

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MASSACHUSETTS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Celebrating 20 Years
Massachusetts Safe Routes to School

2024-2025 EVENTS

JULY - SEPTEMBER | 2024
SUMMER PROGRAMMING WITH SCHOOLS, DAY CAMPS, & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

AUGUST 20 | 2024
SAFE STREETS SMART TRIPS (SSST) HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST LAUNCH AND WEBINAR

SEPTEMBER 4 | 2024
SIGNS & LINES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS LAUNCH INFORMATION SESSION

OCTOBER 1 | 2024
SSST HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST SUBMISSIONS DUE

OCTOBER 4 | 2024
SIGNS & LINES GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE

OCTOBER 9 | 2024
INTERNATIONAL WALK, BIKE, & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY (IWALK)

OCTOBER 18 | 2024
INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE

OCTOBER 23 | 2024
SSST VIDEO CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT MOVING TOGETHER CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 1 | 2024
BIKE RACK GRANT LAUNCH

NOVEMBER 15 | 2024
BIKE RACK GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE

DECEMBER 2 | 2024
ANNUAL PARTNER SURVEY LAUNCH

JANUARY 3 | 2025
YARD SIGN DESIGN CONTEST LAUNCH

JANUARY 29 | 2025
WINTER WEBINAR—TRAFFIC GARDENS

FEBRUARY 5 | 2025
WINTER WALK & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY

FEBRUARY 24 | 2025
YARD SIGN DESIGN CONTEST ENTRIES DUE

MARCH 1 | 2025
CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

MARCH 19 | 2025
CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 16 | 2025
SPRING WEBINAR—NEW TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS

APRIL 16 | 2025
CAR-FREE CAMPUS DAY

MAY 7 | 2025
MASSACHUSETTS WALK, BIKE, & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY

JUNE 2 | 2025
ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Celebrating 20 Years Massachusetts Safe Routes to School

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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For the past two decades, MassDOT has inspired the youth of the Commonwealth to embrace the value of active bodies and focused minds. Through the dedicated efforts of our Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, we develop sustainable strategies that prioritize the health and well-being of students—empowering them to confidently and safely walk, bike, and roll to school. Our SRTS team strives to ensure safe, healthy, and accessible travel options for all students commuting to and from school. Each year, we expand our reach, engaging more students and developing additional Program resources to strengthen this vital initiative.

During the 2024-2025 school year, MassDOT's SRTS Program reached **646,600 students** across the Commonwealth—an **increase of over 50,000** students compared to the previous school year. Through outreach programs, educational webinars, new initiatives, materials, incentives, events, contests, and more, we continue to make a meaningful impact. As we welcome more SRTS Partner Schools, our statewide initiative grows stronger, advancing safety and promoting active transportation for all.

We also prioritize student safety by improving our infrastructure near schools to facilitate and encourage active commutes. We advanced safe infrastructure around five schools by awarding **Infrastructure and Signs & Lines grants**, while our **Technical Assistance Program** keeps our lines of communication open all year round. Additionally, we introduced the benefits and feasibility of implementing **Traffic Gardens** in SRTS communities providing young students with a safe, scaled environment to learn and practice the rules of the road.

This report provides an overview of our efforts and achievements throughout the 2024-2025 school year. It showcases sustainable activities, resources, and events that have positively impacted students, schools, parents/guardians, and the diverse communities of Massachusetts. The success of the Program is evident not only through the data in the report but also through the candid photos captured during the school year. These images beautifully showcase the dedication of the SRTS team, along with the focus, commitment, and joy of our growing students.



Sincerely,

Phillip Eng
Interim MassDOT Secretary and MBTA General Manager and CEO

LETTER FROM DIRECTOR



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Dear Friends,

On behalf of MassDOT, we are pleased to share this Annual Impact Report for 2024-2025, celebrating twenty years of Safe Routes to School in the Commonwealth. Our goal is to enrich our youth with skills to help keep their bodies and minds active by biking, walking, and rolling. These can become fun, free, and healthy habits to last a lifetime. Thanks to their participation in the SRTS Program, our students develop confidence, life skills, and awareness, leading to a safer, healthier, and more equitable future for all. As in past years, our team personally visited hundreds of schools to actively encourage and empower students and their families to incorporate safe and active commuting into their daily routines, and to share this message among their peers. As a result, we continued to expand with increased participation in the Program, new features, and great enthusiasm.

I am pleased to share some key accomplishments from our twentieth successful year:

- We introduced the benefits of **School Streets** as a valuable learning tool and offered tips on how to create one that would fit a school's needs, regardless of space or budget.
- We underscored the importance of how to stay safe around crosswalks and developed a new **backpack flyer** in ten languages.
- Together with **MassBike, we piloted a project for on-bike training** by procuring a **mobile bike fleet.**
- After a successful pilot last school year, we officially launched our **Bike Rack Grant Program** to encourage more students to bicycle to school by increasing the number of bicycle parking spaces.
- We enhanced our **Family Travel Survey** tool with new features for easier use.
- We continued our **Technical Assistance Program** for eligible communities that apply for SRTS infrastructure funding to help set communities up for success.

On behalf of the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School team, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible **1,594** SRTS School and Alliance Partners for adopting and supporting our Program. Your collaboration has been instrumental in developing activities and resources that make Massachusetts a safer and more engaging place for our students. Together, through thoughtful planning, dedication, persistence, and passion, we will continue to build strong, sustainable Safe Routes to School programs, fostering safer and healthier communities for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Rachel C. O'Donnell

Rachel O'Donnell, Program Director

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BACKGROUND & REACH



In 2024-2025, marking our twentieth year, MassDOT's free, federally funded program, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), continued its collaborative efforts with students, schools, educators, law enforcement, parents/guardians, community-led organizations, and public health departments. Together, we worked to enhance student safety and health by making active commutes safe, sustainable, equitable, and enjoyable. Guided by the six Es of SRTS — **Education, Encouragement, Engagement, Evaluation, Engineering, and, overarching all areas, Equity** — we remain committed to upholding the highest standards of the Program. Across Massachusetts, our Outreach Coordinators maintained a community-focused approach, bridging the gap between health and transportation. Their efforts yielded numerous positive outcomes, including healthier students, improved academic performance, better air quality, reduced congestion, higher attendance rates, decreased tardiness and absenteeism, and strengthened social and interpersonal skills.

