JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023

MASSACHUSETTS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT



massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MASSACHUSETTS
Safe Routes to School
MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL

EVENT DATES



JULY–SEPTEMBER, 2022 — Summer programming with schools, day camps, & community organizations

AUGUST 23, 2022 — Signs & Lines Grant launch and webinar

SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 — Safe Streets Smart Trips (SSST) High School Video Contest launch and webinar

SEPTEMBER 7, 2022 — SRTS Traffic Gardens Survey launch

OCTOBER 3, 2022 — SRTS Infrastructure Grant launch and webinar

OCTOBER 12, 2022 — International Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day (iWalk)

NOVEMBER 1, 2022 — SSST Video Contest Winners Announced at Moving Together Conference

DECEMBER 2, 2022 — Professional Development Session in Pittsfield, MA

DECEMBER 9, 2022 — Professional Development Session in Beverly, MA

JANUARY 9, 2023 — Yard Sign Design Contest launch

JANUARY 11, 2023 — Professional Development Session in West Springfield, MA

JANUARY 25, 2023 — Webinar for Municipalities—Grant Writing 101

FEBRUARY 1, 2023 — Winter Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day

FEBRUARY 27, 2023 — Crossing Guard of the Year Contest launch

MARCH 6, 2023 — Annual Partner Survey launch

MARCH 22, 2023 — Crossing Guard Appreciation Day & last day to submit nominations for Crossing Guard of the Year Awards

APRIL 26, 2023 — Spring Webinar—New Tools for Schools

MAY 2-3, 2023 — MassDOT Innovation Conference

MAY 3, 2023 — Massachusetts Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day

JUNE 8, 2023 — Annual Awards Ceremony

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At MassDOT, we envision a future where all students and families can choose walking, biking, and rolling as safe, healthy and accessible options for getting to and from school; and our Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is making that vision a reality for more and more students each year. As we continue to add Partner Schools, our statewide initiative is expanding and enhancing safety while encouraging active transportation for our students.

During the 2022-2023 project year, MassDOT's SRTS Program served **542,934 students – an increase of nearly 80,000 students, or 17%, from last year** – across the Commonwealth with outreach programs, bike and pedestrian safety sessions, educational webinars, events, contests and more.

School-aged children are among our most vulnerable road users; this makes our dedication to SRTS even more important as we strive to prioritize student safety by promoting walking, biking, and rolling to school and improving our infrastructure. We helped build safe infrastructure around 12 schools by awarding more than **$11 million in Infrastructure and Signs & Lines grants**. Thanks to new funding from the Federal Highway Administration, we leveraged the development of innovative programs and resource to support the formal inclusion of high school partners – adding 42 High School Partners – and providing more services and opportunities for high school students.

This report summarizes our efforts and achievements throughout the year. It highlights sustainable activities, resources and events that support students, schools, parents and the diverse communities of Massachusetts.

Monica Tibbits-Nutt
Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, MassDOT



LETTER FROM DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

On behalf of MassDOT, we are pleased to share this Annual Impact Report for 2022-2023. Thanks to their participation in the SRTS Program, our students are developing confidence, life skills, and awareness; ultimately leading to a safer and more equitable future for all. Our team made it a priority to personally visit hundreds of schools and assertively encourage and empower students to incorporate safe and active commuting into their daily routines, as well as to share this message among their peers. As a result, we continued to expand our reach—growing in all areas—with increased participation in the Program across the Commonwealth.

I present to you some accomplishments from our momentous year:

- Our SRTS Program tied for First Place in the Nation on the Safe Routes Partnership 2022 State Report Card.
- We celebrated by welcoming our 1,000th School Partner.
- Our team officially welcomed High Schools as partners in the SRTS Program with exciting new outreach materials and programming activities.
- We engineered change by awarding five more Signs and Lines Grants and eight Infrastructure Grants!
- We underscored the importance of Railroad Safety by developing a new backpack flyer resource in ten different languages.
- We launched a series of case studies in rural, suburban, and urban areas documenting achievements and lessons learned in forming Walking School Buses and hosting bike rodeos.
- We launched our Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-approved Professional Development program with three district-wide sessions in Pittsfield, Beverly, and West Springfield.
- We continue to strengthen our commitment to equity by analyzing and prioritizing engagement for schools based on a custom equity composite score from DESE school demographic data.

I would like to extend the Safe Routes to School team's sincere appreciation to our extraordinary 1,326 School and Alliance Partners for supporting and adopting our Program and whose willing collaboration helps us create activities and resources to make Massachusetts safer for our children. Together, with conscientious planning, persistence, and passion, we will continue to create sustainable Safe Routes to School programs, making our communities safer and healthier for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Diane S. Hanson

Diane S. Hanson, Program Director

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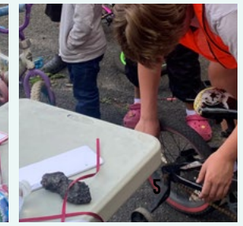


BACKGROUND & REACH

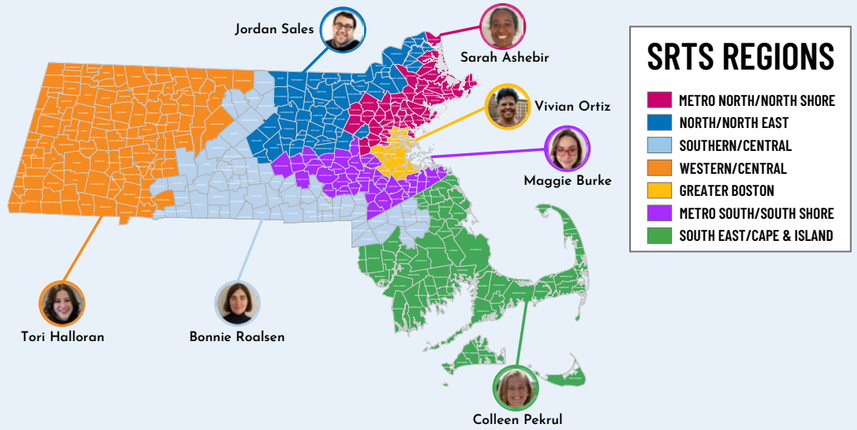






When I started as a Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator five years ago, I wanted to help communities become more climate-resilient and sustainable. Now that I am in a leadership role, it has been wonderful to see the growth and progress communities have made. I love being part of a program that is actively working to make Massachusetts a safer place to walk and roll for all.

