

# SAFE SCHOOL TRAVEL DURING COVID-19

A return to the physical classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic may yield an increase in vehicle traffic for your school and/or an increase in walking, biking, and rolling. There are many decisions to navigate as you assemble your arrival and dismissal plans. **Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program can support you with important services that can bolster your plans.**



## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL SERVICES

	Task Force Formation	Arrival/Dismissal Guidance	Evaluation Tools	Education Tools	Walk, Bike, and Roll Programs	Crossing Guard Resources
Creating an efficient planning procedure for safe arrival and dismissal	✓	✓	✓			
Improving safety in anticipation of increased family vehicle traffic	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Accommodating all forms of transportation during arrival and dismissal	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Reducing the amount of family vehicle traffic on campus	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Offering educators safe options to complete active transportation and safety training	✓			✓		✓

\* All services can be done in-person or virtually, depending on the current circumstances.

## WHAT TO SHARE WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS ABOUT SAFE SCHOOL TRAVEL

Remind parents/guardians of these important safety tips:

- 1 Wear a face covering when traveling.
- 2 Maintain social distance and use sidewalk etiquette.
- 3 Check that students can still hear and see properly when wearing personal protective equipment such as helmets, masks, and other gear.

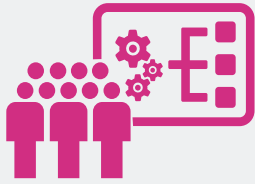
We can help you start planning right away by reviewing your existing arrival/dismissal plan. Start by emailing your school's SRTS Coordinator.

 **CLICK HERE TO GET STARTED**

\*This informational guide is intended to help school districts and elementary/middle schools prepare for safe arrival and dismissal during the COVID-19 pandemic. For additional public health and planning resources, we advise that you follow local, [state](#), and [federal](#) guidelines.

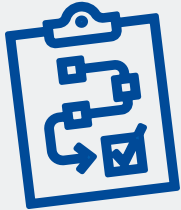
# WAYS WE CAN HELP

Because no two schools are the same, each school requires a tailored transportation plan reflective of the needs of their student population, with consideration given to geography, travel patterns, access, and equity. The MassDOT SRTS Program brings 15 years of solution-driven services to support partner schools and positively impact active student transportation.



## TASK FORCE FORMATION

A SRTS taskforce can **streamline student transportation planning** and help troubleshoot school and parent concerns by enlisting the expertise of school district, municipal, and parent stakeholders. Hosted by an individual school or at a district level, a SRTS taskforce can assist with engineering, communication/encouragement, education, regulatory and informational signage, and policy.



## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL GUIDANCE

A clear and well-communicated arrival/dismissal plan that includes all forms of student transportation is key for ensuring that safety rules apply to everyone. The Program will **create or review existing arrival/dismissal procedures** and suggest changes to encourage preferred forms of student transportation, ensure the use of proper signage, and mitigate any modal conflicts. The Program can also guide **communication strategies** for sharing these procedures with parents/guardians and school staff.



## EVALUATION TOOLS

Schools may experience an increase in family vehicle traffic, which poses a safety risk for everyone on and around the school campus. Traffic concerns can be mitigated by examining infrastructure and encouraging active transportation options. The Program offers **parent travel surveys** to collect data about student travel modes; walking and biking **route mapping** to identify safe walking school bus, bike train, and park and walk/roll locations; and neighborhood **walk/bike audits** to assess infrastructure conditions.



## EDUCATION TOOLS

MassDOT anticipates less opportunities to offer in-person programming over the next year. However, the Program provides many sustainable and flexible options to start or maintain a **safety training program**. Professional development sessions for Health & Wellness faculty in concert with the adoption of pedestrian and bicycle curriculum support ongoing safety education. **Remote learning materials** for instructors and students allow for instruction through a combination of virtual training sessions, videos, lesson plans, and printed materials. The SRTS website also includes parent driver education resources, and bicycle/pedestrian-themed curriculum (sixth grade) for STEM, ELA, and Social Studies.



## WALK, BIKE, AND ROLL PROGRAMS

A strong active transportation program can help lessen family vehicle traffic. The Program encourages schools to celebrate Massachusetts' three annual **flagship events**: iWalk; Winter Walk; and Massachusetts Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day. The Program can assist with the formation of organized walking and biking groups and provide resources such as the **Walking School Bus and Bike Train Guides** and a **Walking School Bus Kit**.



## CROSSING GUARD RESOURCES

Anticipated changes to student transportation modes due to COVID-19 will require the guidance and support of neighborhood Crossing Guards. SRTS **Crossing Guard training** resources provide consistent education across the Commonwealth. Materials can be adopted as a stand-alone training model or as a supplement to existing training.