



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
MERIDIAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
August 19, 2021 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A. May 20, 2021

4. COMMUNICATIONS

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

6. COMMISSION DISCUSSION
A. Safe Routes to Schools
B. New CATA route – Hannah Center
C. Towar/Lake Lansing intersection

7. REPORTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS
A. Township Board
B. Planning Commission
C. Chair
D. Staff

8. NEXT MEETING DATES
A. Township Board Meeting September 8, 2021
B. Transportation Commission Meeting **October 4, 2021 – Joint meeting w/ East Lansing**

9. ADJOURNMENT

IN PERSON MEETING

**Central Fire Station
Community Room**

5000 Okemos Road



Charter Township of Meridian
Meridian Transportation Commission
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Thursday, May 20, 2021– Minutes –DRAFT
Meeting held virtually using the Zoom web conferencing application

Members

Present: Chair Vagnozzi, Vice-Chair Lovell, Commissioners Potter (7:35 pm), Opsommer and Robertson

Members

Absent: Commissioners Hudson and VanCoevering

Others

Present: Deputy Manager Derek Perry, Sgt. Andrew McCready, Community Planning & Development Director Mark Kieselbach, Planning Commission Liaison Christina Snyder and Tim Schmitt

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Vagnozzi called the meeting to order at 7:00pm
Director Kieselbach introduced Tim Schmitt, the new Director of Community Planning and Development

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION BY CHAIR VAGNOZZI TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED TO ADD ITEM 6 D PATHWAY MASTER PLAN. SUPPORTED BY VICE-CHAIR LOVELL MOTION PASSES 4-0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES-MARCH 18, 2021

MOTION BY VICE-CHAIR LOVELL TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED. SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER OPSOMMER. MOTION PASSES 4-0.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Director Kieselbach mentioned the communication from Commissioner Hudson regarding contactless payments for bus rides (copy on file)

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Kris Parnell, 5204 Van Atta Road, stated her concern with the paving of Van Atta Road would cause an increase in traffic and speed.

6. Commission Discussion

A. Railroad Quiet Zones - Update

Deputy Manager Perry referenced the review of the Preliminary Study: Railroad Quiet Zones done by OHM in January 2019 (copy on file)

- Two railroads run through the Township
- Northern line is the CN, average 15-20 trains per day
- Southern line is the CSX, average 3-4 trains per day
- Federal mandate to make crossings safer with the installation of positive train control and associated constant warning time circuitry
- Installation on the CN is not planned due to the low number of trains per day
- Implementing a quiet zone on the CN from Bogue Street to Green Road could occur with minimal work needing to be done
- Estimated cost is approximately \$20,000
- The Township should wait until the positive train control and associated constant warning time circuitry has been installed
- Substantial cost to the Township for a quiet zone on the CSX
- Better serve the community to concentrate the effort to implement a quiet zone on the CN
- Township Board is in support of implementing quiet zones
- Potential for grant money

B. Mt. Hope Road – Traffic Safety

Sergeant McCready provided a summary of the traffic survey conducted by the Police Department (copy on file).

- Concern with speed on the road
- The Police Department's traffic sign gathers data on traffic volume and speed
- Survey for 35 mile per hour (mph) zone done in January-February 2021
- Survey for 45 mph zone done in July 2021
- Road patrol from May 13 to June 19, 2021. No violations observed
- Increase in speed and volume for west bound traffic
- Possible increase due to people returning home
- Additional speed limit signs have been installed
- Volume of traffic on Mt. Hope is too high to do a road diet
- Road Department is waiting on a request for a speed limit review by Michigan State Police to extend the 35 mph zone west to Comanche Drive

C. Shaw Street Pathway (material on file)

- The pathway will be installed as part of the drain improvement work being done by Ingham County Drain Commissioner's Office
- No road right-of-way on the east side of Shaw street north of Lake Drive to install the pathway
- Crosswalk at Shaw Street and Lake Drive will have Rectangular Rapid Flashing (RRF) beacon for pedestrians

D. Pathway Master Plan

- Since the last Transportation Commission meeting Deputy Manager Perry has met with other boards and commissions
- Additional changes to the plan include;
 - #8 Okemos Road to Dobie Road along the south side of the CSX railroad
 - #9 Hannah Blvd to East Lodges Drive
 - #10 Vacated Raby Road right-of-way west of Marsh Road
- Include on the plan a possible bridge connection across the Red Cedar from the Eyde property on Hannah Blvd
- Bike lane assessment maybe done in 2021

MOTION BY VICE-CHAIR LOVELL TO SUPPORT THE UPDATES TO THE PATHWAY MASTER PLAN AS PRESENTED BY DEPUTY MANAGER PERRY. SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER POTTER. MOTION PASSES 5-0.

7. REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board

Trustee Opsommer mentioned the Township board discussed the rezoning on Jolly road and Kansas Road. With the conditions offered by the application the Board was generally in favor of the rezoning. The proposed Andev senior housing project on Hannah Blvd has been withdrawn. Broadband is a priority for the Board in 2021. The Village of Okemos project is moving ahead. They are seeking financing.

B. Planning Commission

Commissioner Snyder reported the Planning Commission had supported the updates to the Pathway Master Plan. The Planning Commission had also approved a special use permit for a carwash at the southeast corner of Grand River Avenue and Dawn Avenue and recommended approval of a rezoning at the northwest corner of Grand River Avenue and Powell Road.

C. Chair

No report

D. Staff

Deputy Manager Perry indicated he was not aware of any plan to pave Van Atta Road at the "S" curve. He also reported MDOT had determined an upgraded traffic signal was warranted at the north leg of the Meridian Road and Grand River Avenue intersection.

The Road Department has applied for a federal safety grant to add a center left turn lane to coincide with the MDOT improvement. If funded construction could occur in 2023.

Director Kieselbach stated it was his last meeting staffing the Transportation Commission and had enjoyed his time working with the Commission.

8. NEXT MEETING DATES

A. Township Board Meeting June 1, 2021

B. Transportation Commission Meeting August 19, 2021

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Vagnozzi adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.



To: Transportation Commission

From: Timothy R. Schmitt, *AICP*
Director of Community Planning and Development

Date: August 17, 2021

Re: Safe Routes To Schools

There is a renewed push in the Community to pursue potential Safe Routes To Schools in Meridian Township. This is an international movement to provide safe and convenient ways for kids to be able to walk and bike to school. The Federal and State governments have put funding resources behind grant programs intended to implement the principles of the program and develop any needed infrastructure.

Dave Pruden, a 5th grade teacher at Kinawa, has launched a biking program for middle school children at Kinawa. He has discussed with Tim Potter the potential of launching a Safe Routes to School program for the overall district. The potential for funding to implement such a program can be considerable, but there are a number of steps that have to be followed to begin the process. Staff has included a copy of the Safe Routes to School introductory document. The remainder of the documentation on the program, which is extensive, can be found here: <https://saferoutesmichigan.org/srts-handbook/> Staff looks forward to discussing this idea with the Commission and what role the Township can play in implementing this in conjunction with the schools.

A How-To Handbook

for Making it Safe and Fun
to Walk and Bike to School

**Safe Routes
to School**™

Michigan:
2005

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The publishers exclude from copyright of the Michigan Safe Routes to School Handbook all materials developed by the American Cancer Society, Michigan Nutrition Network, and Michigan Department of Transportation. These materials are provided as a courtesy to school/community SR2S teams, and when used must appear as they are formatted, including all attribution content. Materials found in Appendix N, Nutrition for Good Health, are provided through the National Agricultural Library, Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The MyPlate url and slogan are the property of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Also excluded from copyright: a) the Walk to School Day module; b) the Visioning Activity in the SR2S Team module; c) the School Property Assessment in the Safe Routes module; d) the bikeability audit in Appendix B; e) and content in the following appendices: D, E, L, and R.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Welcome to Safe Routes to School	1
Two Michigan Success Stories.....	3
Planning For Safe Routes to School.....	4
Sample Safe Routes to School Calendar.....	6
Handbook Extras, Training and Support.....	7
Walk to School Day.....	9
SR2S Team: Starting Your Program.....	19
Behaviors and Attitudes: Using Surveys to Collect Information.....	27
Safe Routes: Conducting Bicycling and Walking Audits.....	37
Making Change: Planning For Safe Routes to School.....	49
Appendices	
Acronyms and Definitions.....	55
Bicycle Education Lessons and Bikeability Checklist.....	57
Classroom Learning Activities.....	65
Do Something Fun.....	66
5 Es to Success: Educate, Encourage, Enforce, Engineer and Evaluate.....	67
Funds for SR2S.....	73
Good Health and Physical Education.....	79
Help for SR2S in the Community.....	80
International SR2S Heritage.....	81
Join the National SR2S Family.....	82
Keeping Communities Active.....	83
Legislation and Policy.....	84
Michigan Fitness Foundation.....	86
Nutrition for Good Health and SR2S.....	87
Other Resources	90
Planning Steps and Tips.....	91
Questions and Quick Answers.....	93
Roads and Road Experts.....	94
Sun Safety for Good Health.....	98
Trails as Safe Routes to School.....	100
Unique Challenges: SR2S for Everyone.....	105
Victories and SR2S Success Stories.....	107
Walking Safety.....	109
X Marks the Spot: School Location Matters.....	111
Your Role in SR2S.....	112
Zebra Stripes and Other Easy Fixes.....	113