–Rachel O'Donnell, Program Administrator

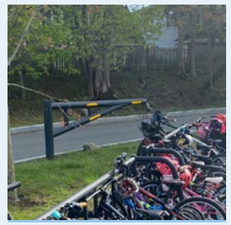




542,934
Students Represented ↑17%



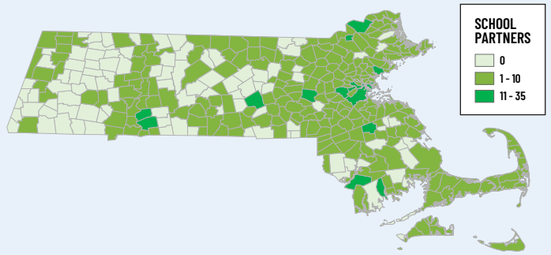
1,106
↑10%
Partner Schools



592 ↑21%
Flagship Days School Registrations

SRTS partners with nearly 60% of eligible Massachusetts Public & Charter K-12 Schools!

New in 2022-2023, we added high schools to our partnership roster.



220
↑11%
Alliance Partners



261
MA Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day

123
MA Winter Walk

398
↑46%
Pedestrian & Bike Safety Trainings
123
Bike
275
Pedestrian

281
↑18%
Communities Served



208
iWalk

Now in its 18th year, MassDOT's free, federally funded program, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), works directly with students, schools, educators, law enforcement, parents/guardians, community-led organizations, and public health departments to positively impact student safety and health by making active commutes equitable, realistic, and sustainable options. We employ the use of the six E's of SRTS: **Education, Encouragement, Engagement, Evaluation, Engineering, and—overarching all areas—Equity;** for SRTS, inclusivity is a top priority.

We strive to meet the highest standards in this regard and hold ourselves accountable to our commitment. Across Massachusetts, our outreach coordinators use a collaborative, community-focused approach, bridging the gap between health and transportation. Our goal of providing active and safe ways to school for all students in all communities yields additional positive results: healthier students, higher academic achievement, better air quality, reduced congestion, higher attendance, reduced tardiness, and enhanced social skills.

EDUCATION

What I love about working with Safe Routes is its hands-on approach to working directly with students and the community. Coming from a recreation background I've always enjoyed interacting with the community and now with Safe Routes to School, I get to watch them learn important safety practices. I find that teaching our pedestrian and bicycle safety allows students to gain confidence and independence in an eco-friendly way, and it is a life skill that they will carry into adulthood.

–Jordan Sales, Outreach Coordinator





Having partnerships with **1,106** unique schools in Massachusetts provides us with access to a comprehensive and innovative toolkit of best educational practices.

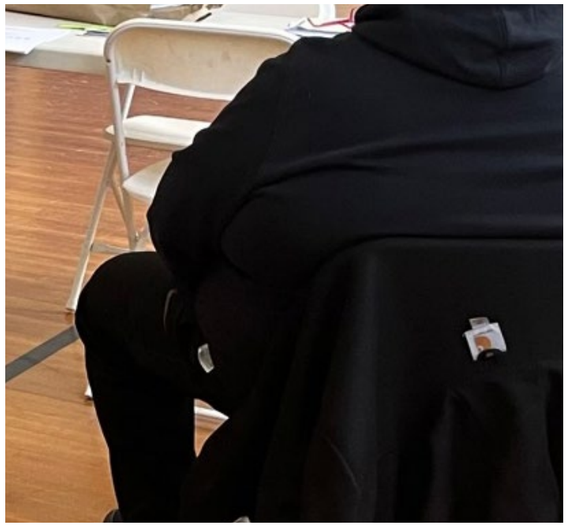
We incorporate a variety of proven techniques to make the learning process both enjoyable and effective in our bike and pedestrian safety trainings, videos, and educational resources. We developed turn-key lesson plans for teachers that can be easily integrated into the curriculum, and our webinars delivered timely, pertinent information and calls to action to schools, students, and stakeholders.



EDUCATION
BUILDING UNDERSTANDING WITH HANDS-ON TRAINING







WEBINARS, CONFERENCES, SURVEYS, CASE STUDIES, AND DEMONSTRATIONS

In this year's **Spring Webinar—New Tools for Schools**, our MassDOT team proudly presented an extensive range of new educational resources, including compelling marketing campaigns (print and electronic), informative webinars, insightful surveys, and exciting contests.

Two webinars, Signs and Lines, and Infrastructure Grant Information Sessions delivered an overview of the programs, eligibility, and application instructions, and gave SRTS partners the tools they needed to consider how these grants could benefit their schools.

The Safe Streets, Smart Trips High School Video Contest Information Session webinar explained submission guidelines, application instructions, and prizes for our 2022 High School Video Contest.

Our Webinar for Municipalities—Grant Writing 101 outlined the grant writing process with helpful tips for making projects stand out and resources for finding federal and local grants.

