

# Bike Train

## CASE STUDY

## Cambridge

EDUCATION **ENCOURAGEMENT** ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION ENGINEERING EQUITY | **URBAN** RURAL SUBURBAN

### Background

Bike trains are a fun, social, physically active, and environmentally friendly form of transportation. Like a walking school bus, bike trains are made with the help of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Outreach Coordinators alongside community members who then work together to determine student drop-off and pick-up points along a designated route to school that is under complete supervision of parents/guardians or school staff.

### Overview

Peabody School is an elementary school in Cambridge, where about 77% of students live within a one-mile radius. The middle school students from the Rindge Avenue Upper School are located within the same building. Both schools became partners with SRTS in 2015.

One dedicated parent biked their children to school every day. In the spring of 2021, she started noticing other families biking to Peabody. This led her to approach parents/guardians at the bike racks during arrival and invited them to meet up and ride to school together. The small, but growing, group gathered for the final Fridays in the school year and agreed to meet up in the fall.

In September 2022, this parent contacted the returning families, posted flyers in the Peabody catchment area, and introduced herself to parents during arrival. In some communities, bike trains start off as quarterly or monthly events. Some of the families who previously walked to school transitioned to joining the bike bus.

To give more families the opportunity to participate, this parent intentionally scheduled the bike trains for Friday mornings at the same time, at the same three meet-up locations, and biked the same route. The bike train developed into a staple at Peabody because of its manageable size, predictable route, and frequent schedule.

### Lessons Learned

- ✓ The number of students and families participating in the weekly bike train has grown to a level where there are now four additional parents/friends helping guide the students along the route. Depending on the size of the group, three adults may help marshal students through an intersection.
- ✓ In its third year running, students who joined the bike train riding on the same bike with their parents/guardians are now biking independently. Some are biking alongside the bike train leader.



### Impacts



The principal has joined the bike train on occasion. The opportunity for a student and their principal to connect in a fun way is meaningful for both



Some of the students from the Rindge Avenue Upper School have joined the bike train



To socialize with their peers, some students ride past the school to join the bike train at one of its meeting points