Acknowledgements

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THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION—FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FUNDING PARTNERS

Michigan Department of Transportation
Michigan Fitness Foundation/Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports
Federal Highway Administration

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL STAFF

Michigan Department of Transportation Staff

Bryan Armstrong, AICP, Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Michigan Fitness Foundation Staff

Meg Thomas Ackerman, SR2S Director
Adrianna Jordan, AICP, SR2S Operations Coordinator
April Morrison-Harke, SR2S Contracts Coordinator

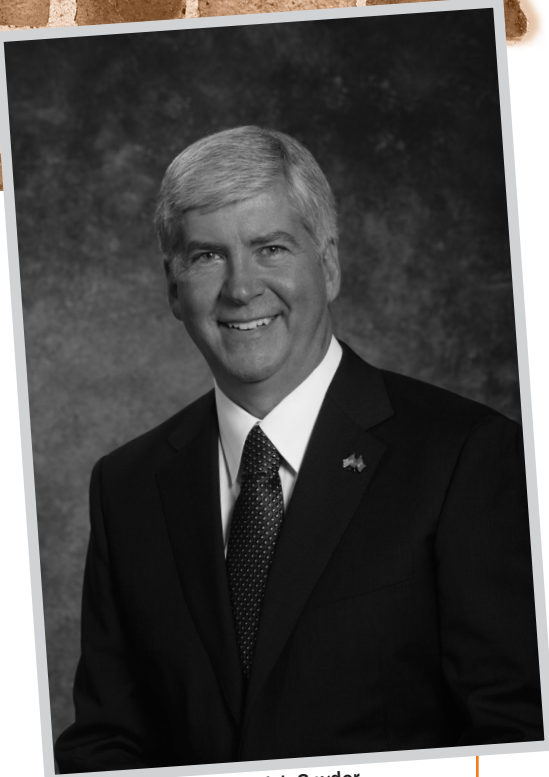
SR2S PILOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Belmont Elementary, Rockford Public Schools
Cherry Creek Elementary, Lowell Area Schools
Clear Lake Elementary, Oxford Area Community Schools
Frost Elementary, Jackson Public Schools
Lincoln Elementary, Cadillac Area Public Schools
Johnson Elementary, Taylor School District
Stanton Elementary, Central Montcalm Schools
Washington Elementary, Flint Public Schools
Webster Elementary, Pontiac School District
Westlake Elementary, Lakeview School District
Winans Elementary, Waverly Community Schools

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL STATE NETWORK PARTNERS

Michigan Department of Transportation
Michigan Fitness Foundation
League of Michigan Bicyclists
Michigan Association of Planning
Michigan State University Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation & Resource Studies
Michigan State University School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance
Program to Educate All Cyclists
Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies
Wayne State University Transportation Research Group





Michigan Governor Rick Snyder

Welcome to Safe Routes to School In Michigan

A light gray silhouette map of the state of Michigan is positioned in the upper right background of the page.

"Safe Routes to School creates opportunities for collaboration within communities, and the result is improved programming, policy and infrastructure that benefits the entire community."

Safe Routes to School is a Michigan (and federal) program to encourage and enable students to bicycle or walk to school on routes that are safe. When routes are safe, walking or biking to and from school are easy ways to ease traffic jams around schools and give students the regular physical activity they need for good health and optimal school performance.

