2024 SCHOOL TRAVEL TALLY REPORT

Seattle
Department of
Transportation

Seattle Public
Schools

Seattle Public Schools and the Seattle Department of Transportation collaborate to survey how K-5 students get to and from school.

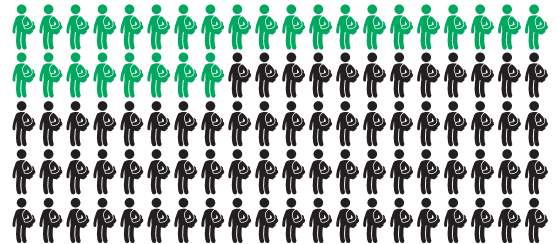In June of 2024, a record number of **55 schools** participated in this survey.
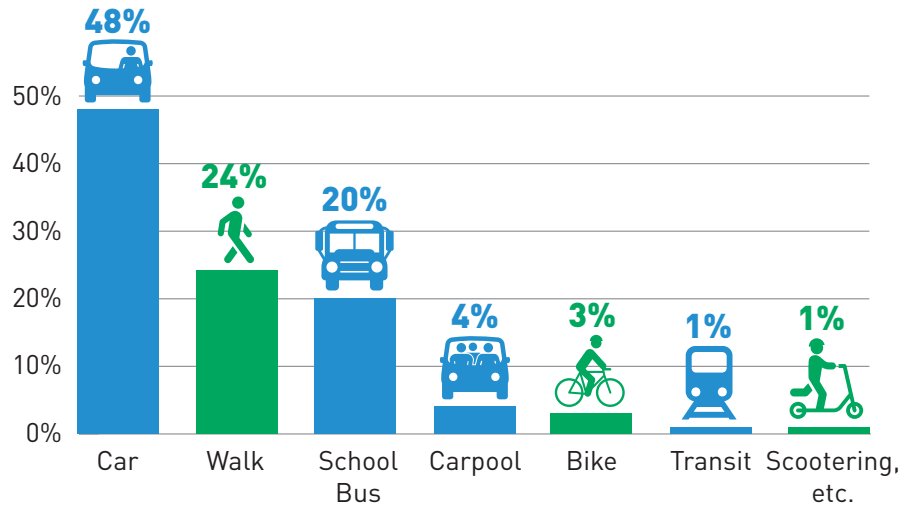
Want to get your school moving in the right direction?

For walk and bike support and supplies, visit www.seattle.gov/transportation/srts

Mode	Percentage
Car	48%
Walk	24%
School Bus	20%
Carpool	4%
Bike	3%
Transit	1%
Scootering, etc.	1%

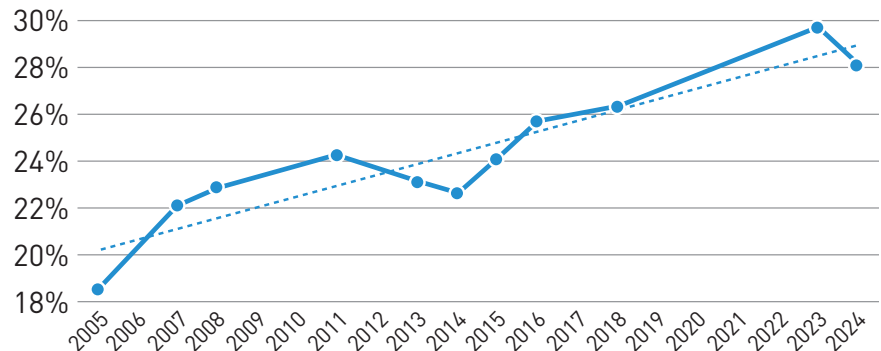# 28%
of students walked, biked, or scootered to school

More and more students are walking, biking, and scootering to school!