> **Northeast and Whittemore Elementary Schools are proud to be the first MassDOT Safe Routes to School Partners. For the past twenty years our students, staff, and communities have benefitted from the collaborative work of SRTS Outreach Coordinators and the Program to bring fresh and engaging programs, events, and materials to encourage safe and active commutes. We have seen the Program grow exponentially, and we are excited to continue to grow with it.**
>
> — Susan Sutherland,
> Supervisor of Registration, Translation, & Transportation,
> Waltham Public Schools

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LEGEND: SRTS Regions

- 1 Metro North/North Shore
- 2 North/North East
- 3 Southern/Central
- 4 Western/Central
- 5 Greater Boston
- 6 Metro South/South Shore
- 7 South East/Cape & Islands

SRTS PARTNERS WITH 70% OF ELIGIBLE MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC & CHARTER K-12 SCHOOLS!

1,270
Partner Schools

324
Alliance Partners

288
Communities Served

646,600
Students Represented
(9% increase over last year)

496
Pedestrian and Bike Safety Trainings
- 185 Bike
- 311 Pedestrian

774
Flagship Days School Registrations

11%
of Partner Schools with a Bike Train, Walking School Bus, or Park, Walk, & Roll

325
Conferences attended and/or Stakeholder Meetings



EDUCATION



By the end of the project year, we expanded our partnerships to include 1,270 unique schools across Massachusetts, granting us access to a diverse and innovative toolkit of best educational practices. We utilized proven strategies and materials to make learning both enjoyable and effective in our bike and pedestrian safety initiatives, videos, and educational resources. Additionally, insights from case studies allowed us to continuously improve the Program. Our webinars provided timely, relevant information and actionable guidance to schools, students, educators, and communities, with all contributors celebrated during our Annual Awards Ceremony.

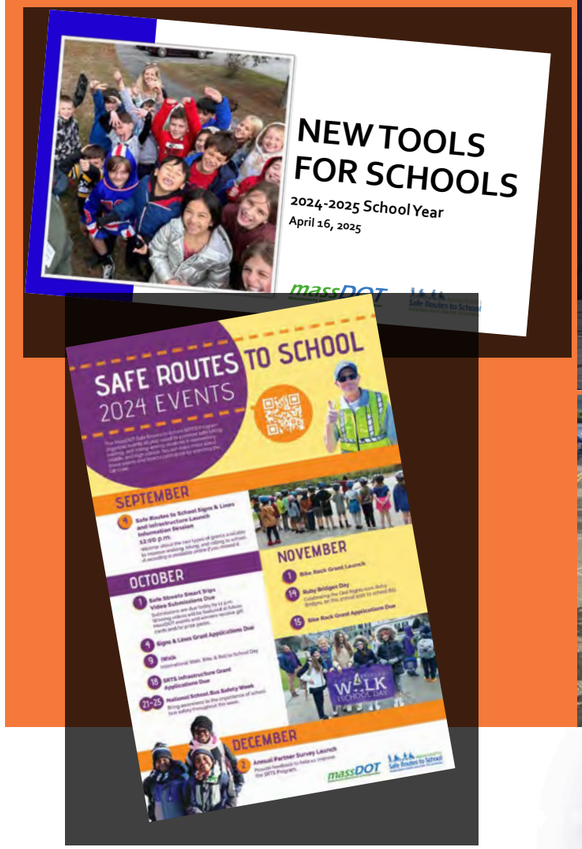
WEBINARS, CONFERENCES, CASE STUDIES, AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The 2024 Signs and Lines and Infrastructure Grant Informational Webinar provided a comprehensive overview of the grant programs, eligibility criteria, project cost categories, timelines, application instructions, and details about the SRTS Technical Assistance Program. It equipped SRTS partners with the knowledge and resources needed to plan effectively and explore how these grants could benefit their schools.

The Safe Streets, Smart Trips (SSST) High School Video Contest Information Session recorded webinar informed viewers with an overview of the contest, submission guidelines, eligibility and rules, theme, contest prizes, and how to submit videos, including a new online form. It also showcased previous winners and prizes for our 2024 SSST High School Video Contest.

In our **Winter Webinar, "Traffic Gardens,"** the SRTS team collaborated with "Discover Traffic Gardens" to present staff and community members with an insightful overview of the past, present, and future of traffic gardens. The session detailed the benefits of traffic gardens and the resources available for communities considering installation. It showcased global case studies, diverse examples, and a vision of how these structures could be implemented in the Commonwealth. Participants learned about ideal locations, different traffic garden types, funding opportunities, activity resources, and the value of partnership and collaboration, along with best practices for installation.

In this year's **Spring Webinar—New Tools for Schools**, our MassDOT SRTS team shared a new and extensive range of educational resources, safety resources, website updates, engaging marketing campaigns (print and electronic), informative webinars, insightful surveys, popular contests, and our Bike Rack Program, all which will be featured individually in this report.