From 2003-05 the Michigan Department of Transportation partnered with the Michigan Fitness Foundation to administer a Safe Routes to School pilot program at 11 elementary schools around the state. The purpose of the pilot was to develop a set of materials and procedures that any Michigan elementary school could use to begin its own SR2S initiative. When the pilot ended in 2005 the program was expanded statewide and made available to all schools. Since then, more than 475 Michigan schools have registered for SR2S, reaching 200,000 student families and the communities in which they live.

"Safe Routes to School is a great way for schools to promote and encourage regular physical activity to their students. Making activity a part of the daily routine for students will help them get the recommended 60 minutes per day of exercise, and they will arrive to class alert, focused and ready to learn. Safe Routes to School creates opportunities for collaboration within communities, and the result is improved programming, policy and infrastructure that benefits the entire community. Congratulations to the participating schools that are making a commitment to safe school commuting and to the health of their students."

Governor Rick Snyder

Welcome to Safe Routes to School

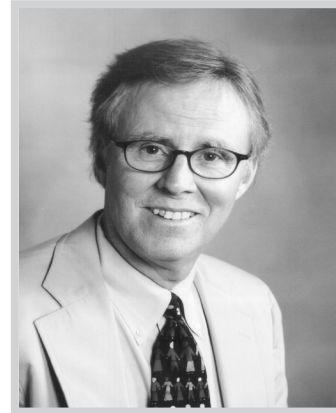


"We as parents should not have to worry about our kids getting to school safely. Every child should have a safe route to school. It is critical to our citizens' quality of life, and we at MDOT must provide a safe, efficient transportation system."

Kirk T. Steudle, Director
Michigan Department of Transportation

"Creating safe, healthy environments for Michigan's school children is critical for optimal learning. The daily commute to school has great potential to set the stage for the classroom experience and we are pleased to support the Safe Routes to School initiative as a quality component of our educational system."

Michael P. Flanagan, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Michigan Department of Education



Welcome to Safe Routes to School

Two Michigan Success Stories

Frost Elementary School, Jackson, Michigan: Collaboration and Community Momentum

Frost Elementary School, a school in the city of Jackson, began a Safe Routes to School initiative in 2004. While the school principal and staff supported a SR2S start-up, leadership for the Frost initiative came from the Fitness Council of Jackson and the city of Jackson—representing a community wide collaborative that had just been awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant for the design of active, livable communities.

During the first year of start-up, the SR2S team developed a marketing campaign to recruit other area schools to join the program. In the spring of 2005, a walking school bus program was launched at 5 local schools, with 10 designated safe routes throughout the city of Jackson.



Photo courtesy Fitness Council of Jackson

The City of Jackson was also an active partner in what became the city-wide Safe Routes to School initiative. With the support of the assistant city engineer, city funding was made available to create a pedestrian island along a route to school (see photo above).

A multi-school SR2S funding award, announced in January 2008 by MDOT, included money to continue Frost's SR2S program.

Horizon Elementary School, Holt: SR2S for Smaller Towns and Rural Settings



Photo courtesy Governor's Council on Physical Fitness

Horizon Elementary School in Holt started a walking school bus program in 2009 with a total of five walking school bus routes, but by 2013 Horizon had grown the program to 15 walking school bus routes, sizably increasing the number of children who walk and bike to school. In 2011, Horizon's principal, David Hornak, applied for a mini-grant with the National Center for Safe Routes to School and was awarded \$1,000 to pay for bike locks and signage for their "walking school bus" program. Horizon competed with 300 other schools nationally for this mini-grant. Later in 2011, Horizon was awarded a federal grant through MDOT and partnered with Delhi Charter Township, the

Ingham County Road Commission, and the City of Lansing to install sidewalks and crosswalks on Ambler Street and Washington and Willoughby roads, the busiest intersections near Horizon Elementary.

Horizon Elementary is an avid participant in Walk and Bike to School Day events. Principal David Hornak, who was awarded the Governor's Fitness Award in the category of Champion of Health in 2013, had led by example and constantly encourages his students to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

Additional Michigan success stories, including examples of urban SR2S initiatives, are located in Appendix V, Victories and Success Stories.

Welcome to Safe Routes to School

Planning for Safe Routes to School

In 2005, the United States Congress authorized the first Safe Routes to School federal program and funding stream in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) transportation bill. In 2012 funding for SR2S was renewed through the new Federal Transportation Act Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). Under this new act, SR2S was combined with other programs under the new Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). These federal funds flow through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). In Michigan, SR2S school/community teams may apply for funds from MDOT only after the team completes the planning process described in the SR2S Handbook you are holding.