Year	Percentage
2005	18.5%
2007	22.2%
2008	22.9%
2011	24.2%
2013	23.1%
2014	22.7%
2015	24.0%
2016	25.7%
2018	26.4%
2023	29.7%
2024	28.1%

Walking, Biking, and Scootering Across the District

Bar chart showing walking, biking, and scootering percentages by school:

- John Rogers*
- Montlake*
- Cascadia
- Rising Star
- Rainier View
- TOPS @ Seward
- Alki
- Decatur
- Pathfinder
- Louisa Boren STEM
- Thurgood Marshall
- Sacajawea
- Hazel Wolf
- McGilvra
- South Shore
- Olympic Hills
- Thornton Creek
- Maple
- Dearborn Park
- Wing Luke
- View Ridge
- Daniel Bagley
- Licton Springs
- North Beach
- Green Lake
- Graham Hill
- Dunlap
- Roxhill
- Laurelhurst
- B.F. Day
- Concord
- Arbor Heights
- Catharine Blaine
- Hawthorne
- Wedgwood
- Magnolia
- Queen Anne
- Gatewood
- Orca
- MLK Jr
- Madrona
- Fairmount Park
- Leschi
- West Woodland
- West Seattle
- Beacon Hill
- Loyal Heights
- John Muir
- Adams
- Lawton
- Bryant
- Genesee Hill
- Whittier
- Greenwood
- Stevens

Horizontal axis: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%

*John Rogers and Montlake were both at interim sites outside of their regular walk zone.

INTRODUCTION

To better support students in walking and biking to school and track annual progress, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) work together to conduct an annual travel tally in all elementary and K-8 schools during the first week of June. This collaboration has been ongoing on and off since 2005.

In June 2024, **55** schools participated in the travel tally[1]. Schools across the district had an average walking/biking/rolling rate of **28%** for student trips to and from school. This rate is 2% lower than 2023 and 10% higher than 2005 when the tally was first conducted. This report highlights specific schools and changes over time with a focus on equity.

METHODOLOGY

The Travel Tally methodology is based on the National Safe Routes to School model for collecting student travel data.

On one day in June, teachers ask Seattle Public School students to raise their hands to tally which mode of transportation they used to get to school that day and how they plan to travel home. Starting in 2023, we began conducting the travel tally in Physical Education classes instead of students' home classrooms. This resulted in more schools participating and we are hopeful that working with P.E. teachers will produce more consistent sampling over time. Physical Education teachers conducted the tally either on June 4th (Tuesday) or June 6th (Thursday) because these are days that we'd expect to have typical travel patterns.

The modes of transportation included in the survey are walking or rolling (wheelchair, mobility device); biking; school bus; car; carpool; transit (city bus, light rail); and "other" (skateboard, scooter, etc.). Because skateboarding and scootering are an active form of transportation, starting in 2023, we added that category to biking and walking for the total "walking/biking/rolling" rate.

PARTICIPATION

SPS received responses from **55 schools out of 72**[2] **elementary and K-8 schools across the district (76%)**, a record since the tally was first conducted in 2005 and similar to the 2023 response from 54 schools.

Teachers recorded a total of 14,361 trips from approximately 7,180 students. Response rates ranged from 7-99% of K-5 students enrolled at each school, with an average response rate of 45%. Responses increased from 2023 to 2024, capturing an additional 2,568 trips with approximately 1,284 more students surveyed.
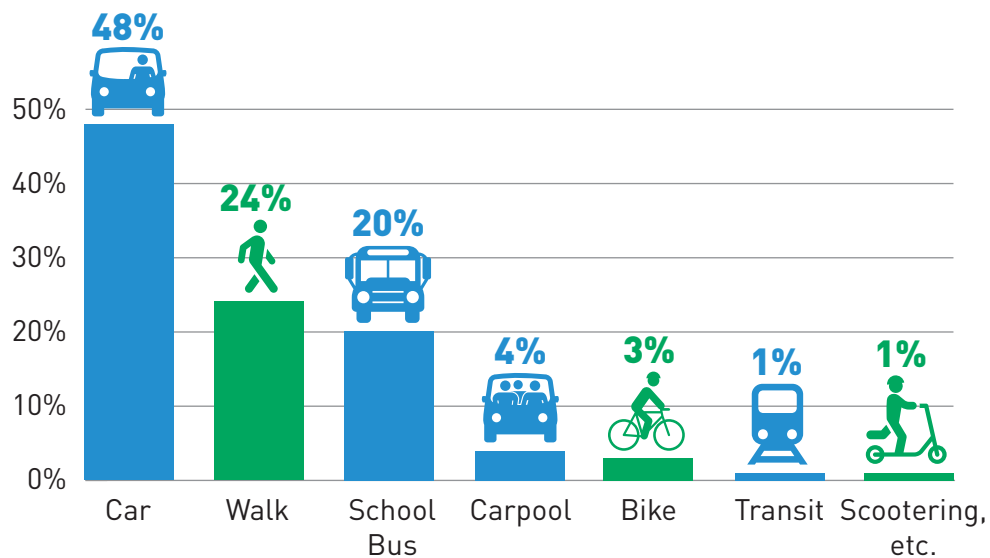
HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS

Walking, biking, scootering, skateboarding, etc. accounted for 28% of trips, which is a 2% decrease from 2023. The top 3 modes were car (48%), walk (24%), and school bus (20%).
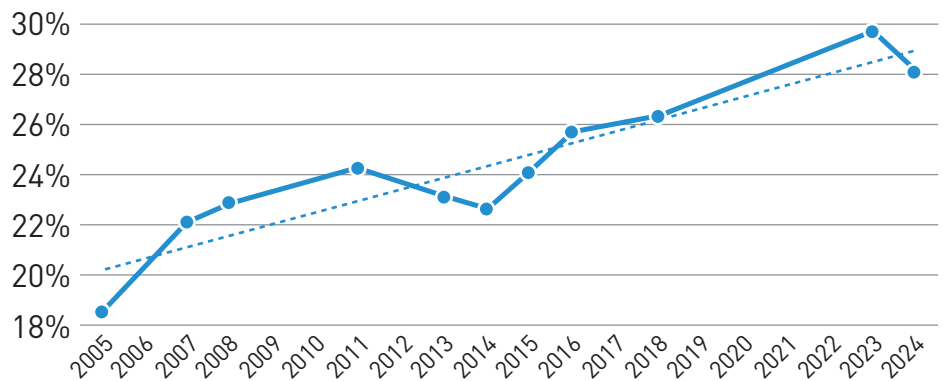
The 2% decrease in walking/biking/rolling from 2023 may partially be due to heavy rain on one of the two days the tally was conducted. We found in our 2019 Racial Equity Analysis that many students (63%) who normally walk or bike to school are deterred or prevented from walking or biking due to cold or rainy weather.

Overall, we're seeing an increase in walking/biking/rolling since we first conducted the tally in 2005.

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[1]This tally includes grades K-5. See Appendix B for the Washington State Department of Health Healthy Youth Survey data on walking and biking surveys for grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. This tally is not a scientific study, but it helps us (Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Department of Transportation) track progress and note where additional support is needed for students.

[2]Cascade Parent Partnership is not included in the total elementary count because of its hybrid model.

48% — Car
24% — Walk
20% — School Bus
4% — Carpool
3% — Bike
1% — Transit
1% — Scootering, etc.

50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0%

Car | Walk | School Bus | Carpool | Bike | Transit | Scootering, etc.

More and more students are walking, biking, and scootering to school!

30% 28% 26% 24% 22% 20% 18%

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

MODE SHARE BY GRADE[3]

We're seeing a higher percentage of the youngest and oldest grades walking/biking/rolling. This year the highest rate was among 4th and 5th graders at over 30%.

