

# Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee

## Meeting held online

### July 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)  
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  
Jeanne Suleiman, KC Metro customer relationship manager in mobility division
- X Brian Dougherty (SDOT)
- X Allison Deno (Principal Lawton Elementary)
- X Ashley E. Davies. (Director of Enrollment, SPS)

#### Public Comment

No comment.

#### Last Month's Minutes

Not approved pending Jennie's edits in August.

**ACTION:** Peaches will write a letter to the City requesting a similar analysis (to the one she reported on last month) here in Seattle. Also she will request the City carry it out by funding groups who are already working in this space. Moved to August.

#### MODE CHOICE SURVEY PLAN:

Richard shared response from Treena Sterk, School Operations Chief and former Principal. 'There are so many surveys and so little time'. How is this data used? Why do we care? What difference does it make? Unless there is a clear understanding about the purpose of the survey, how it might benefit their school, how they compare to other schools, and possibly a curriculum piece, teachers are emphatically not interested.

Discussion returned to this at the end of the meeting. Brian stated that there is a real correlation to decisions SDOT makes as to their future actions but they are not equipped to write curriculum. SDOT could potentially fund SPS to create an educational module.

**ACTION:** Richard Staudt will inquire about who would/could write a curriculum piece for SDOT about the mode choice survey that ties in info about how this impacts students and schools. It could make sense for this to be connected to Earth Day activities.

**ANNUAL REPORT:** Mary Ellen and Margaret have completed report with exception of minor editing.

**CROSSING GUARD UPDATE:** Back to school communication will go out in August. Then discussion veered somewhat off topic. SPS is moving toward being Carbon Neutral. The 5 Year plan will consider whether to invest in the district's own fleet or continue to outsource transportation. Currently we are "Hemorrhaging dollars". A plan is being prepared to present by December showing a 3-tier system. This will include a White fleet using vans, cars, and electric busses. Most of the excess money spent now is for SPED transportation. It is not a sustainable expense as there is no special funding, but change will be slow. Buses have a 13-year life, so it takes time to change to electric and time to change our system of assigning SPED kids to faraway schools. Over the next 5 years strategize about the possibility of the district acquiring its own fleet of buses along with the white fleet. This is a long-term goal. SPS is projecting transportation to be 17 million in the red next year.

Mary Ellen said to contact us if there was anything we could do to help. We support anything that can change money from transportation to education. Lee stated that walking and biking is carbon neutral and less expensive.

**SDOT UPDATE:**

**See attached** Jennie completed SDOT action items from last month and sent email report.

Brian Dougherty attended as SDOT representative at this meeting.

1. Annual Report: In order for the city council to hear our report the best current option is to invite member to our meeting.

**ACTION:** Margaret will draft a letter to Alex Peterson and Dan Strauss. She will get it to Jennie who will transmit it to Mr. Straus and Mr. Peterson.

**ACTION:** SDOT liaison: Either Jennie or Brian will ask the right person at SDOT speak to us about street crime and student safety while walking and biking.

**LAWTON SCHOOL AND CROSSING GUARD NEED:**

Dr Allison Deno came to present a problem at the crossing at 27<sup>th</sup> and Elmore.

**ACTION:** Brian said that SDOT is looking into a 4 way stop at that intersection (but it wouldn't probably be in until the winter months if approved. SDOT will report back next month. All-way stop review at Madison middle school is under way too. Brian will also review 4-way stops around John Hay.

Shrubbery encroachment was discussed. It is a land use violation and a citation and fine can be levied as last resort. Our police representative was missed because the 30-foot setback for parked cars is not being obeyed. In the past he would have corrected this.

**ACTION:** Brian or Jennie will send Dr. Deno a copy of the Rubric that SDOT uses to grade intersections as part of this committee's process for developing walk maps and recommending crossing guard placement.

**LESCHI ELEMENTARY CURB RAMPS:**

Richard Best was not here to present this request as scheduled. Leschi is adding 4 classrooms but being asked to build curb ramps around the entire school (18 ramps to a cost of about \$200,000) if they do this. Their request argues that it is not proportional. Brian said all their sidewalks are in terrible condition and ideally, they need new sidewalks as well. Richard S. suggested running it by the Departures Committee.

**CROSSING GUARD UPDATE:**

Yvonne is working on a Crossing Guard Brochure that looks like it will be very effective. She has 6 applicants to fingerprint now. Training will begin in August.

**ACTION:** Mary Ellen will reach out to local news to get crossing guard recruitment spots running in August.

**ACTION:** Lee will get brochures and posters from Yvonne on the beginning of August to circulate in the North End.

**ACTION:** Jennie will post information on the SDOT blog about Guard positions.

**KIMBALL/WASHINGTON SCHOOL**

Ashley E. Davies, Director of Enrollment at SPS, reported that Kimball Elementary will now be a feeder school to Washington Middle School. The community is concerned about walking and biking that far. Suggestions included getting Metro working on showing HOW/TO instructions about working the ORCA cards which will be all new to these students.

**ACTION:** Mary Ellen will contact Jeanne Suleiman, our Metro representative, to make her aware of this issue and get the Kimball community connected to Metro resources.