The planning process is a series of steps that a SR2S team takes to answer two important questions: “what are the barriers to walking and bicycling to school on safe routes?” and “how do we remove or diminish those barriers?”

5 PLANNING STEPS

1. Register the school Safe Routes to School initiative at www.saferoutesmichigan.org and consider attending a regional training.
2. Build a multidisciplinary SR2S team.
3. Collect parent and student surveys.
4. Collect environmental information with a bicycling and/or walking audit.
5. Complete an Action Plan of projects and activities to eliminate or reduce barriers, using survey and environmental audit findings.

Walk to School Day is a great way to launch Safe Routes to School and is highly recommended; however, it is not a required planning step.

ACTION PLAN

The SR2S Action Plan pictured on this page is a worksheet that the team completes as the last planning step. The Action Plan describes Safe Routes to School activities and projects in five areas: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation.



[SCHOOL NAME] Safe Routes to School Action Plan
[DATE]

Walking Audit or Survey Recommendation	Steps to Take to Achieve Outcome	Person Responsible	Date Completed	Approval			Other Partners
				Road	School	Other	
EDUCATION							
1.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
ENCOURAGEMENT							
1.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
ENFORCEMENT							
1.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
3.	1. 2. 3.	4. 1. 2.	1. 2. 3.				
ENGINEERING							
1.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				
3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.				



Welcome to Safe Routes to School

Planning for Safe Routes to School, cont.

Examples include:

- Evaluating student and parent attitudes toward walking and bicycling to school
- Engineering safer street crossings or bike lanes
- Educating students about safe walking behaviors
- Encouraging parents to form walking/bicycling groups or obey speed limits in school zones
- Enforcing current laws or starting a community watch program

Completion of the Action Plan also requires the team to identify the steps they will follow to implement the project or activity (column 2), who is responsible for each step (column 3), target dates for completion of steps, (column 4), identifying necessary permissions (column 5), and other partners, if any, (last column).

The Action Plan worksheet is available on the enclosed CD.

THE SR2S HANDBOOK

All materials and procedures that are needed to complete each planning step are provided in the SR2S Handbook modules. However, the first two pages of each module contain all the information needed to get started.

TIP! Read the first two pages in each module to get started.

Easy-to-read information on the first page includes:

- Description of the activity.
- Why, when, and where advice.
- Easy win ideas and tips.
- List of customizable materials on the CD.

An easy-to-follow checklist on the second page provides step-by-step directions to complete the activity.

PLANNING AND HANDBOOK MODULES

The SR2S Handbook modules correspond to four of the Michigan Safe Routes to School planning steps. Directions to complete the first planning step, register the school initiative and attend training, are located on the SR2S website. The website address is www.saferoutesmichigan.org. Contact the Michigan Fitness Foundation at (800) 434-8642 if additional assistance is required.

The planning steps and corresponding Handbook modules are:

- Build a multidisciplinary SR2S team
→ SR2S Team module
- Collect parent and student information with state surveys
→ Behaviors and Attitudes module
- Collect and prioritize environmental information with a bicycling and/or walking audit
→ Safe Routes module
- Action Plan
→ Making Change module and A-Z appendices

Making Change

Easy Win:
Use survey information and audit information to develop a SR2S Action Plan that includes short and long term objectives. Celebrate early successes to build momentum and public support for other outcomes that will take more time.

Outcomes:
Safer routes to school
A more walkable, bikeable community for everyone
A defensible plan to include in a funding application

WHAT IS THE SR2S ACTION PLAN?

- A plan to make the safe routes to school vision a reality
- The solutions that were picked to solve problems identified in surveys and the environmental audits)
- The last step in the safe routes to school planning process

WHY HAVE A PLAN?

- To identify priorities and the steps to achieve success
- To submit with a funding proposal, if funding is sought

WHEN DOES PLANNING HAPPEN?

- After survey, walking/biking audit, and school property findings are available

HOW IS THE ACTION PLAN COMPLETED?
Over the course of several meetings:

1. Revisit the vision for safe routes to school (e.g. more students walking and bicycling on safe routes.)
2. Review the barriers to walking and/or bicycling to school that were identified in the surveys.
3. Review the high priority safety issues found during the walking and/or bicycling audit.
4. Identify the highest priority problems and the types of solutions needed (i.e. engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement.)
5. Invite experts (e.g. engineers, educators, law enforcement officers) to identify specific projects to include in the Action Plan.
6. Insert the recommended activities and projects into the Action Plan.
7. Complete other sections of the Action Plan, including approval needed and potential funding partners.

Materials:

- Action Plan worksheet (CD)
- Survey results—Behaviors and Attitudes module
- Walking and/or bicycling audit results—Safe Routes module
- EE Educate, Encourage, Entice, Engage and Evaluate—Appendix E
- Trails as Safe Routes to School—Appendix T
- Roadside Road Experts—Appendix R
- Funds for SR2S—Appendix F
- Victories and Success Stories—Appendix V (optional)
- Zebra Stripes and Easy Flies—Appendix Z (optional)
- Michigan Safe Routes to School Funding Application Guidelines

Communication Power:
Communicate to stakeholders that a SR2S plan is being developed. These experts bring the knowledge you need in order to create a practical plan. Bicycle clubs and trail groups are especially important to help sustain SR2S in your community.

Welcome to Safe Routes to School

Sample SR2S Calendar

The calendar on this page is provided as an example of how to schedule SR2S activities over the course of a school year. However, each Safe Routes to School initiative is unique and the local team should determine the pace and calendar that is reasonable for their school.

	Walk to School Day	SR2S Team	Behaviors and Attitudes	Safe Routes	Making Change
Sept.	Plan Walk to School Day	Recruit core SR2S team			
Oct.	Conduct Walk to School Day	Recruit community stakeholders	Plan survey distribution		
Nov.		Team meeting	Distribute and collect parent and student surveys		
Dec.		Team meeting	Analyze survey information		
Jan.		Team meeting		Plan for environmental audit	
Feb.		Team meeting		Assign tasks for route assessment	
Mar.		Team meeting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify routes to assess Distribute audit flyers Invite guests 	
Apr.				Conduct walking/biking route assessment	Identify other experts needed on team
May	Plan for the next fall's Walk to School Day				Action planning meeting
June-Aug.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Action Plan Submit funding application if desired



Welcome to Safe Routes to School

Handbook Extras, Training and Support

HANDBOOK EXTRAS

Appendices

The Michigan Safe Routes to School Handbook appendices cover a wide range of topics developed to supplement the five activity modules. The materials list located on the module overview page includes the titles of appendices that help complete the module activities. It may also be helpful to scan the appendix titles and consult those appendices that address questions the team has.

Compact Disc (CD)

A CD of Handbook materials is located at the end of the appendices. Many of the documents can be customized for local use, printed, and then copied for distribution. The customizable materials on the CD include:

- Flyers
- Invitation letters
- Press releases



This symbol indicates that a customizable version of the document is included on the CD.
On CD

In addition to customizable materials, other materials that SR2S teams may wish to copy and distribute are located on the CD. For a complete list of these documents, open the CD folder titled *CD Materials*. A partial list of the materials you will find includes:

- Bicycle Education Lessons, Worksheets and Handouts
- Good Nutrition Tips
- SR2S Newsletters

In a few instances, Handbook materials are available only on the CD. For example, Bicycle Education Lessons and supportive materials have been provided only as electronic files. The sun safety tips and SR2S newsletters are also located only on the CD.

DVD

A 14-minute Safe Routes to School DVD is also located on the inside back cover of the binder. This DVD is a fast-paced overview of the five SR2S

activities described in the Handbook modules. Michigan elementary schools and SR2S teams that participated in a two-year pilot project are featured on the DVD. The DVD is an effective tool to introduce Safe Routes to School to new SR2S team members and community stakeholder groups. The DVD can be obtained by contacting the SR2S Office at 1-800-434-8642.

Other Helpful Materials

Excellent materials to help educate and engineer for, encourage, enforce, and evaluate Safe Routes to School are available from other organizations and agencies in Michigan and nationally. A partial list of these organization can be found in appendices H, I, J and O.

Handbook Training

Safe Routes to School training is provided free of charge with the Handbook. Call the SR2S office at 1-800-434-8642 or check the SR2S website, www.saferoutesmichigan.org, for an up-to-date training schedule. Training includes a field experience of the route assessment and other interactive exercises to help SR2S teams easily complete the five activities.

Technical Support

Technical assistance is available free of charge through the SR2S office and website. Contact the office at 1-800-434-8642 or submit questions at the website (www.saferoutesmichigan.org).