Walk/Bike/Roll Rate by Grade

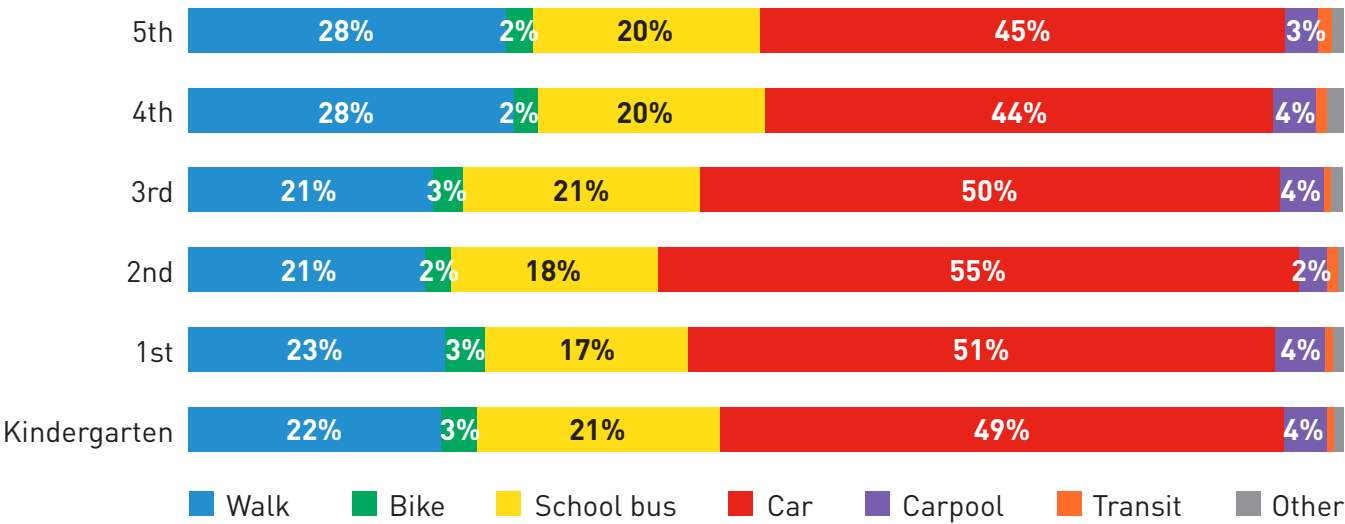34% 32% 30% 28% 26% 24% 22% 20%

K | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th
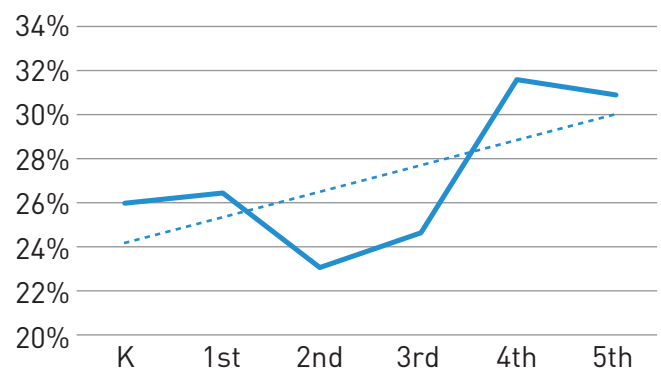
[3]Three schools reported several grades in one response sheet, and we did not include this data in the grade analysis. Twenty-nine classes across 20 different schools reported more than 1 grade in a survey response (e.g. 4-5 split class, or K-5 total) which reduced the amount of data we could include in the grade-by-grade breakdown.
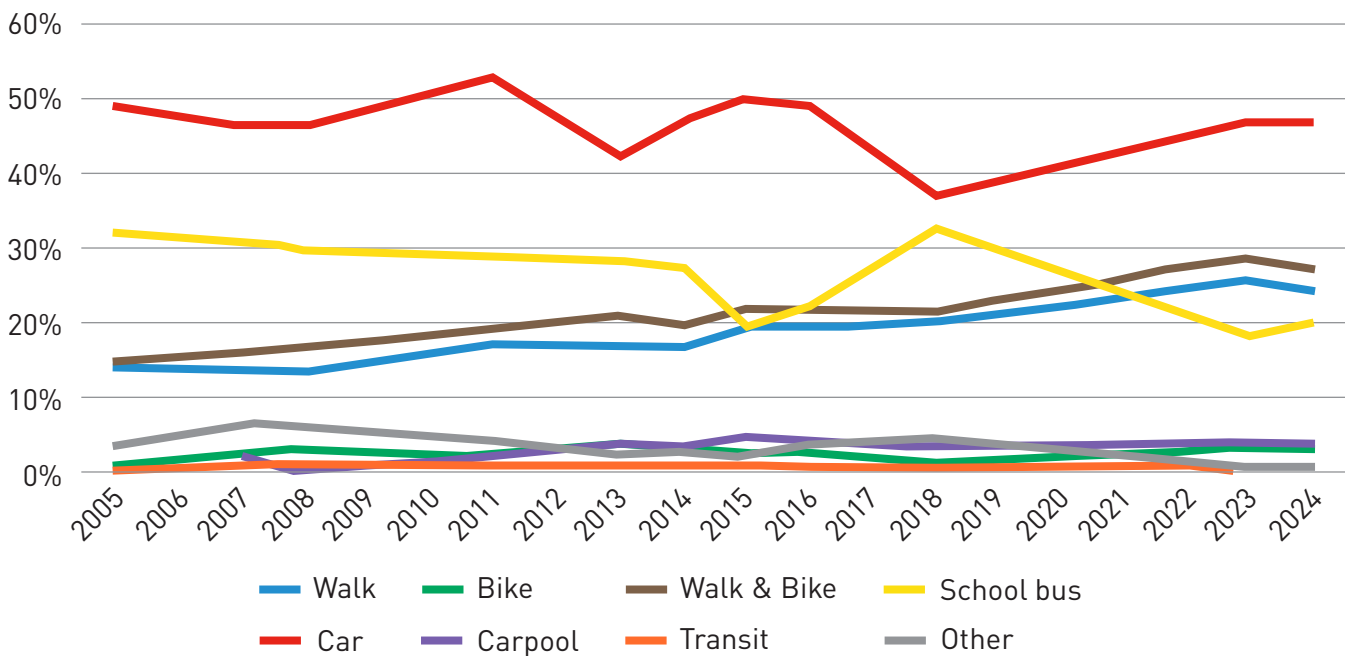
MODE SHARE OVER TIME

