

Rural Communities

CASE STUDY

Clarksburg

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

Background

Clarksburg Elementary School is located off a busy road. For a long time, their school policy did not allow student walkers and rollers because there are currently no sidewalks leading up to the school. During arrival and dismissal time, there is significant traffic on and near the school campus that poses a safety concern for students walking and rolling. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) collaborated with Clarksburg Elementary School to do an arrival/dismissal observation. After this observation, SRTS recommended that the school amend their policy to allow student walkers and rollers. The school edited their policy and engaged their student council to discuss ideas around safe walking and rolling.

Overview

In 2022, the student council identified a nearby parking lot as an opportunity to increase student walkers. The parking lot serves the recreation fields near the school and is connected to the school by a trail that leads through the woods. SRTS worked with the student council to explore options for infrastructure and safety improvements at the parking lot and along the trail. SRTS also put together a circulation plan to utilize the space as a satellite drop-off location. The student council worked with their staff advisor to handle the launch and marketing of the parking lot as a Park, Walk, and Roll Location. In the last few weeks of school, thanks to the student council's hard work, the school began utilizing the parking lot as a satellite drop off location once a week. Students would get dropped off at the parking lot and walk up the trail to school. Next, student council has their sights set on creating a plan so that older students can bike to school, collaborating with SRTS and local officials.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Involving student council in walk, bike, & roll initiatives increased students' participation in and ownership of the event as well as interest in creating ongoing programs
- ✓ Students enjoyed opportunities to bike and walk to school together and the socialization time it provided
- ✓ Infrastructure limitations and the trail's makeup prevent most students from biking to the school's bike rack and entrance. Students disliked having to carry their bikes up the path, as there was no bike rack down at the town field.



Impacts



The school will work with the town to move a bike rack to the town field for bike storage during future walk, bike, & roll to school events



SRTS helped identify the importance of bike safety education, especially with existing infrastructure gaps. SRTS taught bike safety sessions to increase students' bike safety knowledge in Spring 2023.



The School and Town have prioritized maintenance of the trail and will work together to clear it following storms



Students want to increase bike to school day events frequency and identified a goal to have one to two Bike to School days per week in May