The SRTS Traffic Gardens Survey was conducted for a month in the fall of 2022 to collect stakeholder feedback. The goal was to gain insights into the types of traffic gardens that SRTS partners are interested in and to understand the type of support required to make traffic gardens an asset in their communities. The survey received a total of 28 responses from parents/guardians, government representatives, community organizations, schools, and school districts, representing 21 municipalities across the state, revealing insight into respondents' desires and concerns that will help inform SRTS's tactics for future planning.

Our new Railroad Crossing Safety backpack flyer, available in ten languages, educates families on the Dos, Don'ts, and rules for safety when walking, biking, rolling, or driving near or across railroad tracks.

SRTS Program Professional Development Training—we held three Professional Development (PD) sessions in Pittsfield, Beverly, and West Springfield. Categorized under Health & Wellness, our PD Program focuses on encouraging students to take active and safe commutes to and from school. The PD training is recommended for teaching professionals and staff, school administrators, advocates, and community partners; the modules offer:

- Understanding Safe Routes to School
- SRTS Bike Safety and Pedestrian Safety Principles
- Observation of Bike and Pedestrian Safety Training
- Optional Learning and Program Implementation

Case Studies for the Walking School Buses and for Bike Rodeos illustrate and evaluate the support the SRTS Programs offer to School Partners to develop and sustain these fun social activities promoting safe trips to and from school. With a significant increase of 23% over the previous year, there were **126** (11%) Partner Schools with a Walking School Bus, Bike Train, or Park, Walk, & Roll this year. After analyzing events for urban, rural, and suburban schools, the SRTS Program team assessed their impacts and gleaned lessons learned to guide future planning.

Our Bike Safety Script for High School Students, newly developed in conjunction with our partner, MassBike, is written specifically to reach students on the High School level, with hands-on learning examples to improve biking and safety skills.

ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Our Annual Awards Ceremony brought together SRTS champions from all corners of Massachusetts, inspiring us and fueling our drive and commitment to carry on with this crucial work. At this year's ceremony, MassDOT Federal Programs Coordinator Miranda Briseño opened with an overview of Program accomplishments from the school year. MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver and Joi Singh, MA Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, spoke on behalf of their agencies as well.

As Keynote Speaker, Former MassDOT Secretary and CEO Gina Fiandaca highlighted the Program's successes in improving the safety, awareness, and health of students. She offered insight into the positive influence the Program will have on our students for years to come.

> ***MassDOT is pleased to have this opportunity to thank individuals, school staff, and members of school communities for all of their exemplary work and continued dedicated efforts in helping to keep students and families safe within school communities throughout the Commonwealth.***
>
> **–Gina Fiandaca, Former MassDOT Secretary and CEO**

We awarded Partner Level Certificates to **217** School Partners, welcomed new School Partners, and celebrated the winners of our Crossing Guard of the Year awards. We also heard from SRTS enthusiasts and guest speakers including Jenn Martin from the Newton SRTS Taskforce, Jodi Elder, MSN, RN, NCSN, of Beverly Public Schools, and Community Partner, Stephanie Colón.





Exemplary Program Winners by Region

Awarded to schools that set a notable example by crafting a new or existing Safe Routes to School Program through innovation, creativity, and engagement.

- William E. Norris School, Southampton (Western)
- Belmont Street Community School, Worcester (Central)
- Glover Elementary School, Marblehead (Northeast)
- LaLiberte Elementary School, Raynham (Southeast)

Community Collaboration Award

Awarded to an Alliance Partner organization that strongly demonstrated the importance of collaborating among schools and community stakeholders and furthered the mission of Safe Routes to School.

The **Bike Connector**—a non-profit, volunteer-run, community-based program that offers a "Do It Together" bike repair workshop, affordable bicycles, and hands-on educational programming, and collaborates with community partners to distribute and maintain bikes in greater Lowell, MA.

Nikki Tishler Memorial Award

Awarded to an individual who served as a true champion of SRTS over the past year, making the extra effort to ensure a successful Program in his or her community, this eponymous SRTS award is dedicated to the memory of Nikki Tishler, SRTS's great "Superhero."

Stephanie Colon, Mass in Motion Coordinator, City of Holyoke



ENCOURAGEMENT



I love helping students and families discover the joy, peace, freedom, and fun that can come from bicycling and supporting communities as they create safer streets for their youth to navigate every day.

—Bonnie Roalsen, Outreach Coordinator

The best form of a "thank you" is receiving a leg hug.

—Judy Crocker, Statewide Coordinator and Outreach Supervisor

INSPIRATIONS FROM MONTHLY TALES FROM THE FIELD:

- For the second year in a row, SRTS partnered with the **Lowell Bike Connector** to hold special bike events in Lowell. Students received free bikes and helmets courtesy of the **Bike Connector, and SRTS/MassBike** conducted the bike safety/bike rodeo sessions.
- What began as an experiment, **Bike Train Day** at Hardy Elementary School has become a lasting practice.
- Curriculum Nights at Lawrence advertised 17 newly printed **student route maps** representing 23 schools. The maps will help with the development of **Walking School Bus and Park, Walk, & Roll** locations. During Lawrence's annual Ciclovia, SRTS distributed 70 helmets through the **Project KidSafe Campaign (Breakstone, White & Gluck)**, promoted Walking School Buses, and conducted a Bike Rodeo with **MassBike**.
- One of our SRTS Outreach Coordinators attended the Burlington High School Career Fair, where she spoke with students about her role; shared information on **SRTS's latest programs for high school students** and how they can get involved at their school; and how the Program can fit into their curriculums.
- SRTS conducted **pedestrian safety professional development** with the nursing staff of Beverly Public Schools to prepare them for their roles when hosting **Walking School Buses and Flagship Days activities**.
- The Principal at Osgood Elementary School in Cohasset reached out to SRTS to get her **entire school trained in pedestrian safety**. Twenty classes in grades K-2 braved the elements and practiced sidewalk, crosswalk, and parking lot safety. Osgood has been an SRTS partner since 2012 but decided to get every student up-to-speed before the next **Flagship Day** in May!

