SDOT Update

Ashley is interested in doing a Hands-Up Tally to get an understanding of how students are travelling to school. Jennie is wondering how many students are returning to school and if there are any traffic issues. Hunter says roughly half of the students are returning in person. All Middle School students who were receiving bus service are now getting Orca Cards from SPS. The Seattle Times Education Lab has some statistics, including roughly 65% of elementary school students have returned. Richard Staudt says that there is a range for elementary school students between 50% to 80% and the higher end of that range is generally for north-end schools and lower for south-end schools. Hunter says Ashley Davies would be the best person to contact regarding those statistics.

Brian says that Ashley is pushing to install crosswalks at Wing Luke before there are counts. The larger crosswalk policy is in the process of being updated.

ACTION: Jennie will connect with Hunter Maltais about the Hands-Up Tally.

Orca Card Update

Jeanne says Metro has put together a large team. There are signs up at 45 locations where Metro expects the highest ridership to be. The signs say "Welcome back students" and inform students how to see when the next bus is coming. There has been a lot of other messaging and communications to alert students to be ready to ride the bus with tips for how to ride the bus and plan a bus trip. Extra bus trips are being run where there is highest ridership near schools. As of Tuesday, 1300 extra Orca cards have been requested for students. There are no fare collections if students don't have orca cards and that message has been shared with Sound Transit. Metro is going to be meeting next week to see how Monday goes. All middle schoolers are eligible this year for orca cards.

ACTION: No Action

Crossing Guard Update

Yvonne has not lost any more crossing guards. There are at least 45 positions that have not been filled.

ACTION: No Action

School Streets Update

School Streets are going well and the number of schools has increased since the program was launched. Mini grants could be used for upgrading materials.

ACTION: We will all be closely monitoring the program as it progresses.

Bussing Updates and Walk Maps

Hunter says they have not been able to find enough 'HopSkipDrive' Drivers.

Hunter is developing a committee to look at their bus service standards. It is currently inequitable and favors schools in the north. Some schools in the north have shuttles, for example, which are 'grandfathered in'. Hunter is getting feedback from lower income areas that they want to reduce the walk zone because of safety and fear of crime. This might have to be an update to the Transportation Service Standards. There had been issues specifically at Bailey-Gatzert, and SDOT had provided mini-grants to schools/parents to form walking groups. Walk groups are going to be a good immediate solution for some. Perhaps we can review some of these issues on a case-by-case basis.

The committee will meet this Spring and will have something to present by December of this year.

ACTION: Hunter will provide updates to the STSC about this committee that is forming.

Annual Report Update

Jennie is still confirming/coordinating a spot for a STSC presentation of the Annual Report. Include issue, in terms of crossing guards, that the finger-printing process can be a barrier to recruiting new crossing guards.

OTHER

Active Transportation Coordinator Position

Hunter Maltais says they need to have the board action approved, they need to change the pay level, and they need to change some of the language. They have the position created, they just need to change some of the details.

Future Topics

- Walk Boundary Subcommittee
- Seattle's climate change planning for transportation (when in-person meetings resume)
- Mode choice survey schedule (When in-person school is starting)
- Annual calendar lookahead
- Bus Stop Paddle Funds 2019-2020

Next Meeting date: May 21st