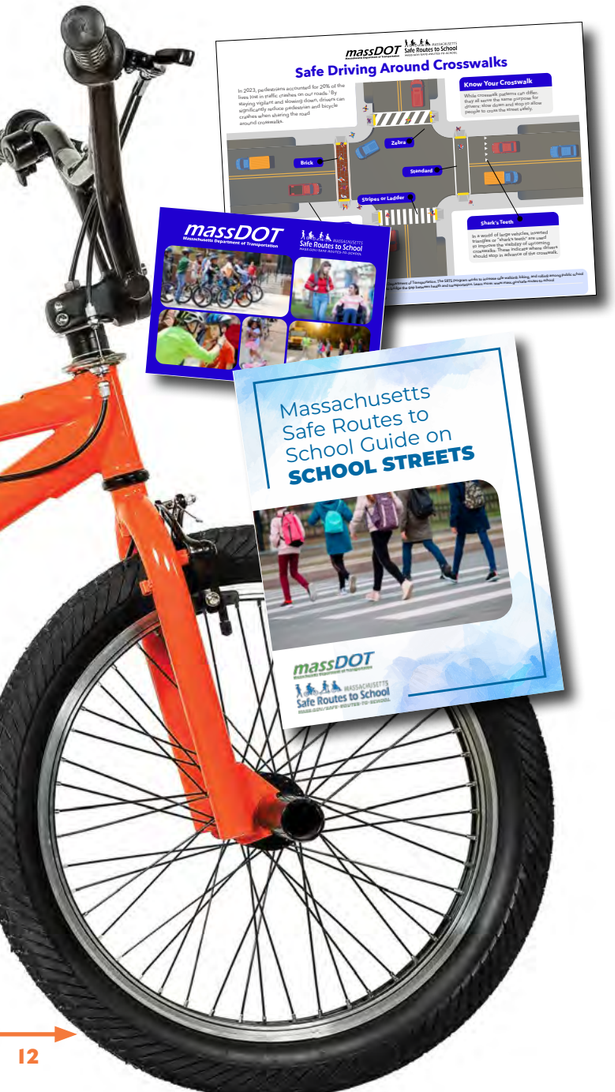


SRTS conducted four **Case Studies for High School Programming** that included studying school background, overview, and programming to help the SRTS team assess their impacts and garner lessons learned to guide future planning. High schools included were Brockton (urban), Lexington (suburban), Somerville (urban), and Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical (suburban).

NEW PRINT AND DIGITAL RESOURCES

Our 2024-2025 SRTS Calendar, an essential resource for parents/guardians, students, teachers, and administrators, helped partners stay current and anticipate and plan for SRTS events. With attractive graphics and photos, this calendar walks the reader through the school year and lists SRTS events, launches, webinars, application due dates, and more. A QR code brings the reader to the SRTS website page with all upcoming and past events.

New for the 2024-2025 school year, the SRTS Program launched a **Pilot Project for On-Bike Training and a Mobile Bike Fleet** in collaboration with **MassBike.** This initiative explored the use of a mobile bicycle fleet to support on-bike training at partner schools. MassBike managed the procurement of all necessary assets for the pilot program, including acquiring a collection of new, used, and donated bicycles in various sizes, arranging secure storage for the bicycles when not in use, and managed the transport of the fleet to selected schools during training sessions.



Safe Driving Around Crosswalks Backpack Flyer: This year's backpack flyer tip sheet, available in ten languages (Haitian Creole, French, Khmer, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, English, and Vietnamese), serves as a valuable resource for parents/guardians, and student drivers. The tip sheet educates drivers on crosswalk laws, safe navigation practices to prevent pedestrian and bicyclist crashes, and familiarizes them with various crosswalk elements and designs.

The SRTS Annual Report is a comprehensive document that captures the collective efforts of Outreach Coordinators, schools, districts, and SRTS School and Alliance Partners. It emphasizes success stories, collaborative solutions, and measurable outcomes, making it an invaluable tool for learning, accountability, and strategic planning.

Our School Streets Guide discusses the benefits of "School Streets," which stem from a European initiative of closing off the streets near schools to cars and opening the streets to people walking, biking, and rolling. The guide highlights examples from around the world, and provides guidance on how to budget for, design, and implement School Streets in communities.

NEWsletter – New and Improved! SRTS updated and improved the design of the online SRTS newsletter into an easier-to-read format.

New Resources! As a complement to the Traffic Gardens webinar, the SRTS team developed new resources available on the SRTS website to assist our partners who are interested in learning more. The new **Digital Toolkit** provides guidance for getting started on traffic garden projects including initial planning and visioning; community engagement; site selection and design; installation and launch; and maintenance. Our new one-page informational flyer, **Traffic Gardens 101**, describes what a traffic garden is, its benefits in the community, and why students and educators love them. The SRTS team also launched **MassDOT's online Traffic Garden interest form.**

The new SRTS 5" x 7" Postcard highlights the benefits of maximizing SRTS partnerships and outlines the services offered through the six Es. To foster a personal connection, the postcard includes a designated place for the SRTS Outreach Coordinator's business card, making them easily accessible, along with a QR code linking to MassDOT's webpage for comprehensive information about the SRTS Program.



A robust program like this had to start somewhere. And that somewhere was 20 years ago. We've shared a lot of great memories with all of our school partners, alliance partners, and champions over the last 20 years. The program would not be what it is today without their support.

— Miranda Briseño
Federal Programs & Regional Planning Coordinator,
Office of Transportation Planning, MassDOT

Celebrating 20 Years Massachusetts Safe Routes to School







ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Our much-anticipated Annual Awards Ceremony once again brought together SRTS champions from all corners of Massachusetts to recognize and celebrate the Program's School Partners, community champions, stakeholders, and Crossing Guards who have made significant contributions within their communities by strengthening, promoting, and improving safety for students who actively commute to and from school. At this year's ceremony, **MassDOT Federal Programs and Regional Planning Coordinator Miranda Briseño** opened with a "Year in Review" of the Program's accomplishments and highlights along with a timeline of Program milestones from its inception to present. **MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver** also offered remarks on behalf of the Department.

With great enthusiasm, MassDOT speakers highlighted the Program's ongoing and growing achievements over the past twenty years to enhance student safety, focus, socialization, and health.

We awarded Partner-Level Certificates to **218** School Partners across Massachusetts who completed SRTS activities and events, qualifying them for Basic, Bronze, Silver, and Gold partner-level awards. We also welcomed **93** new School Partners and **59** new Alliance Partners, awarded the Community Collaboration Award, celebrated exemplary programs by region, and honored the winners of our Crossing Guard of the Year award.

We heard from SRTS supporters including Dennis Geniuch, Director of Health & Wellness K-12, Brockton Public Schools, who offered School Partner remarks, and Susan Sutherland, Supervisor of Registration, Translation, & Transportation, Waltham Public Schools who gave "First SRTS Partner" remarks on behalf of Northeast and Whittemore.

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:

Winner: Greenfield Middle School, Greenfield (Western)

Winner: Margaret Neary Elementary School, Southborough (Central)

Honorable Mention: Warren Community Elementary School, Warren (Central)

Winner: Chelsea High School, Chelsea (Northeast)

Winner: Gilmore Elementary School, Brockton (Southeast)

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION WINNERS

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:

Winner: Melrose Pedestrian and Bicyclist Committee

Honorable Mention: Worcester Safe Routes to School Task Force

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 their community, this eponymous SRTS award is dedicated to the memory of Nikki Tishler, SRTS's great "Superhero."