ENCOURAGEMENT
INSPIRING THROUGH MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES

Imagine the power of encouragement! When students are uplifted, they unleash their inner creativity and bring a fresh perspective to the table. Encourage students, and they will "Wow!" you—responding with enthusiasm. We organize events and contests with serious core messages, encouraging students to actively participate in fun, and meaningful ways—and they always deliver.

FLAGSHIP DAYS

Massachusetts students rallied for three statewide Flagship Day events to demonstrate what they have learned about walking, biking, and rolling to school. With flyers in multiple languages to get the word out prior to the events, participation continued to grow this year. These events can also bring families, champions, community members, and even elected officials and law enforcement together to commit to addressing urgent safety needs or simply to reinforce the value of choosing to walk or ride.

Flagship Days: Number of Schools Registered

- **iWalk: 208** (an increase of 20% over last year)
- **Massachusetts Winter Walk & Roll to School Day: 123** (6% increase over last year)
- **Massachusetts Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day: 261** (30% increase over last year)

Total Incentives/Materials Distributed

- Haitian Creole	**1,110**
- Spanish	**7,850**
Bike Helmets*	**360**
Hand Signal Bookmarks	**20,065**
Survey Incentive Kits	**5**
Walk Bookmarks - English	**47,087**

*Many thanks to our generous partner, the law firm of Breakstone, White, & Gluck's Project KidSafe Campaign, for again donating bike helmets for distribution to students in 22 communities.






1,000TH PARTNER SCHOOL CELEBRATION

This year, we held our 1,000th Partner Celebration in Belchertown, MA. Last year, Belchertown signed on all five schools as partners resulting in the MassDOT SRTS Program reaching its 1,000-Partner School milestone! As part of the celebration, the elementary schools completed "1,000 Things" challenges like 1,000 jumps with a jump rope, 1,000 praise notes, and 1,000 books checked out of the library.

*"Partnering with Safe Routes to School gives our students additional resources and makes learning about bike and pedestrian safety fun. Plus, our teachers will benefit from turn-key lesson plans and professional development courses. We had a great turnout for our first **iWalk** event and we look forward to participating in many more."* **—Brian Cameron, Belchertown School Superintendent**

SAFE STREETS SMART TRIPS (SSST) HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST

High school students from across the state used their artistic, technical, and SRTS-inspired talents to emphasize how we must all put safety first and do our part to reduce injuries and tragedies on our roadways in our SSST High School Video Contest. Students were asked to write and produce a 30-to-60-second video focused on interpreting the various signs and pavement markings on roadways and in school zones and explaining their meaning. We received **43** entries from 10 different schools; then MassDOT Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Jamey Tesler announced the winners of this 9th annual contest at the MassDOT Moving Together conference on November 1, 2022.



"Each year, students from across the state have used humor, facts, and real-life incidents to underscore how all of us have to put safety first and do our part to reduce injuries and deaths on the roadways."
—Former Secretary Jamey Tesler

Winners in the Freshman/Sophomore Category

- Grand Prize: Newton North High School —"Signs are Your Friend"
- Runner Up: Dartmouth High School —"Dartmouth High School News - Road Safety"
- Honorable Mention: Maynard High School —"Kids Crossing"

Winners in the Junior/Senior Category

- Grand Prize: Millis High School —"Can't Stop Motion"
- Runner Up: Framingham High School —"Speeding Kills"
- Honorable Mention: Dartmouth High School —"Wacky Driving Made Safer"









HIGH SCHOOL MARKETING PLAN:

Partnership with High Schools means the SRTS Program will now develop and administer educational materials, campaigns, and programs not only to the High School partners but directly to the High School student audience. The objective of marketing efforts towards High School students is to encourage them to engage with the SRTS Program and display a sustained commitment to safe travel behaviors that prioritize alternative modes of transportation and the adoption of best practices to establish a safe travel environment, particularly within and around the school campus.

MASSDOT SRTS HIGH SCHOOL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

With a successful soft launch in January/February 2023, we established our High School Ambassador Program to recruit high school students and train them as volunteers for biking and pedestrian safety training with elementary and middle school students. With taglines including, “Volunteer to do good in your community.” / “Self-starters and doers wanted!” / “Add real-world experience to your resume.” / “A way to earn community service hours,” we provided high schools with a marketing toolkit that included posters, flyers, website and newsletter content, and social media graphics and content to increase student interest and participation. By pledging to become SRTS Ambassadors, students will receive expert safe travel training, add real-world field experience to their resumes, and receive community service hours while helping younger students and their families access safe, healthy, and equitable transportation options.

Schools from Lexington, Arlington, and Belmont, among the first to become SRTS partners nearly 18 years ago, have been part of the Program long enough to have students who have experienced SRTS throughout elementary, middle, and high school!

CAR-FREE CAMPUS DAY

“Let’s Show Our Planet–and Campus–Some Love.” New this year, in celebration of Earth Month, we encouraged high school students to make one day in April, May, or June car-free with a pledge to show the school’s commitment to safe, sustainable transportation choices and collective love for our planet. Our marketing campaigns created opportunities for activities such as creating parklets, cleaning up the campus, hosting a bike tune-up day, and more.