**ACTION:** Margaret and her children will survey the safest routes and contact Ashley Davies.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GQM6wq0z\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GQM6wq0z_4) The preceding video was brought to the committee by Ms. Davies but we didn't see it. It is a compelling visual of difficulties these young students will face walking or riding.

[https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_543/File/District/Departments/Enrollment%20Planning/Growth%20Boundaries/Mercer/Mercer\\_Scenario1\\_ada.pdf](https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/Enrollment%20Planning/Growth%20Boundaries/Mercer/Mercer_Scenario1_ada.pdf) Map of the schools shared on chat.

**SDOT GRANT FOR FUNDING OUTDOOR CLOTHING:**

Richard S. reported that SDOT has authorized a \$30,000.00 grant for a pilot of 4 or 5 target schools to fund all weather clothing for students. This is for students who either can't walk or ride because they lack rain or snow gear or who do and arrive at school soaking wet in bad weather. They have identified Dunlap, MLK, and Bailey-Gatzert so far and are looking for one or two more schools. SDOT is preparing criteria to decide if this improves walking and riding. We circled back the hands up Mode survey, thinking this might be a purpose.

ANNUAL REPORT:

Mary Ellen and Margaret shared the report, and the committee was delighted. One additional ask was suggested. Ask for 100% Bike Parking in future school projects.

#### Future Topics

- SDOT transportation equity work group (September)
- Sand Point Elementary walkthrough (early fall)
- Crossing guard publicity, need push in early August.
- Walk Boundary Subcommittee
- Seattle's climate change planning for transportation (when in-person meetings resume)
- Annual calendar lookahead
- Bus Stop Paddle Funds 2019-2020
- Revisit hands up tally (August or Sept, when Ashley is coming)
- Possible grants to buy electric white fleet vehicles (Mary Ellen to research)

**Next Meeting date: August 20, 2021**

## **Appendix**

### **Notes From Jennie Muelenberg for July Meeting.**

- **Note - please update the June meeting minutes to reflect the changes that I sent to you all on June 22nd.** If anyone would like to discuss my edits, we can hold off on approving the minutes until the August meeting (see attached email thread)
- Action: Jennie will work to invite CM Alex Pedersen to a STSC meeting to discuss the Annual Report.
- **Responses for June action items:**
  - I reached out to our SDOT liaison to City Council (CC), and they recommended that the Committee draft a formal invitation letter. I will share the draft letter with our CC liaison, and then once it's finalized, I will send it to CM Pedersen's office. Our CC liaison will help set up the meeting after the invitation is sent. Please email me a draft invitation and then I can coordinate the rest.
- Action: Jennie will ask a representative from the SDOT Pedestrian Master Plan Program to come to a STSC meeting to discuss the Pedestrian Master Plan planning process.
  - I reached out to our PMP team and requested a presentation that specifically relates to the question of how schools are incorporated into the program's prioritization process. Their presentation is scheduled for the September meeting.
- Action: Jennie will talk to Polly about homelessness and student safety in terms of walking to school.
  - I let Polly Membrino (the SDOT liaison to the Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board) know that this was something the STSC would be interested in discussing if we have time at the joint meeting.
- Action: Jennie will check about sign audits that many need to be done at new or renovated schools.
  - There are no locations where the Safe Routes to School program needs a sign audit at new or renovated schools currently. The Safe Routes to School team would like to work with the STSC on walk audits to identify improvements at certain schools before the

current levy ends (2024). Sandpoint ES is a good first location, and projects related to signs and markings (eg. parking restrictions, painted curb bulbs, crosswalks, etc.) are the scale of scope that we would probably install here. Here is the [Safe Routes to School Toolkit](#) for reference.

- **Action:** Jennie will share the list of top 9 priority schools from Ashley.
  - The SRTS prioritization list can be found [here](#). Our 5 year action plan [webpage](#) also has details on where we've done projects over the past few years. We prioritize schools in two ways: improvements along the roadway and crossing the roadway improvements. We're currently working on updating this prioritization list based off of new data, and hopefully that will be complete later this summer.
  - Along the roadway
    1. Wing Luke
    2. Northgate
    3. Rainier View
    4. Van Asselt
    5. Broadview Thomson
    6. John Rogers
    7. Alan Sugiyama HS
    8. Dunlap
    9. Rainier Beach HS
  - Crossing the roadway
    1. Alan Sugiyama HS
    2. Mercer MS
    3. Bailey Gatzert
    4. Franklin HS
    5. Emerson
    6. Roxhill
    7. Dunlap
    8. World School
    9. Aki Kurose
  - The Levy requires us to make an improvement at every public school. Schools that still need a project identified include:
    1. Cascade PPP
    2. Gatewood
    3. Sand Point
- **Action:** Jennie will create an SDOT blog post in early August (for crossing guards).
  - I updated the meeting notes to say that Yvonne will need to draft the blog post. I don't know the details of what that program wants to share. If it's posted on SPS media accounts, we can reference/link to it with our SDOT SRTS back to school outreach.
- **Action:** Hunter and Jennie will keep the STSC updated on when in-person meetings are allowed.
  - No news yet