Jennifer Hessel-Smith, Nathaniel Morton Elementary School, Plymouth







PROGRAM MILESTONES

PROGRAM INITIATION

- 500th Partner Celebration
- Ist Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video Contest
- Ist Yard Sign Design Contest
- Ist Signs & Lines Grant
- Ist Walk Audits & Arrival/Dismissal Observations
- Ist Winter Walk & Roll to School Day
- Ist DESE Professional Development
- Launched Technical Assistance Program
- 1,000th Partner Celebration AND Introduction of High School Partners
- Ist Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign
- Ist Bike Rack Grant

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20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement fosters fresh ideas and enthusiasm, empowering students to tap into their creativity and challenge themselves to explore new opportunities. Through SRTS events and contests around impactful messages, we encourage students to engage in enjoyable and meaningful activities that promote physical, mental, and social growth.

A FEW INSPIRATIONS FROM MONTHLY STATEWIDE COORDINATOR UPDATES AND TALES FROM THE FIELD:

July 2024: Our SRTS Program was honored to have been included as a strategy in one of 50 **Radical and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) grant** awarded nationwide by the Center for Disease Control.

September 2024: Raising awareness ahead of the **National Pedestrian Safety** Month in October, MA SRTS presentation at the quarterly **Mass Traffic Safety Coalition** meeting focused on how the Program works to bridge the gap between health and student transportation.

September 2024: William G. Morgan Elementary School in Holyoke partnered with **Paper City Art Kids** to paint a series of interactive sidewalk murals along the school's **Walking School Bus** (WSB) route. They held a WSB Back-to-School painting event with the SRTS team and other community partners.

October 2024: New England Traffic Safety Education Association (NETSEA), a group of driver and safety education professionals, hosted both MassDOT's SRTS and MassBike as session speakers for the **NETSEA Conference** with over 100 attendees. SRTS session and tabling topics included driver education tip sheet; understanding school zone and school property circulation and traffic patterns; student parking fees and utilization of Park, Walk, and Roll locations, and more.

April 2025: SRTS held an overview meeting with the **K-12 nurses from Newton Public Schools**. The discussion involved improving equity through uniform grade cohort educational programming across their 22 schools.

May 2025: For the first time, the **National Youth Bike Summit** (YBS) held its annual three-day event in Boston. The MassDOT SRTS team reached out to the organizers and helped to connect them with local, like-minded groups. Twenty scholarships for our SRTS partner high schools were offered by the conference organizers so students could attend for free.

> **Action is the foundational key to all success.**
>
> — Pablo Picasso





> **Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.**
>
> — Benjamin Franklin

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Massachusetts students rallied for four statewide Flagship Day events (**iWalk, Massachusetts Winter Walk & Roll to School Day, Massachusetts Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day**, and new this year, **Car-Free Campus Day**) to demonstrate what they have learned about walking, biking, and rolling to school. Flyers, geared toward family and peer participation, in English, Haitian Creole, Spanish, and Portuguese, helped get the word out before the events. Participation continued to grow this year with a total of **774** schools registered for Flagship Day events. These fun and engaging events bring families, champions, community members, elected officials, and law enforcement together to address urgent safety needs and reinforce the value of choosing to walk or ride. Popular as always, a variety of safety incentives were available to students at these events.

The total number of participating schools for Flagship Days—774
- International Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day (iWalk): **249**
- Winter Walk & Roll to School Day: **155**
- MA Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day: **269**
- Car-Free Campus Day: **101**

SRTS SAFETY INCENTIVES DISTRIBUTED OVER THE 2024-2025 PROGRAM YEAR:

Safety Incentives Distributed 2024-2025	Quantity
Biking Stickers (18,957); Walking Stickers (42,228)	61,245
Bookmarks: Walk, Hand Signals, Arrival/Dismissal	80,011
Helmets	214
Velcro Reflective Bands	2,513
Lights: Bicycle Duo	18
Bicycle U-Locks	30
Tip cards for Safety: Night riding and Winter	100
SRTS Safety Vests	29
Survey Incentive Kits	5
Maps	71
Walking School Bus and Bike Train Kits	9
Yard Signs	72
Total Incentives Distributed:	**144,320**



BIKE RACK GRANT PROGRAM

Safe, simple, and adequate bicycle parking at schools encourages students to bicycle to school. Following a successful pilot program in the 2023-2024 school year aimed at increasing the number of bicycle parking spots, we launched our **Bike Rack Grant** for the 2024-2025 school year. A new online form allows eligible schools to request new bike racks for their students. SRTS accepted applications from November 1 through 15, 2024 and received over **60** applications. The following **three** winners received the new bike racks, according to their needs, during this past school year:

- Blueberry Hill Elementary School, Longmeadow (5 racks)
- Conte Community School, Pittsfield (2 racks)
- Jenkins Elementary School, Scituate (5 racks)

Helmets, bike locks, and bike lights to accompany the bike racks were distributed to those schools requesting them.

SAFE STREETS SMART TRIPS (SSST) HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST

Our contest aims to raise awareness of safe transportation behaviors and allows high school students to lead by example in showcasing safe behaviors through a video. This year students were challenged to write and produce a 30-to 60-second video informing friends, family, and the local community about the theme, **"Empathy at the Intersection"** and on the roadway.

We awarded more than **$1,800** in prizes and announced the 2024-2025 winners of our **eleventh annual contest** at the MassDOT *Moving Together Active Transportation Conference* on October 23, 2024, in Boston.

SSST Winners in the Freshman/Sophomore Category

First Place: Newton North High School—"See People as People"

Runner Up: Newton North High School—"I Give You the Wheel"

Honorable Mention: Dartmouth High School—"Buckle, Watch, and Cross"

SSST Winners in the Junior/Senior Category

First Place: Burncoat High School—"E-M-P-A-T-H-Y"

Runner Up: Medford Vocational High School—"Empathy on the Road"

Honorable Mention: Dartmouth High School—"Empathy on the Road"



To create a universal understanding of safe and unsafe behaviors on the roads, it is essential to have a conversation about community-centered transportation, where everyone can be exposed to the different challenges faced by road users. We look forward to seeing how students across Massachusetts use their creativity to showcase and promote empathy, helping us to reach as many people as possible with this message.