ENGAGEMENT

My favorite thing about SRTS is working hands-on with the communities I serve. I love getting to know names and faces from select boards, regional commissions, planning councils, etc., while in the field. But without a doubt, the best part is when I return to a school and a student remembers not only the education curriculum from the year or two before but remembers that I was the one who taught it to them. In only a few short years, I've been able to see young students transform from the confidence they've gained as independent walkers, bikers, and rollers within their schools, their families, and among their friends.

—Maggie Burke, Outreach Coordinator

Our reach and participation levels are continuously on the rise! We proactively engaged with schools, districts, municipalities, law enforcement, and community organizations to communicate our unwavering commitment to the goal of SRTS and to secure their steadfast support for safe and active commutes. The response was bold and enthusiastic—with **102 new School Partners and 23 new Alliance Partners joining this year.**







+102

+23



ENGAGEMENT
PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION DAY

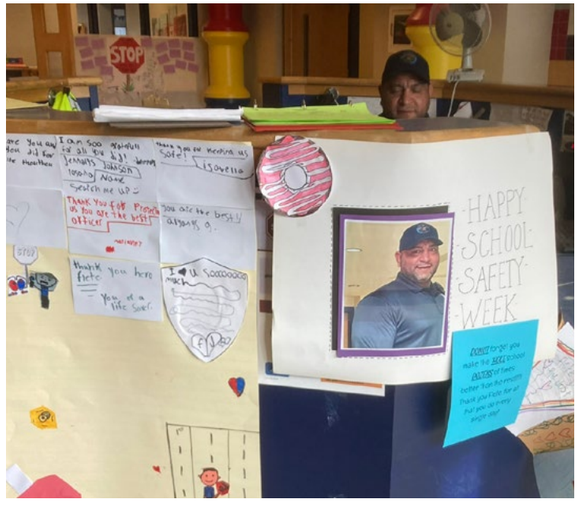
Increasingly, schools are emphasizing the significant role Crossing Guards play with **47** Partner Schools newly adopting our SRTS Crossing Guard materials in 2022-2023. Our third Annual **Crossing Guard Appreciation Day** was again a popular event; students, families, and members of the community shared their esteem for this profession by nominating those deserving of our "Crossing Guard of the Year Award." This year we received **177** nominations for 78 Crossing Guards from 30+ communities. We expressed gratitude to these safety heroes all over the state on March 22 and announced the winners at our Annual Awards Ceremony in June. Outreach materials included the development of posters, promotion on social media, and a thank-you card that students could download, sign, and give to their Crossing Guards.

CROSSING GUARD OF THE YEAR WINNERS

"*Crossing Guards play an integral role in school communities throughout the Commonwealth by helping to support the safe travel of students and families to and from school. We are pleased to recognize this year's winners who were nominated by families and school and community members because of their special contributions within each community and for their exemplary level of service, proactive safety-focused actions they perform, and their enthusiasm and dedication in keeping the individuals they serve safe.*"
—Gina Fiandaca, Former Transportation Secretary and CEO at the SRTS Annual Awards Ceremony

- **Crossing Guard of the Year:** Debbie Lang, Warren-Prescott School, Boston
- **Honorable Mention:** Dr. James Cummings, Grafton Public Schools
- **Crossing Guard Champions:**
  - Cheryl Anziano, Herbert V. Bowie Elementary School, Chicopee
  - Linda Carella, Hardy Elementary School, Arlington
  - Claire MacPherson, Pierce School, Brookline





YARD SIGN DESIGN CONTEST

We never cease to be amazed by the creativity of our elementary and middle school students who respond to our call to promote safe roads for cyclists and pedestrians. The theme of our 7th annual Yard Sign Design Contest focused on slowing down in school zones and on/around school property. We received an amazing **507** entries (+176, 53% more than last year) from 29 schools. Two of the winning signs were multi-lingual! We printed the winning yard signs and delivered them to schools statewide which displayed them proudly on campuses and in family yards. We selected winners from:

- Lincoln-Hancock Elementary School (Quincy)
- The Patrick Lyndon Pilot School (West Roxbury)
- John R. Fausey Elementary School (West Springfield)
- Richardson Olmsted School (North Easton)



EVALUATION







3,114

Students Represented in Parent/Guardian Travel Survey

I have enjoyed being an integral part of the Safe Routes to School Program since inception and it has been great watching the Program grow from a seedling to such a mature, difference-making Program. Being part of such important work has been the motivation and driving force that makes me proud to go to work every day!

–Leon Papadopoulos, Sr. Operations Manager

On-site observation and analysis by our SRTS field team gives us the expert insight we need to assess how the Program can benefit each school and effectuate improvements. This year we completed **149 Arrival/Dismissal Observations** and provided tangible recommendations to schools to improve safety and reduce traffic congestion. To assess infrastructure issues and walkability around schools, we joined school staff, engineers, city planners, maintenance teams, and other stakeholders in **16** formal **Walk Assessments**, with findings that inform a future of clearer sidewalks, improved signage, ADA accessible ramps, safer paths, and better routes to school, as well as the formation of **Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, and Park, Walk, & Roll** locations.

ENGINEERING

My background is in active transportation and urban & regional planning. I'm particularly interested in the relationships between the built environment, mobility access & choices, and public health. I joined the SRTS Team because of my passion for increasing safe & reliable transportation options as well as building more equitable and resilient neighborhoods and communities.

—Tori Halloran, Outreach Coordinator







At SRTS, we are building for safety, access, and mobility. Our "Engineering" E, backed with additional funding, will help build confidence in students as they commute using public streets and sidewalks. Through two MassDOT grant programs, we are creating better, safer infrastructure around our public elementary, middle, and high schools. Our resources, observations, and guidance help schools and districts identify hazards, safety issues, and areas for improvement that students encounter when walking, bicycling, or using a wheeled mobility device to get to school.