We're seeing an increase in walking to school since we first conducted the tally in 2005. School busing is decreasing. Biking to school is increasing slightly. The percentages for driving, carpooling, and transit are remaining roughly the same for K-5 students.

When evaluating year to year change, it is important to note the travel tally response rate for each school (see Appendix A) and number of schools participating to paint a representative picture. Further, the travel tally was not conducted in 2006, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2022.

2024 Mode Share by Grade

Grade	Walk	Bike	School bus	Car	Carpool	Transit	Other
5th	28%	2%	20%	45%	3%		
4th	28%	2%	20%	44%	4%		
3rd	21%	3%	21%	50%	4%		
2nd	21%	2%	18%	55%	2%		
1st	23%	3%	17%	51%	4%		
Kindergarten	22%	3%	21%	49%	4%		

Legend: ■ Walk ■ Bike ■ School bus ■ Car ■ Carpool ■ Transit ■ Other

Mode Share Over Time

Legend: — Walk — Bike — Walk & Bike — School bus — Car — Carpool — Transit — Other

MODE SHARE BY SCHOOL

See appendix A for the total walking/biking/rolling and response rates for each school. Walking/biking/rolling rates ranged from 0% to 70%. Only schools at interim sites outside of their walk zone reported rates of 0%.

Schools with highest walking/biking/rolling rates

School	Walking/Biking/Rolling Rate	Response Rate
Stevens	70%	99%
Greenwood	61%[4]	7%
Whittier	60%	35%
Genesee Hill	48%	21%
Bryant	47%	24%

STEVENS' BIKE TO SCHOOL RATE WAS 30%, THE HIGHEST IN THE DISTRICT!

"Bike to School month is a big celebration at our school. Signs are posted leading up to the month, in P.E. classes students talk about how this daily habit helps them with their fitness, and we have a big celebration for Bike/Roll to School days to promote and recognize kids."
— Susan Goubert, Physical Ed. teacher at Stevens

Photo: SPS

Ms. Goubert keeps the event momentum rolling as "biking/rolling/walking are woven throughout the year to remind students about asking their families to bike/walk/roll to places outside of school. Students are consistently sharing their efforts, like "I rode all the way to X with my family."

[4]Greenwood Elementary had a low response rate in 2024. In 2023, Greenwood's response rate was 94% and their walking/biking/rolling rate was the highest of all schools in the tally at 59%.