— Jaclyn Youngblood
MassDOT Deputy Chief of Innovation



NEW HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

The SRTS Program develops and promotes engaging educational materials, campaigns, and programs not only to the High School partners but directly to the high school student audience.

Our new High School Programming Flyer for students and staff lists and describes the many initiatives available to high school students and ways to participate in the MassDOT SRTS Program, including the Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video contest, the Ambassador Program, Car-Free Campus Day, and the Move a Little, Live a Lot School Campaign. Also included are other ways to get involved, with helpful links to recommendations in marketing/media, education, transportation and event planning, engineering, and community organizations.

MASSDOT SRTS HIGH SCHOOL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Established in the 2022-2023 school year, our High School Ambassador Program aims to recruit High School students and train them as volunteers for biking and pedestrian safety training with elementary and middle school students. We updated the program this year with prerequisites and activities to gain a certificate. Overseen by the SRTS Outreach Coordinator and the school representative, after completing the prerequisites (readings, watching a video, and attending a training event), students can use a list of potential activities to decide what to complete. Required is one pedestrian-related, one bike-related, and one "other" task from the list. Activities must meet a minimum of five hours for the student to receive a certificate.

CAR-FREE CAMPUS DAY

In celebration of Earth Month, we encouraged high school students to make one day in April, May, or June a car-free day, with a pledge to show the school's commitment to safe, sustainable transportation choices and collective love for our planet. This year, we included the day as one of our Flagship Day events and received **101 school registrants.**

ENGAGEMENT









CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION DAY

Our fifth Annual Crossing Guard Appreciation Day proved that students, families, and members of the community are recognizing this important role as well; they shared their esteem for this profession by nominating those dedicated champions deserving of our "Crossing Guard of the Year Award." This year we received **457** nominations for **120** Crossing Guards from **43** communities. We expressed gratitude to Crossing Guards all over the state on March 19, 2025, and announced the winners at our Annual Awards Ceremony in June 2025. Outreach materials included the development of a promotional flyer "Nominate your Crossing Guard!" (also in Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole), posters, promotion on social media, and thank-you cards that students could decorate, sign, and give to their Crossing Guards.

CROSSING GUARD OF THE YEAR WINNERS

As dedicated heroes, Crossing Guards play an integral role in school communities throughout the Commonwealth; regardless of the weather and hazardous conditions, they support the safe travel of students and families to and from school, every school day. Our winners were selected by the Massachusetts SRTS team and MassDOT based on stories of safety and commitment to students and the community within, and outside of, their duties as Crossing Guards.

Thank you for keeping our students safe!

- **Crossing Guard of the Year:** Gina Hayes, Ferryway K-8 School, Malden (5 years as a Crossing Guard and 96 nominations)
- **Honorable Mention:** Bridget and Gerry Buckley, Warren-Prescott K-8 School, Charlestown
- **Crossing Guard Champions:**
  - Jill Boyd, Mary E. Flaherty Elementary School, Braintree
  - Lie-Mei Ho, Underwood Elementary School, Newton
  - Soliel Hanger, Silvio O. Conte Community School, Pittsfield

> **Creativity is intelligence having fun.**
>
> — Albert Einstein

YARD SIGN DESIGN CONTEST

Young students connect deeply with visual messages and are able to creatively convey their profound understanding of critical safety topics to others. For the 9th annual Yard Sign Design Contest, the theme was '**Helmet Safety**.' This year, we received an impressive **694 submissions** from **31 schools**. 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 from Amherst, Maynard, Milton, and Northborough.

- Fowler School, Maynard: "Keep Your Brain Safe by Wearing a Helmet" (top left)
- Pierce Middle School, Milton: "Helmets are our Heroes!" (top right)
- Marguerite E. Peaslee Elementary School, Northborough: "Be an Elephant. Never Forget your Helmet!" (bottom left)
- Crocker Farm Elementary School, Amherst: "Always Wear a Helmet!" (bottom right)



> **It's amazing to see students from all over Massachusetts using their creativity to promote a safer, more inclusive transportation network. This contest is an opportunity to engage young people in meaningful conversations about transportation safety while encouraging healthy habits that support both personal wellbeing and the environment.**
>
> — Rachel O'Donnell
> Program Director,
> Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Program

97 NEW SCHOOL PARTNERS AND 61 NEW ALLIANCE PARTNERS









SRTS Outreach Coordinators helped organize celebrations at each of the winning schools. Each student winner received the first printed copy of their yard sign before they were distributed across the state.

SRTS STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

MassDOT's SRTS Program directly supports Beyond Mobility and Strategic Highway Safety Plan initiatives aimed at achieving Vision Zero and encouraging clean transportation. Hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts youth have been taught critical pedestrian and bicycle safety awareness skills and encouraged to develop lifelong habits to choose active transportation. Our SRTS Program has steadily grown over time, increasing the number of school partners by about 9% a year since 2012. Today it reaches about **69%** of all public and charter K-12 students in the Commonwealth, and awards millions of dollars each year for pedestrian and bicycle safety upgrades near schools. MassDOT is interested in continuing to expand the reach of Massachusetts SRTS while taking steps to ensure long-term Program sustainability and success.

As the Program celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2025, this Strategic Plan conducted a programmatic assessment and identified new approaches to support ongoing growth and guide sustainable program delivery over the next five to ten years with the following key findings in Program successes:

Key Program Successes

- MA SRTS has consistently been identified as one of the top Programs in the nation, ranking #1 in 2022 and as one of only four states receiving top scores in 2024.
- About 69% of all public and charter K-12 students attend a school that participates in the Program.
- SRTS School Partners report high satisfaction with the Program. About 70% of respondents to the 2024 Partner Survey who had received SRTS assistance reported increases in active student commutes and 80% believe their participation in SRTS made these trips safer.

The Executive Summary Strategic Plan establishes a new Vision, an updated Mission Statement and five refined goals to guide Program delivery over the next five to ten years. The Vision Statement articulates the aspirational long-term outcomes of the program, while the Mission Statement describes the activities associated with ongoing daily implementation.

MA SRTS Vision Statement: Massachusetts youth have safe routes and the skills needed to safely walk, bike or roll to school and throughout their communities, improving their health and school performance, and encouraging active lifestyles from an early age.