13

Grants Awarded



ENGINEERING
PLANNING FOR SAFETY; BUILDING CONFIDENCE



5 Signs and Lines Grants awarded

└ **20** Signs and Lines projects completed since the Program's inception

Totaling **$24K**

8 Infrastructure Grants awarded

└ **39** Infrastructure projects completed since the Program's inception

└ **40** Projects currently in progress

Totaling **$11M**



Due to the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in the fall of 2021, MassDOT was excited to use part of the increased funding to expand our SRTS Infrastructure Grant Program by about $5 million per year.

Partner Schools can apply for grants through **Signs and Lines**, which provides low-cost design and construction funding for projects such as crosswalk improvements and sign installation around schools. We provide up to $6,000 in eligible construction funding to selected municipalities, and approximately $4,000 in additional benefits of assessment and design services. In this fifth year of the program, we awarded **five** Signs and Lines grants. Including these, we have completed **20** Signs and Lines projects since the Program's inception.

Our **Infrastructure Grants** are designed for larger projects like sidewalk improvements, traffic calming measures, and bicycle facilities. We award between $200,000 to $2 million for eligible projects that meet the objectives of the SRTS Program; in this project year, we awarded approximately $11 million to **eight** Massachusetts municipalities. Since the Programs' inception, we have completed 39 infrastructure projects—additionally, 40 projects are currently in progress.







To assist with scoring grant applicants, MassDOT:

- Utilized a rubric that prioritized equity through a variety of data points including the percentage of students served that are considered economically disadvantaged and the school's Title I designation.
- Included a new section called "Additional Equity Indicators" that identifies Environmental Justice communities, average school attendance rate, and students with disabilities.
- Reviewed detailed plans and estimates for proposed work.
- Identified the level of school involvement in SRTS programs.

We are pleased to be able to provide funding for these important local SRTS infrastructure projects which will help create safe pathways for students to get to and from their schools. Individuals of all ages are eager to walk and bike more in their communities and it is our goal to continue to collaborate with local officials and stakeholders to create infrastructure, connections, and pathways that are accessible, equitable, and have the latest best practices in place to ensure all travelers safely reach their destinations.

–Gina Fiandaca, Former Transportation Secretary and CEO, MassDOT

SIGNS AND LINES GRANTS[1]

School	Municipality	Project Description Improved safety, access, and mobility for students by the following:
Fox Hill Elementary School	Burlington	The removal of existing signs and pavement markings and replacement with new ones, new crosswalk markings, and installation of wrong-way arrows to direct traffic in the prescribed pattern.
Ferryway School	Malden	New pavement markings and new signage to reinforce school zone rules.
Clyde F. Brown Elementary School	Millis	New signage, pavement markings, and wrong-way arrows to reinforce the flow of traffic in a one-way circulation pattern to reduce conflicts.
Westfield Middle School	Westfield	Implemented solutions to improve pedestrian visibility and safety through the striping/restriping of crosswalks, new signage, and the removal of a left turn movement.







[1]A fifth grant was awarded to a community that was unable to build out the project in time to receive reimbursement, however, they received a full plan set of improvements and plan to implement them when resources are available.

INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

School	Municipality	Project Description Improved safety, access, and mobility for students by the following:
Freetown Elementary School	Freetown	The installation of a new asphalt shared-use path with granite curb, crosswalk, raised crossings, ADA compliant crosswalks, and new pavement markings.
Robert Adams Middle School	Holliston	The installation of a new concrete shared-use path, landscaped area, vertical granite curbing, ramps, signage, new catch basins for drainage, and crosswalks.
H.B. Lawrence Elementary School	Holyoke	Improvements to six intersections on streets leading to the school including installation of new concrete sidewalk, landscaped areas, vertical granite curbing, curb ramps, signage, drainage, crosswalks, and mill-in traverse rumble strips.
Oak Hill Middle School	Newton	Improvements to traffic flow including new asphalt sidewalk/shared-use path, armadillo dividers, bicycle transition ramps, pedestrian tactile warning strips, raised crossings, signage, and pedestrian signals.
Coolidge Middle School	Reading	Upgrades to drainage and illumination, new asphalt shared-use path, vertical granite curbing, crosswalks curb ramp, and signage.
William E. Norris School	Southampton	The installation of a new concrete shared-use path, concrete sidewalk, vertical granite curbing, curb ramp, detectable warning panel, signage, crosswalks, and mill-in traverse rumble strips.
Samuel Bowles Elementary School	Springfield	Improvements to traffic flow with new asphalt berm and signage, and new asphalt shared-use path with street buffer, grass buffer and vertical granite curbing, drainage, curb ramps, crosswalks, bicycle crossings, pedestrian and bicycle tactile warning strips, and flashing beacon and sign assemblies.
Sarah W. Gibbons Middle School	Westborough	The installation of a new asphalt shared-use path with vertical granite curbing, new curb ramp, signage, crosswalks with tactile warning strips, and flashing beacon and sign assemblies with push buttons.

EQUITY







Before joining the Safe Routes to School team, I was part of MassBike's team of instructors in Cambridge Public Schools. Most instructors liked teaching the skills, but I preferred approaching students whose body language let me know that they didn't know how to ride, the helmet was not going to fit their head, or English was not their preferred language—I was once that 6th grader. I've been with SRTS for almost five years and am most proud of the smiles I receive when I'm able to find a quiet space at a busy bike rodeo to help a student discover their #bikejoy.