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY HAD A 43% WALK/BIKE/ROLL RATE!

John Muir had the highest rate among Tier 1-3 equity schools and the 8th highest in the district. John Muir families organize two daily walking school bus routes (the route along Renton Ave S includes many bikers too!). Muir walk bus leaders have also championed a partnership with the City for traffic calming improvements near the school.

"It's such a joyful, healthy, and empowering experience for kids. And extremely helpful for families for whom this fills a meaningful transportation gap."
—John Muir Elementary parent

John Muir Elementary has two daily walking school bus routes. Photo: SDOT
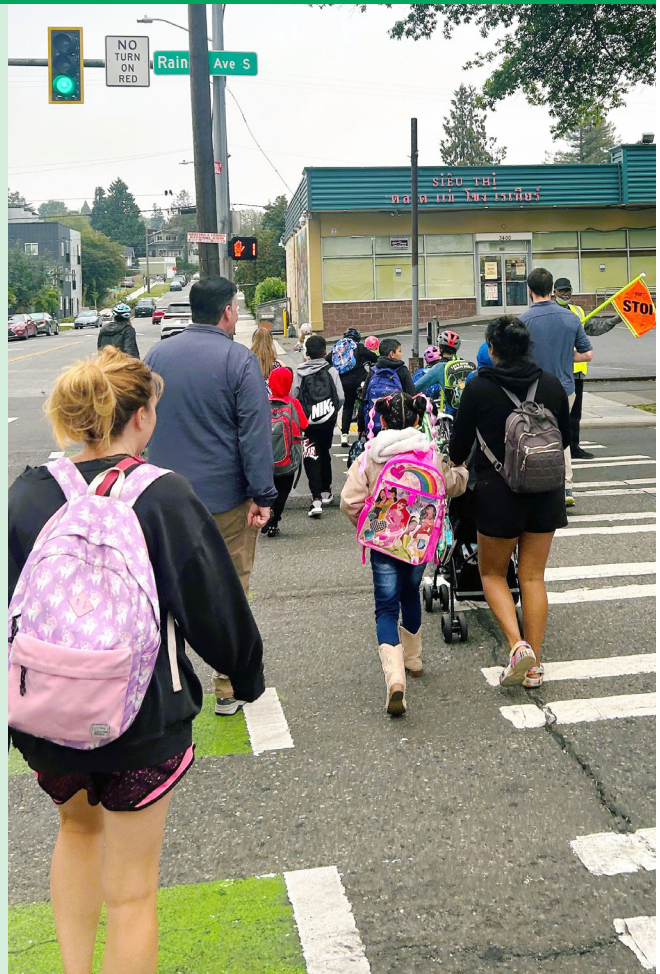
EQUITY

Seattle Public Schools compiles a ranking for each school in the district based on equity-need. The rankings range from Tier 1 (highest equity need) to Tier 4 (lowest equity need) and are based on a wide range of precise factors, for example number of African American male students, number of students born outside of the United States, number of students who qualify for free/reduced meal program, number of students experiencing homelessness, and the number of students who are multilingual learners.

Tier 1 ranked schools need the most support to account for the effects of racism, poverty, English language learning, and other factors contributing to historical opportunity gaps.

In our tally, Tier 2 schools averaged the highest walking/biking/rolling rate, followed by Tiers 4, 1, and 3 respectively. This year's data suggests that equity tier may not be a strong predictor of walk/bike/roll rates.

Most improved schools

School	Increase	Walk/bike/roll rate 2024	Response rate 2024	Equity tier
West Seattle	+41%[5]	41%	25%	2
Genesee Hill	+24%	48%	21%	4
Queen Anne	+18%	35%	88%	4
Beacon Hill	+17%	41%	26%	3
Lawton	+16%	47%	60%	4

In order, the 5 schools with the most improved walking/biking/rolling rates are: West Seattle, Genesee Hill, Queen Anne, Beacon Hill, and Lawton.

Beacon Hill had a 17% increase in rate from last year's tally. Physical Education teacher, Heather Graves, leads walking safety education for her students in and outside of class. Last year, Ms. Graves also successfully advocated for extra crossing support and a crossing guard position to be relocated near the entrance to school.