MA SRTS Mission Statement: Increase walking, biking, & rolling among Massachusetts youth through safety improvements, in-school education and encouragement, and by using a collaborative, community-focused approach to meet broader safety, health and environmental goals.

NEW GOALS FOR MASSDOT'S SRTS PROGRAM:

1 **Increase Safety for Students Walking, Biking, and Rolling in their Community**
Continued infrastructure investments to improve safety are aligned with Beyond Mobility's priority for safety and achieving Vision Zero. But infrastructure alone is not enough to ensure safety – safety education increases awareness and provides skills to better protect vulnerable roadway users.

2 **Increase the Number of Students Walking, Biking, and Rolling in their Community**
Getting more students to make active commutes to school can directly benefit their overall physical health and improve school performance. This goal aligns with Beyond Mobility's priority for Clean Transportation, as well as broader State goals related to health, active transportation, and the environment.

3 **Prioritize Resources to Meet Broader MassDOT Goals and to Sustain Program Growth**
MA SRTS has experienced significant growth and success, but it is not clear that future resources can keep pace. In addition to safety and clean transportation goals, MA SRTS also aligns with Beyond Mobility's overarching call for equity, prioritizing the engagement of "Priority Schools" based on demographics and enrollment data. Better focusing Program staff and resources on specific MassDOT priorities will help accommodate and sustain future growth.

4 **Boost School Partner Capacity and Commitment to SRTS and Foster Community Support**
Improving the capacity of school partners to manage in-house SRTS programs could also help sustain ongoing Program growth. MA SRTS proposes to develop new engagement guidelines that would lead partners through tiered levels to build capacity, while also working to foster community support and better embed SRTS into the local curriculum and culture.

5 **Pursue Strategic Partnerships to Enhance Overall Program Efficiency**
Greater coordination with other state agencies and Alliance Partners that share overlapping goals could also help increase the overall impact and efficiency of MA SRTS. MA SRTS will cultivate relationships with partners that best help achieve Program goals. MassDOT will also look to coordinate with other state programs that aim to achieve positive health and/or safety outcomes through transportation, public health, land use, educational or other policies and programs.



EVALUATION

Our on-site observation and analysis by our SRTS Outreach Coordinators give us the expert insight needed to assess how the Program can benefit each school and effectuate improvements. This year we completed **71 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 **15** formal **Walk Assessments**, with findings that inform a future of more pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, improved signage, ADA accessible ramps, safer paths, and better routes to school. This year the number of SRTS Partner Schools with at least one **Walking School Bus, Bike Train, or Park, Walk, & Roll** reported was **146**, and there were **12 new locations/routes launched.**

This year, we created **72 new maps** for Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, and student origin points. Our GIS and mapping experts developed easy-to-read, precision Student Radius Maps (with home locations of students who live from less than .25 miles to greater than 1.5 miles away from the school).

The **Massachusetts SRTS Partner Survey** plays a crucial role in assessing how effectively the SRTS Program meets the needs of our School Partners. As we rely on input collected from school staff, administration, district representatives, and SRTS Alliance Partners involved in SRTS programming at SRTS Partner Schools, the survey helps ensure the delivery of high-quality programming to meet schools' needs. This year's survey resulted in **99** eligible responses. Seventy-nine percent of respondents (21% more than last year's survey respondents) received assistance from SRTS during the 2024-2025 school year. **Ninety-three percent** of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they received from their SRTS Outreach Coordinator. Data from the survey indicates participation in the SRTS Program increases safe walking, biking, and rolling, in comparison to no participation.

The Massachusetts SRTS Program conducts **Family Travel Surveys** at participating SRTS Partner Schools to learn how students travel to and from school and the distance. It aims to understand current behaviors regarding walking and biking, and to inform the allocation of resources to improve walking and biking conditions around schools that will encourage these patterns. To facilitate survey usage and encourage participation, new features this year included a QR code for each survey and an easier address search for locating specific points on the map. The information collected is used to help plan safe and healthy options for all students.

Surveys were initiated at **72 SRTS Partner Schools**. We received **5,345 responses** from parents/guardians representing a total of **6,768 students.** Participation in this survey also qualifies schools to receive SRTS grants.

> **The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.**
>
> — Lao Tzu





15 Walk Assessments

71 Arrival/Dismissal Observations

72 Maps Created for Walking, Biking, & More

77 Partner Schools participated in Family School Travel Surveys

99 Partner Survey responses representing 70 municipalities

6,768 Students Represented in Family Travel Survey



ENGINEERING

Our Engineering "E" provides guidance and grants to improve conditions around schools to encourage students to commute using public streets and sidewalks. We aim to build for safety, access, mobility, sustainability, and longevity. Through our two MassDOT grant programs, we continue to engineer innovative solutions to create better, safer infrastructure around our public elementary, middle, and high schools. Our resources, guidance, and observations—based on audits by professional engineers, SRTS team members, and school representatives—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. We are pleased to be able to provide funding for these important local SRTS projects which will help create safe pathways for students to get to and from their schools.

SRTS School Partners can apply for grants through **Signs and Lines,** which provides design and construction funding for low-cost projects such as crosswalk improvements and sign installation around schools. Signs and Lines projects eliminate small barriers students encounter when walking, bicycling, or using a wheeled mobility device to get to and from school. We provide assessment and design services and eligible construction funding to selected municipalities. Projects must be completed within the school or fiscal year. In the **seventh year** of the grant program, we awarded **three** Signs and Lines grants, splitting the **$50,000** award three ways among the needs of the communities. Including these, we have completed **26** Signs and Lines projects since the program's inception.



BEFORE

Thoreau Elementary School, Concord

AFTER



3
SIGNS AND LINES GRANTS AWARDED (and completed)

26 Signs & Lines projects completed since the Program's inception

2
INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS AWARDED

86 Infrastructure projects completed or in progress since the Program's inception



Infrastructure projects seek to improve safety, access, and mobility for public K-12 students while also encouraging more students to walk and bicycle to school. Our **Infrastructure Grants** are designed for larger projects that accommodate the needs of bicycles and pedestrians, like sidewalk improvements, traffic calming measures, and bicycle facilities. Awards range from **$300,000 to $2 million** for eligible projects that meet the objectives of the SRTS Program. In this project year, we piloted a phased approach to the Infrastructure grant and awarded **two** grants to Massachusetts municipalities. Since the grant program's inception, **86** infrastructure projects were either completed or are in progress.

