

Seattle Department of Transportation

Safe Routes to School Mini-Grant

2012 Year-End Report

Eckstein Middle School

Program Description and Accomplishments

2012 was the inaugural year of the Eckstein Bikes! Program, which was led by a team of parents and staff, and enjoyed participation in its first year by over 60 students. SDOT was a key partner in this program through its grant program which provided funding for many of the activities.

The first year was very successful, including incentives and outreach to get more kids biking to school, as well as upgrades to the bike parking “cage” at Eckstein. In previous recent years, very few students have biked to Eckstein (estimated at 5 to 10 or less on average), whereas through the Eckstein Bikes! program the number of students commuting to school by bike has increased to around twenty students riding every day even in inclement winter weather, nearly forty on average throughout the spring and fall, and as many as sixty on large event days.

The program began with several parents “randomly” showing up at school with treats to reward bikers on the occasional Friday. This created a little word of mouth that good things happen to those who bike. We then applied for and received the Safe Routes to School grant, which helped really launch the program.

An early focus of the program included several “Biker Donut Days” — morning meet-ups at the Eckstein bike cage parking area to reward kids who biked to school that day. Despite being held throughout the late fall and winter, each donut day saw more kids on bikes as word got around and we increased our advertising to the school community. These continued into the spring, and on 2012 Bike to School Day (also a Biker Donut Day) we had 58 kids on bikes — a new record for Eckstein. Eckstein participated in Cascade Bicycle Club’s bike to school day and month in May, and had the most riders both for the day and the month of all middle schools in Seattle.

Efforts in 2012 also included:

- Kickoff and celebration events including volunteer-led bike tuning, obstacle courses for kid bikers to have fun while also practicing safe bike handling skills, a “bicycle-powered blender” party, bike art activity day, etc.
- Planning and implementation of renovations to the bike cage to improve its security and make it a more welcoming space for prospective and current bike commuters. Specifically we installed a new Eckstein Eagles sign to welcome students to the bike parking area, security lights to provide light on dark mornings (Eckstein bikers begin to arrive at school at 7:15 a.m.), and a secured pump for student use. We also organized volunteer work parties to clean up the cage and make it more inviting.
- Coordination with the school and with SDOT on safety improvements around the school for our kid bikers as well as Eckstein’s kids who walk to school. This led to a new

painted crosswalk on 30th Ave. NE which was not grant-funded but is a nice complement to the program's goal of also making riding and walking to school safer for students. The program also provided some safety tips to student bikers through various communication means. Several other physical safety improvements are still pending.

- Getting the word out about the program via Facebook, Twitter, sandwich boards and other signs, and school notices in the daily bulletin and calendar. Communication was used both to communicate to others within the school about the program, as well as to other schools and interested community members and groups.

The Donut Days and other events also created a great opportunity to provide advice on bike commuting to student bikers, and also to provide some needed gear to the kid commuters. This included distribution of over a dozen blinkie lights — front and rear — as well as one helmet (donated). We also have had a couple of visits from “The Bike Wizard”, who has delivered bicycle seat bags (also donated) to kids that needed them.

The Eckstein Bikes! team looks forward to continuing to grow safe and sustainable kid commuting at Eckstein.

Representative photos are attached. For more information, please see:

<http://facebook.com/Ride2Class>

<https://walkbikeschools.wordpress.com/category/schools/eckstein-middle-school/>

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Summary of Program Expenses

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Refreshments for "Donut Days" Donuts, Drinks	318.16
Bike cage improvements Sign, Bike Pump, Lights	340.75
Safety incentives Bike lights	130.70
Other incentives Gift cards, T shirts	172.09 ¹
Misc supplies	38.30
Total	1000.00²

1. Reported costs include those billed to grant.
2. Total does not include additional items donated by individuals and local businesses, estimated at greater than \$500.



Core group of Eckstein bikers celebrating award for biggest middle school program



Bike cage with grant-funded sign



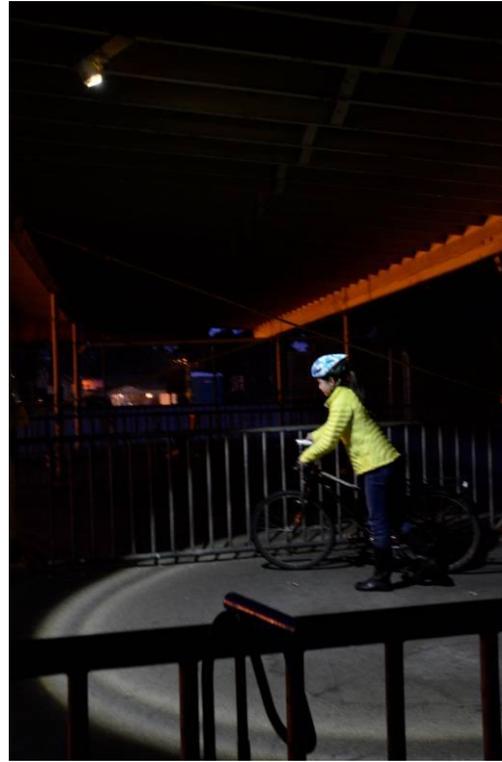
Example of graphics used to promote Eckstein Bikes!



Program included obstacle course and other fun events



Typical “Donut Day” morning gathering



New motion-activated lights for cage