CONCORD HAD A BIKING RATE OF 7%, WHICH WAS A 7% INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR!

STEAM teacher, Kate Ayers, and Physical Education teacher, Keith Lindahl, collaborate on walk and bike events and student school patrol. They also partner with Bike Works to get students free bikes.

"Thanks for the goodies! This year I had each student make their own backpack dangle with a reflector and a laminated copy of the May calendar. I'm hoping this way they might not get lost as easily! The older kids made them for my Kinders."
      —Kate Ayers,
          STEAM teacher at Concord

Part of our walking and biking packages are heart reflectors and earth reflectors that say "Keep the earth cool, walk and bike to school." Photo: Kate Ayers

[5]West Seattle Elementary returned to their permanent location this school year and organized a walking school bus.

Walk/bike/roll rate and equity tier by region of the city

High school that the elementaries feed into	Walking/biking/rolling rate	Equity Tier (1 being highest equity need)
Ballard	47%	4
Franklin	34%	1
Lincoln	33%	4
West Seattle (includes one school at an interim location)	30%	4
Chief Sealth	29%	1
Garfield (includes one school at an interim location)	27%	2
Ingraham	25%	2
Roosevelt	23%	4
Rainier Beach	18%	1
Nathan Hale (includes one school at an interim location)	17%	2

To compare schools by region of the city, we compiled average walking/biking/rolling rates by high school cluster (the high school the elementaries feed into). The schools that feed into Ballard High School have the highest walk/bike/roll rate at 47%. Rainier Beach and Nathan Hale have the lowest rates at 18% and 19% respectively.

While we're seeing progress, there is still more work to do to better support students at high equity-need schools and they'll continue to be our focus for both infrastructure and programming (see more in our annual report).

DATA LIMITATIONS

There are a few notable data limitations.

The two schools that reported a 0% active transportation rate (John Rogers Elementary and Montlake Elementary) were at interim locations outside of the school's typical walk zone. **These schools were still included in the overall average and average for their equity tier and high school cluster.**

Two out of the 55 participating schools only reported one grade for their entire travel tally report. This likely skewed data for these schools based on which grade was reported. As shown in the grade-by-grade breakdown, the oldest and youngest grades reported higher walk/bike/roll rates.

A Physical Teacher helps students learn to ride. Photo: Cascade Bicycle Club

Overall, 55 out of 72 schools surveyed students, which equals a 76% school participation rate from elementary and K-8 schools. The percentage of students surveyed at each participating school (response rate) ranged from 7-99% with an average response rate of 45%. Schools with lower response rates may not be an accurate representation of the whole school.

HOW ARE THE CITY AND SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPPORTING SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL?

Our Safe Routes to School program builds walking and biking infrastructure around schools and supports programming and activities that encourage more students to walk and bike.

Our program is built around the seven E's: Equity, Environment, Education, Empowerment, Encouragement, Engineering, and Evaluation. From developing safer infrastructure, supporting students to learn how to ride a bike, providing resources to schools, and much more, we are committed to improving the safety and lives of students. Learn more at seattle.gov/transportation/srts.

Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Department of Transportation partner to offer Safe Routes support within the school district. The Seattle Public Schools Safe Routes to School Program offers school specific support to caregivers and school leaders looking to organize walk, bike, and roll groups, events, and programming at schools. Interventions are prioritized by equity tier, with the most engagement and individualized support offered to schools in equity tiers 1-3. Learn more at seattleschools.org/walkbikeroll.

THANK YOU!

We appreciate Lori Dunn and SPS Physical Education teachers for helping us again achieve record travel tally participation this year! And your work teaching students how to bike through your Kindergarten All Kids Bike program and SDOT's Let's Go program is what gives so many of our city's students the skills they need to walk and bike to school with confidence. Thank you.