—Vivian Ortiz, Sr. Outreach Coordinator & Bike Education Lead

EQUITY
ADVANCING ACCESSIBILITY

Our commitment to equity serves as an overarching principle; we must reach ALL students. We know that active travel is the only way that some students can get to school and that the environment for walking and biking is not the same everywhere; underserved neighborhoods demand prioritization for improvements. So, when considering resources for education, encouragement, engagement, evaluation, and engineering, our first consideration is ensuring equity and opportunities for every student. For SRTS, this means continually improving the accessibility of resources for students, regardless of:

- Where they live—in a city, in a rural area, or in the suburbs.
- The language they speak—family-oriented materials are translated into nine languages, with family-friendly communication.
- Abilities—we use the term "rolling" to encompass bikes and wheeled mobility devices and our online materials are accessible to those with disabilities.
- Race, culture, and socio-economic status.

It is crucial that our team continues to work hard to find ways to further equity in the Program. We are currently exploring how to offer technical assistance in applying for SRTS grant programs so that our municipalities who may be staff-limited can also leverage this funding opportunity to support students in their communities.



Our annual **Equity Assessment & Analysis** helps us evaluate our impact in delivering equitable programming. Building on the factors incorporated into the State of Massachusetts' School and District Profile reports, four of the five equity indicators were identified as a means to track how well the MassDOT SRTS programming was distributed during the 2022-2023 school year. One indicator (students in rural schools) is derived from US Census Data.



96
Bike/Pedestrian trainings with priority schools

18,596
Non-English resources distributed

85
Materials translated and/or tagged for accessibility

MassDOT SRTS Program Equity Indicators Among Participating Schools 2022-2023

- **7%** of students at rural schools
- **42%** low income students
- **18%** students with a disability
- **45%** students of color
- **14%** students with limited English proficiency



84.7%
of Environmental Justice Communities represented through SRTS Partnership



Equity Indicator	K-8 Schools Only				K-12 Schools	
	SRTS Program Partner Schools 2018-19	SRTS Program Partner Schools 2019-20	SRTS Program Partner Schools 2020-21	SRTS Program Partner Schools 2021-22	SRTS Program Partner Schools 2022-23 (Compared to All K-12 Schools in 22-23)	All Public K-12 Schools 2022-2023
Students in non-urban environments	9.1%	8.9%	8.9%	10.8%	7.0%	8.9%
Low income students	21.1%	32.7%	37.3%	43.6%	42.3%	42.4%
Students with a disability	17.2%	17.5%	17.6%	17.9%	18.3%	18.4%
Students identifying as non-White or Hispanic	42.3%	42.6%	43.7%	43.9%	45.7%	45.8%
Students with limited English proficiency	12.3%	12.5%	12.2%	12.8%	13.9%	12.2%

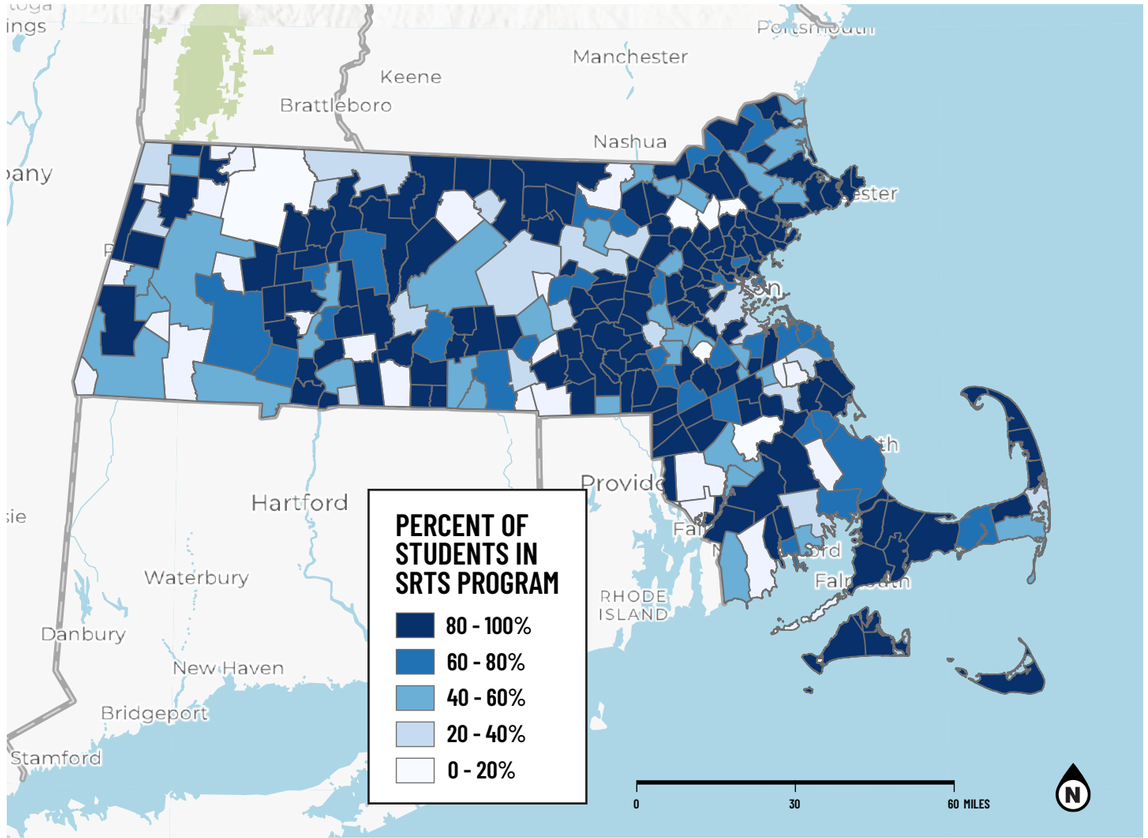
The Comparison of Participation in the MassDOT STRS Program shows how the Program performed for the five equity indicators compared to the overall student population in Massachusetts. Note that previous year's data (2018-2022) measured the equity indicators for K-8 partner schools (light teal). The 2022-2023 data represent equity indicators measured for K-12 partner schools (dark teal). The cells in teal represent the years where the variable was redefined—in the case of students in non-urban environments, new urban/rural census classifications were released in the 2022-23 school year; in the case of the low-income measurement, the method the state used to calculate this measure changed in the 2021-22 school year.

