

Seattle Safe Routes to School Newsletter

Sharing ways to make it safer and easier to walk and bike to school.

Upcoming Events

JANUARY

16th. Arrival and Departure Observation at Olympic Hills
21st. Day of Caring at Dearborn Park

FEBRUARY

1st. 90% design will be complete for sidewalks on NE 130th Street (by Olympic Hills) and 30th Ave. SW (by Roxhill). Contact brian.dougherty@seattle.gov if you would like to review the plans.

Date TBA: Walking Audit at Dearborn Park

MARCH

Dates TBA. Walking School Bus and Bike to School Month training
Contact jen@feetfirst.org for details.



One task of the Safe Routes to School program is to improve student safety during arrival and departure times.



GREETINGS FROM THE TEAM

This is the winter 2012/2013 issue of your Safe Routes to School (SRTS) newsletter, published for the four Seattle Schools currently receiving SRTS grants from the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Did you know that the Seattle School District now includes walking school buses in its pupil transportation plan? With a unanimous vote of the Seattle School Board on February 1, 2012, Safe Routes to School became a key part of the Transportation Service Standards. Titled “Safe Routes to School / Biking & Walking Student Wellness Plan,” the new provision calls for:

1. Continued employment of adult crossing guards at K-8 schools;
2. An annual travel mode survey in every K-8 school; and
3. Support for walking school buses at every K-8 school beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.

The Safe Routes to School grants will help your schools realize these policy goals by making it safer and easier for families to walk and/or cycle in the area. As we work to develop walking school buses at each partner school, we will take notes to share with the School Board about best practices. At Roxhill, parent champions will organize their peers into walking groups. At Dearborn Park, staff-led walking school buses are very popular. At Olympic Hills, dense housing areas can function as natural starting points. At Hawthorne, we are looking at the walking school bus as a tool to address student tardiness.

In March we will hold a training for parents and staff who are interested in leading walking school buses or bicycle encouragement campaigns. Please contact any of the people below for more information.

Caitlin Callaghan – SRTS Event Coordinator, Feet First (Caitlin@feetfirst.org)

Jen Cole – SRTS Program Director, Feet First (Jen@feetfirst.org)

Julie Salathe – Education Director, CBC (julies@cascadebicycleclub.org)

Jenny Almgren – Education Programs Assistant, CBC (jenny.almgren@cascadebicycleclub.org)

Brian Dougherty – SRTS Coordinator, SDOT (Brian.Dougherty@seattle.gov)

This Safe Routes to School Newsletter is made possible through funding from:

Get your Walk on: School Updates

DEARBORN PARK

Winter walking will be a little easier at Dearborn Park thanks to the United Way of King County's "Day of Caring" Program. On Martin Luther King Day, January 21st, a team of volunteers will clear overgrowth that is compromising a sidewalk on South Brandon Street behind the school. The sidewalk is part of a walking school bus route, and is used year-round by Dearborn Park students and staff. Maintenance of this sort is a critical part of ensuring walkability, and we are thankful to United Way and the generous volunteers! If you would like to help on the Day of Caring, contact: darcy@feetfirst.org.

HAWTHORNE

Like Dearborn Park, Hawthorne had an observation of its student arrival and departure procedures last spring. Feet First will now work to bring together members of the school's Safety Committee, concerned families, neighborhood and district stakeholders to decide on a circulation plan that addresses safety issues for walkers, cyclists, drivers and bus riders. If this is a particular concern of yours, please contact jen@feetfirst.org to give your input or help on the committee.

The engineering project will undergo a change of scope following a community meeting that took place in November. For more information contact: brian.dougherty@seattle.gov.



OLYMPIC HILLS

Feet First led a walking audit here in November, and SDOT convened a community meeting in December. The events were effective in gathering input about area needs, sharing ideas for grant-related improvements, and making community connections. The issues

at OHE differ from the other grant schools because the area is largely without sidewalks. While the grant-funded sidewalk will make a connection to the library and other

businesses, a priority recommendation is for the grant to provide safety education for students and parents so that they can safely take advantage of the many assets in this neighborhood. OHE will conduct an observation of student arrival and departure shortly after the winter break.

ROXHILL

Working with the White Center CDA (see side panel), this school has recruited two parent champions to help connect Roxhill families with the SRTS program. Luul Abshir and Alejandra Diaz. These Roxhill parents were already instrumental in bringing many Roxhill families together for the walking audit in November. Over the course of the next several months, they will focus on engaging families to begin walking school buses from nearby locations.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: WHITE CENTER CDA

The White Center Community Development Association (CDA), established in 2002, is located less than a half mile from Roxhill Elementary. The CDA's mission is to develop authentic leadership, leverage resources and build economic & social equity to create a strong and connected community. One of the goals of the CDA is to help parents to get involved in their children's education and understand how to work within the school system to affect change.

It has been said that a walking school bus is the perfect 'vehicle' to connect parents and schools. Rather than dropping students off curb-side, or waving to them as they get on the bus, the walking or cycling parent is more likely to enter the front door, chat with other parents, and make connections with school staff. So in many important ways, the CDA Family Connections model is a wonderful fit for SRTS.

CDA Community Builder Marquise Roberson and Family Connections Manager SOPHA DAHN will help identify and support Roxhill parent leaders with the goal of establishing parent-led walking school buses. You can find out more information about the CDA at www.wccda.org, or by calling (206)694-1082



To contact Marquise or SOPHA, email: marquise@wccda.org, or sopha@wccda.org

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