As a service, our SRTS team now **provides technical assistance to eligible communities** applying for SRTS infrastructure funding. This service ensures more equitable support for communities that may lack the resources or staff to navigate the application process independently. Additionally, it positions communities for success if awarded an Infrastructure grant, as some of the preliminary work in assessing their needs will already be completed.

A form on the SRTS website allows users to request assistance by identifying grant opportunities. The program, available to all SRTS Partner Schools and municipalities, features rolling applications and year-round support.

Scientists investigate that which already is; Engineers create that which has never been.

— Albert Einstein

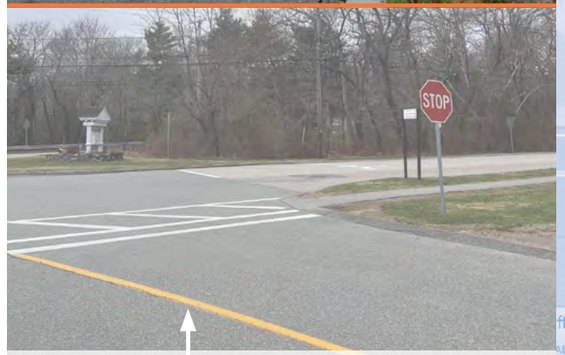


BEFORE

City View Discovery School, Worcester

AFTER



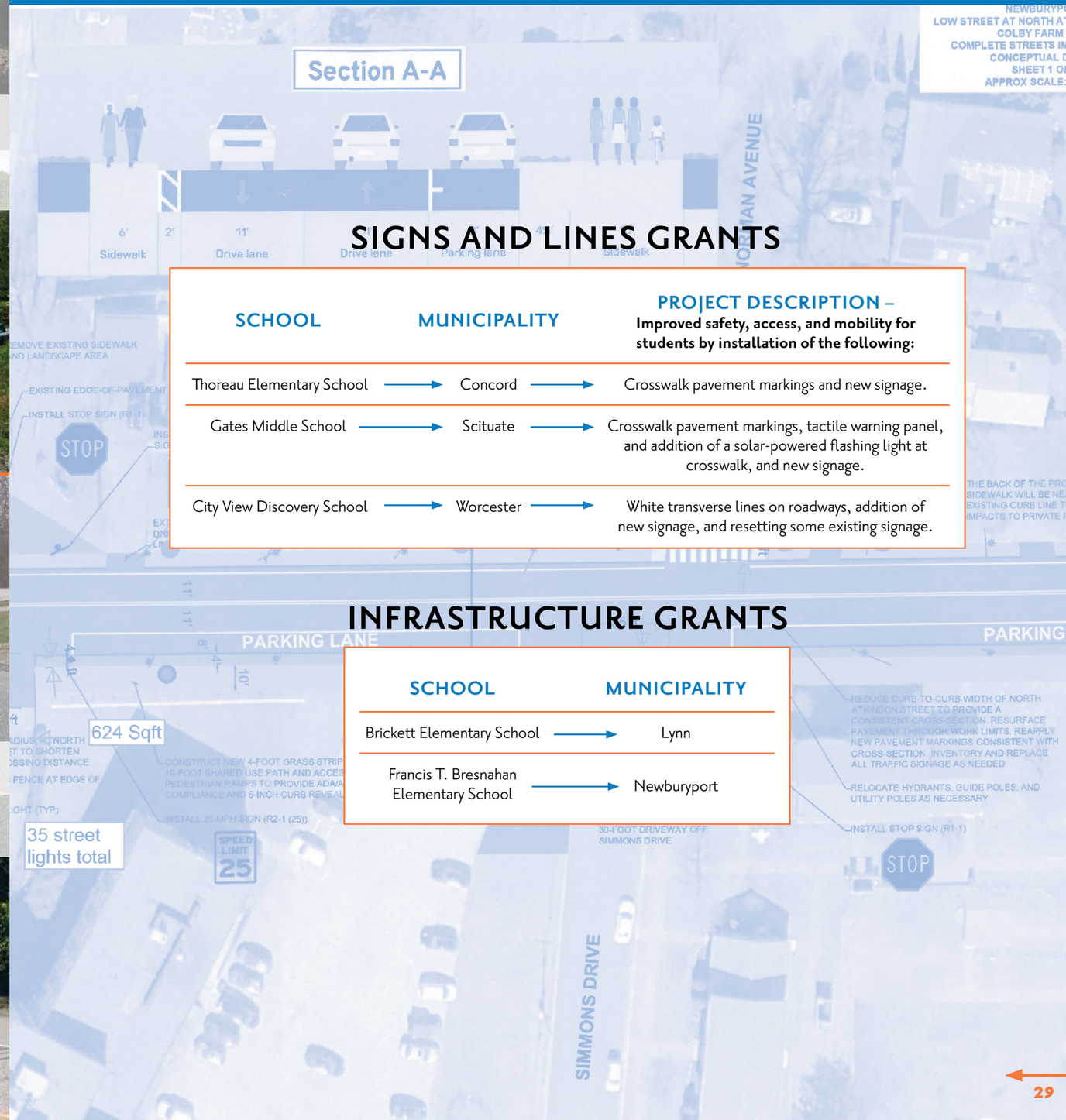


BEFORE

Gates Middle School, Scituate

AFTER





SIGNS AND LINES GRANTS

SCHOOL	MUNICIPALITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION – Improved safety, access, and mobility for students by installation of the following:
Thoreau Elementary School	Concord	Crosswalk pavement markings and new signage.
Gates Middle School	Scituate	Crosswalk pavement markings, tactile warning panel, and addition of a solar-powered flashing light at crosswalk, and new signage.
City View Discovery School	Worcester	White transverse lines on roadways, addition of new signage, and resetting some existing signage.

INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

SCHOOL	MUNICIPALITY
Brickett Elementary School	Lynn
Francis T. Bresnahan Elementary School	Newburyport

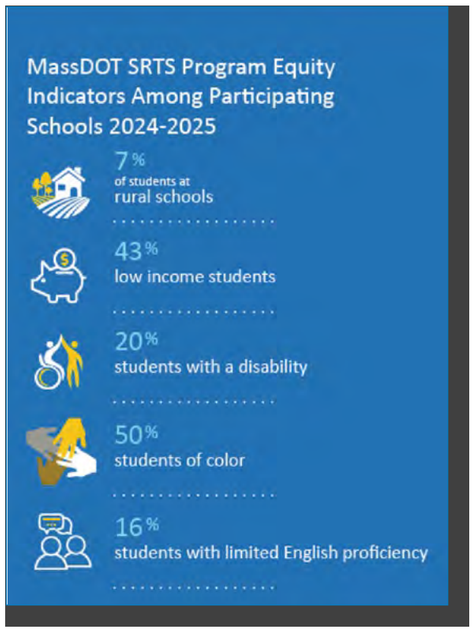
EQUITY

> **Equity is the only acceptable goal.**
>
> — Dr. Paul Farmer



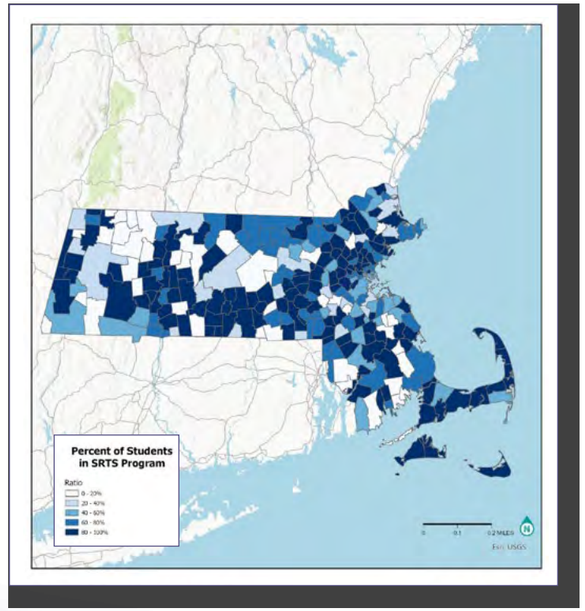
Equity is the umbrella under which all the other Es operate; we strive to incorporate it into all the Es, providing accessibility for all. Since Equity is at the heart of each of the six Es, our team is devoted to furthering equity in the Program. Our proven **Technical Assistance Program** continues to be an asset when 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 Memo, which uses information from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's data portal, helps evaluate our impact in delivering equitable programming. Despite having different needs, every student has an equal opportunity to be a part of the SRTS Program. When considering all resources for education, the MassDOT SRTS Program addresses inequities and provides students with the opportunity to participate regardless of where their school is located, their family income, ability, race, and English language proficiency. In the memo, these five criteria are referred to as "equity indicators." The graphic from the memo shows the percentage of students within each equity indicator category among Partner Schools.



Compared with all Massachusetts students for the 2024-2025 school year, four equity indicators show that our SRTS Program served a higher percentage of students than the average of all schools in Massachusetts. (For the equity indicator for students in non-urban environments, the state of Massachusetts was at 8.9% and MA SRTS was at 7%.) Overall, the results indicate that the MassDOT's SRTS Program is a well-representative of the general youth population in Massachusetts, regardless of school location, family income, ability, race, or English language proficiency.

This map shows the percentage of students in each district attending schools that have partnered with the SRTS Program. It highlights that the Program's reach is well-distributed across the state, not only in terms of the number of students served but also their geographic location, including suburban, urban, and rural areas.





85% of Environmental Justice Communities represented through the SRTS Partnership

150 bicycle/pedestrian trainings with Priority Schools

8,517 non-English resources distributed

46 materials translated and/or tagged for accessibility

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

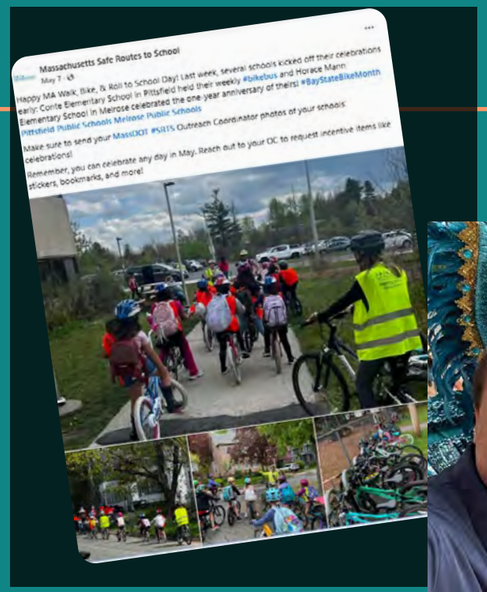
NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS FOR EACH:

1,270 Facebook

2,065 "X"

615 Instagram

373 LinkedIn











20
Email Blasts

6,901
Subscribers

43%
Overall open rate of all of our 2024-2025 email blasts
(Typical open rates for government sector emails in 2023 average 30%.) [1]

[1] 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%

SUBCONSULTANT ACTIVITY

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR?

As we step into the next twenty years, we remain committed to delivering high-quality, impactful programs and messages that benefit students, their families, schools, communities, and their futures. Through collaboration, our shared knowledge and expertise will shape our approach for the 2025-2026 project year. With great enthusiasm, we look forward to implementing our plans to keep the MassDOT SRTS Program engaging and top-of-mind for all participants. In the coming year, we will continue to build upon the solid foundation established for this continually expanding Program:

- We will update our existing resources to keep them fresh (such as the Bike Rodeo Guide, Crossing Guard Guide, etc.)
- We will continue to expand upon the tiered engagement model based on findings from the Strategic Plan created last year.
- We will continue to explore Traffic Gardens and how to help fund them to boost feasibility so that they may become a reality to more schools.









OUR WORKING PARTNERS:

At MassDOT, we collaborate with trusted 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 carried us confidently through our twentieth year and will, into the future. In addition, **Alta Planning & Design, Regina Villa, AMW Marketing, Depict Brands, ASG Planning** contributed their expertise to survey analysis, equity analysis, webinar content, and other engaging materials. We also partnered with **MassBike** on bicycle safety education, on-bike training and mobile bike fleet, Bike Rodeos, and other engaging events.





MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Safe Routes to School

10 Park Plaza, Suite 4150

Boston, MA 02116

mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school

massDOT

Massachusetts Department of Transportation