APPENDIX A
All schools – 2024

School	Walk/bike/roll rate	Travel tally response rate
Adams	44%	90%
Alki (at an interim location)	11%	58%
Arbor Heights	31%	35%
B.F. Day	30%	35%
Beacon Hill	41%	26%
Bryant	47%	24%
Cascadia (highly capable program outside typical walk zone)	1%	19%
Catharine Blaine	32%	66%
Concord	31%	37%
Daniel Bagley	23%	39%
Dearborn Park	23%	34%
Decatur (highly capable program outside typical walk zone)	12%	65%
Dunlap	28%	80%
Fairmount Park	38%	32%
Gatewood	36%	29%
Genesee Hill	48%	21%
Graham Hill	25%	39%
Green Lake	25%	37%
Greenwood	61%	7%
Hawthorne	32%	33%
Hazel Wolf K8	17%	29%
John Muir	43%	91%
John Rogers (at an interim location)	0%	49%
Laurelhurst	28%	27%
Lawton	47%	60%
Leschi	41%	38%
Licton Springs	24%	77%
Louisa Boren K8	14%	65%
Loyal Heights	41%	25%
Madrona	38%	41%
Magnolia	35%	39%
Maple	22%	32%
McGilvra	18%	55%
MLK	37%	35%
Montlake (at an interim location)	0%	76%

School	Walk/bike/roll rate	Travel tally response rate
North Beach	25%	27%
Olympic Hills	19%	29%
Orca K8	37%	21%
Pathfinder	12%	84%
Queen Anne	35%	88%
Rainier View	8%	55%
Rising Star	8%	26%
Roxhill	28%	10%
Sacajawea	14%	50%
South Shore PK8	18%	29%
Stevens	70%	99%
Thornton Creek	20%	26%
Thurgood Marshall (highly capable program outside typical walk zone)	14%	28%
TOPS K8	8%	84%
View Ridge	23%	32%
Wedgwood	35%	37%
West Seattle	41%	25%
West Woodland	41%	78%
Whittier	60%	35%
Wing Luke	23%	42%
Broadview-Thomson K8	-	0%
Frantz Coe	-	0%
Emerson	-	0%
Bailey Gatzert	-	0%
Hay	-	0%
Highland Park	-	0%
Kimball	-	0%
Lafayette	-	0%
Lowell	-	0%
McDonald International	-	0%
James Baldwin	-	0%
Olympic View	-	0%
Sand Point	-	0%
Sanislo	-	0%
John Stanford International	-	0%
Viewlands	-	0%
Salmon Bay	-	0%
Cedar Park	-	0%

2023 Healthy Youth Survey Data collected every 2 years for grades 6, 8, 10, and 12

Full report

	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
92. On average, how many days a week do you walk to or from school?	(n=2,964)	(n=1,277)	(n=1,243)	(n=823)
In an average week, I don't normally travel to school.	6.2% (±0.9)	5.7% (±1.3)	4.6% (±1.2)	3.5% (±1.3)
Never	45.4% (±1.8)	37.0% (±2.7)	40.7% (±2.7)	55.5% (±3.4)
1 - 2 days	10.6% (±1.1)	14.9% (±2.0)	16.2% (±2.0)	12.3% (±2.2)
3 - 4 days	8.7% (±1.0)	10.1% (±1.7)	10.1% (±1.7)	5.8% (±1.6)
I walk every day.	29.0% (±1.6)	32.3% (±2.6)	28.5% (±2.5)	22.8% (±2.9)

	% (± CI)	% (± CI)	% (± CI)	% (± CI)
93. On average, how many days a week do you ride a bicycle to or from school?	(n=2,823)	(n=1,240)	(n=1,216)	(n=811)
In an average week, I don't normally travel to school.	9.0% (±1.1)	9.9% (±1.7)	8.2% (±1.5)	5.4% (±1.6)
Never	85.1% (±1.3)	85.2% (±2.0)	88.5% (±1.8)	90.5% (±2.0)
1 - 2 days	2.9% (±0.6)	2.0% (±0.8)	1.5% (±0.7)	1.7% (±0.9)
3 - 4 days	1.0% (±0.4)	1.0% (±0.6)	0.7% (±0.5)	0.5% (±0.5)
I bike every day.	2.1% (±0.5)	1.8% (±0.7)	1.1% (±0.6)	1.8% (±0.9)

Walk and Bike to School Day at Viewlands Elementary. Photo: SPS

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