The strength of the Program is evident since despite adding the data for all public high schools into the mix, the representation statewide is still +/- 2% points overall for this school year. That gap will be closed even more as we continue to partner with more high schools.

A key difference in past years is the number of students in non-urban environments. The US Census Bureau released new urban/rural designations this past year to reflect the 2020 census while the previous year's calculations relied on urban/rural designations from 2010.

The 2022-2023 MassDOT SRTS Program served more students with disabilities (+2%), students of color (+4%), and students with limited English proficiency (+9%) compared to the previous year.

This map illustrates the proportion of students in the state who attend schools that have partnered with the SRTS program.



SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

2,168
Followers[2]

1,120
Followers

379
Followers

205
Followers

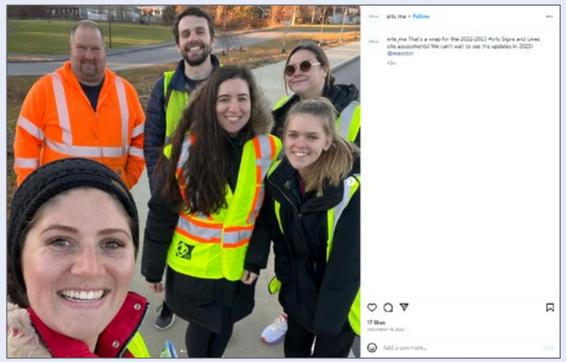


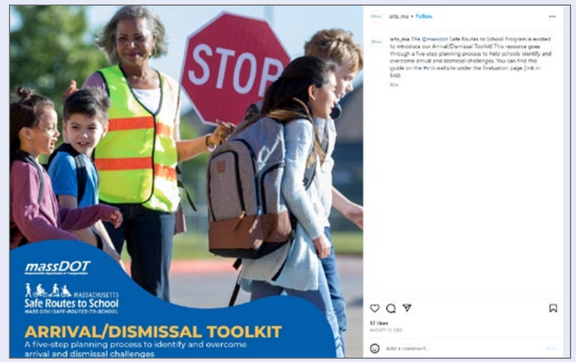
18
E-Mail Blasts

43.6%
Open Rate[3]



5,595
SRTS Newsletter Subscribers

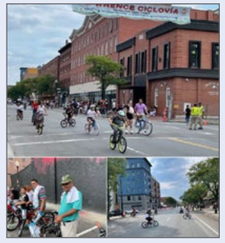




















[2]Due to the ownership transition of Twitter, many followers left the platform, so the percentage of growth is not as high as with other social media platforms.

[3]Median open rate for state and local government accounts, reported from Granicus: https://granicus.com/resource/2022-public-sector-digital-communications-benchmark-report/ is 30% (page 5 of report)

WHAT'S NEXT / SUBCONSULTANT ACTIVITY

WHAT'S NEXT:

Our collective knowledge and expertise will be the driving force behind our approach for the 2023-2024 project year; we anticipate, with enthusiasm, all that we have planned to keep the MassDOT SRTS Program fresh, engaging, and ever-expanding:

- For High School students, we will add new outreach materials based on lessons learned from the Ambassador Program's pilot launch and the spring Car Free Campus Day, develop an SRTS Resource Guide, conduct High School discussion groups and market testing, and develop and implement an active transportation campaign.
- We will award more infrastructure funding through the Signs and Lines and Infrastructure Grants, and for the first year, we will launch both grants at the same time. Signs and Lines grant funding will increase from $6K to 10K per year, and we will pilot technical assistance for the Infrastructure Grant.
- We will continue our popular annual contests for Yard Sign Design, High School Videos, and Crossing Guard of the Year Award.
- We will update our user-friendly Family Travel Survey platform to allow for future customizations of questions and reports.
- We will pilot a bike rack grant program.
- We will develop and print an informative and attractive SRTS calendar for schools to display.



- We will continue to explore how we can support the development of Traffic Gardens in the Commonwealth.
- And we anticipate the launch of our new MassDOT SRTS Listserv pilot for idea sharing. The goal of the Listserv is to reach communities and stakeholders that have not yet participated in the Program and deepen existing partners' involvement in the Program, ultimately giving them the confidence to elevate their individual SRTS Programs and help their communities become more sustainable.

OUR WORKING PARTNERS:

Synergy is essential for the success of Safe Routes to School. We collaborate with industry experts and specialized providers to deliver excellence to Massachusetts schools, students, and communities. MassDOT would like to thank **AECOM** for providing comprehensive program management and diligent outreach efforts that have facilitated MassDOT's SRTS Program to continue to rank in the top tier of the annual National Safe Routes Partnership State Report Cards. In addition, **UrbanTrans of North America** contributed their expertise to survey analysis, our Arrival/Dismissal Toolkit, webinar content, and other engaging materials. **Alta Planning + Design** prepared our equity analysis and provided content for the Webinar for Municipalities. We partnered with **MassBike** on bicycle safety education as well as Bike Rodeos and other events. Finally, the **Metropolitan Area Planning Council** helped us transition the parent/guardian travel survey to **AECOM** for redevelopment.

AECOM alta MAPC MassBike URBANTRANS NORTH AMERICA



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

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massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation