



# Travel Plan Toolkit

FOR DPS LEADERS AND STAFF

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# Fact Sheet

The Denver Public Schools (DPS) Transportation Department has an abiding interest in implementing innovative transportation services that support the growth and development of the DPS community. In an effort to decrease traffic congestion around schools and increase safety, academic performance, and physical activity as part of DPS's Denver Plan 2020 "Support the Whole Child" goals, the Transportation Department has collaborated with the City of Denver, Denver Public Health, and Denver Safe Routes to School Coalition to implement Commute Denver Public Schools (CommuteDPS). CommuteDPS was made possible by the generous support of Kaiser Permanente. For more information about CommuteDPS, visit the website at <http://thecommons.dpsk12.org/Page/2118> or email [CommuteDPS@dpsk12.org](mailto:CommuteDPS@dpsk12.org).

## What is CommuteDPS?

The CommuteDPS program provides school leaders and families with tools to create and communicate School Travel Plans that develop proper pick-up and drop-off protocols and provides resources and programs that encourage the use of all available commuting options for students and their families.

- Students have multiple options for traveling to and from school such as walking, biking, taking the school bus, and carpooling.
- Safety is the number one priority! We encourage schools and parents to explore and use any of the resources provided in this toolkit to safely improve transportation at their school.

## Why Your School Should Have a Travel Plan:

A School Travel Plan is a document that outlines how to improve busing, carpooling, walking, and biking conditions on and around campus.

- Safer conditions leads to increased use of options such as walking and biking and decreases traffic congestion.
- Less traffic means improved air quality at your school!
- More walking and biking leads to healthier students!

This toolkit provides short-term and long-term Travel Plan solutions that can be tailored to your schools unique needs.

## How Much Time Will it Take?

Creating a Travel Plan won't take long – all it takes is one motivated administrator, teacher, parent, Parent Teacher Organization or Parent Teacher Association to kick things off! When you're designing your Travel Plan, don't forget to make it sustainable. This toolkit provides you with everything you need to make it a success!



# Implementing Travel Plans

First understand the busing, carpooling, walking and biking environment at your school, and identify barriers and supports by answering the following questions:

- How many students currently walk and bike to school?
- How do parents and caregivers feel about children doing so?
- Have there been recent safety incidents or concerns relative to students walking or biking to school?
- What safety hazards or risks do students face when traveling to school (walking or biking on or crossing a roadway)?
- Use this worksheet to assess the transportation at your school: <http://bit.ly/CDPSCTPAW>.

## **The following strategies can help alleviate congestion and improve safety:**

Establishing, communicating, and enforcing drop-off and pick-up protocol to students, parents, and staff can help to accomplish this goal. Some strategies include:

- Introducing formal programs for student loading, for example a Kiss-And-Go Program or a Pick-up Card system.
- Separate bus and parent loading zones.
- Install visible signage to clearly identify zones and their intended use.
- Use separate entrances for grade levels.
- Increase the number of curbside assistants present during unloading and loading.
- Encourage parents to apply to the PAID crossing guard positions to increase student safety while crossing streets near the school. - <http://thecommons.dpsk12.org/Page/1058>
- Promote the formation of Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains with parent supervision.
- Encourage parents to meet their children at a nearby offsite location instead of on campus.
- Designate walking and/or biking lanes.
- Clearly identify storage locations for bikes and scooters, such as bike racks.

Details on how to organize and implement these programs can be found on the following pages.

## **Evaluate Potential Hazards:**

As part of the CommuteDPS program, DPS Transportation Services establishes walk route plans and evaluates them for hazards associated with walking on or along, or crossing roadways. The level of hazard exposure relates to children's ages, the speed and volume of motorized traffic, and location and type of walkways. A combination of factors could qualify your school for CommuteDPS services.

## **Get help evaluating hazards and the safety of your campus:**

- To evaluate hazards, school bus loading zones, signage on school property and to determine safe routes near construction areas, please contact the DPS Transportation Safety and Training Department at 720-423-4631 or send an email to [CommuteDPS@dpsk12.org](mailto:CommuteDPS@dpsk12.org).
- To report maintenance needs on your campus please contact DPS Facility Management at 720-423-4020.

Please review Campus Safety Tips Handout on page 9.

## **Suggested timeline for implementing a travel plan:**

**June:** Develop a School Travel Plan using the strategies outlined in this toolkit.

**July:** Develop a strategic communications plan to notify parents and students of the new plan. Need help creating your communication plan? Use this guide: <http://bit.ly/2VHD5PX>.

**August:** Using your strategic communication plan, inform parents and students of the new School Travel Plan before the start of the school year. This time should be used to establish parent volunteers to implement any commuting programs that you have chosen.



# Safe Walking

## Designing a Crossing Guard Program

Crossing Guards supervise the safe crossing of school children before and after school at designated crosswalks, therefore increasing pedestrian safety.

Crossing Guard Duties:

- Gather children at a safe distance from the curb.
- Scan traffic and identify adequate gaps of 150 feet.
- Signal children to use crosswalks.
- Ensure that motorists yield right of way to pedestrians.
- Instruct children to obey traffic control devices like pedestrian pushbuttons.
- Issue warning citations to drivers who do not follow the established rules. However, Crossing Guards are not law enforcement officers.

To report parents who do not obey traffic laws, contact the Denver Police Department at 720-913-2000. DPS staff cannot direct traffic off school grounds.

### How to Create a Crossing Guard Program:

1. Recruit Crossing Guards by asking staff and parents to participate. Consider an adult to child supervision ratio of 1:4 since crosswalks have increased risks. Review the Crossing Guard manuals by visiting <http://thecommons.dpsk12.org/Page/1058>.
2. Shifts should begin 10 minutes before the start of drop-off and pick-up. The number of walkers utilizing the crosswalk will determine the length of the shift. Consider rotating assistants between morning and afternoon shifts, and assigning guards to a Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule.
3. If funding is available, Crossing Guards can get paid for their time. To apply for these paid positions visit <http://thecommons.dpsk12.org/Page/1058>. For more information call 720-424-1892.
4. The Colorado Department of Transportation provides Crossing Guard program training. For information please call 303-757-9088.



# Safe Walking/Biking

## Facilitate Student Commuting Groups

A Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train is a group of children commuting to school as a group with adult supervision. The recommended adult to child supervision ratio is 1:8 or less, however children with physical disabilities or in wheelchairs will require more care. Similarly, a remote drop-off program can accommodate students who live too far to walk or bike. However, the group will need to be accompanied by an adult or adults to school from drop-off locations. Encouraging parents to form commuting groups and choose remote drop off locations also helps build community.

## How to Encourage Parents to Coordinate Commuting Groups:

- Encourage parents to plan the safest routes to and from school with their children and choose meeting points if friends are involved. Parents should practice these routes with their children before they are used for commuting.
- Ask parents for help by writing emails, posting a message in the school newsletter, or by asking in person at Parent Teacher Organization/Parent Teacher Association meetings. Not sure what to say in an email? Use this template: <http://bit.ly/CDPSCGPJET>.
- Network at parent teacher conferences
- Promote the benefits of walking and biking in school communications. Need facts to use? Use these: <http://bit.ly/CDPSATFS>.
- Launch social media challenges to generate excitement about commuting groups. Some examples: <http://bit.ly/CDPSSMC>.

## How to Create a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train:

1. Choose a safe meeting point or 2 to 3 safe meeting points. Ideal meeting places are a student's home, or public places such as parks, malls, or churches that are 1 mile or less from school.
2. Routes should be tested with parents on weekends.
3. Make sure that parents and students are aware of biking and walking safety tips by sending information out in emails, in school newsletters, or by having posters with safety tips visibly displayed at schools. See Campus Safety Tips on page 8.

## FREE Website for Arranging Commuting Groups:

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) has created a web-based tool called WayToGo with a SchoolPool section for parent networking. Participating schools have individual SchoolPool webpages linked to maps highlighting clusters of families who may be able to work together to form walking and biking groups. Parents who 'opt in' get website access to view other parents' contact information. Consider the following tactics to advertise MyWayToGo SchoolPool to parents:

- Newsletters and emails
- Websites and social media
- Registration and open houses
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Weekly folders
- Provide information sheets in traffic lines

DRCOG even provides templates for many of the communication tactics listed above! To learn more about WayToGo promotional tools visit <http://www.waytogo.org/hidden/optinresources>. To set up a SchoolPool webpage for your school call DRCOG at 303-455-1000.

# Safe Commuting

## Creating a Kiss-And-Go Program

A Kiss-And-Go program provides a safe, organized, and efficient system for children to be dropped off in pedestrian zones at school. Parents should be encouraged to use the Kiss-And-Go lane(s) to transfer their children into the hands of curbside assistants who walk them into school. Curbside assistants greet students at vehicles and help unload items while parents remain inside their vehicles.

Kiss-And-Go lanes should have a two minute loading/unloading time limit and drivers should exit the lane quickly. If transfers take longer than two minutes, parents should park in lots or return to the end of the lane line.

## How to Create a Kiss-And-Go Program:

1. Select a Kiss-And-Go lane or lanes. Different lanes can correspond with grade levels, however multiple children can be dropped off in the same lanes if it saves time and works better for your school. Kiss-And-Go lanes should be clearly signposted.
2. Recruit curbside assistants by asking staff, older students, and parents to participate. Designate roles for Kiss-And-Go assistants.
3. Assistants should be at the Kiss-And-Go area 10 minutes before the start of drop-off and pick-up times. Consider rotating assistants between morning and afternoon shifts, and assigning assistants to a Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule.
4. Communicate Kiss-And-Go protocols with parents and students.

Use this worksheet to give your Kiss-And-Go program the best chance for success: <http://bit.ly/CDPSKaGIWS>.





# Safe Commuting

## Implementing a Pick-Up Card System

A Pick-Up Card system can help decrease the time that school staff spends identifying parents and caregivers in vehicles before releasing children. The level of supervision is lower than that of a Kiss-And-Go program since students walk to vehicles independently. Adult school staff should be responsible for releasing students to vehicles displaying a custom numbered card issued to parents by the school.

Numbered and colored identification cards should be placed in a visible location such as a window or the dashboard as vehicles enter the loading zone. Parents not in possession of an identification card must park and present identification to the school office before children can be released. If identification is confirmed, another set of cards can be issued for a fee. Therefore, office staff will be required to be onsite for the duration of school pick-up.

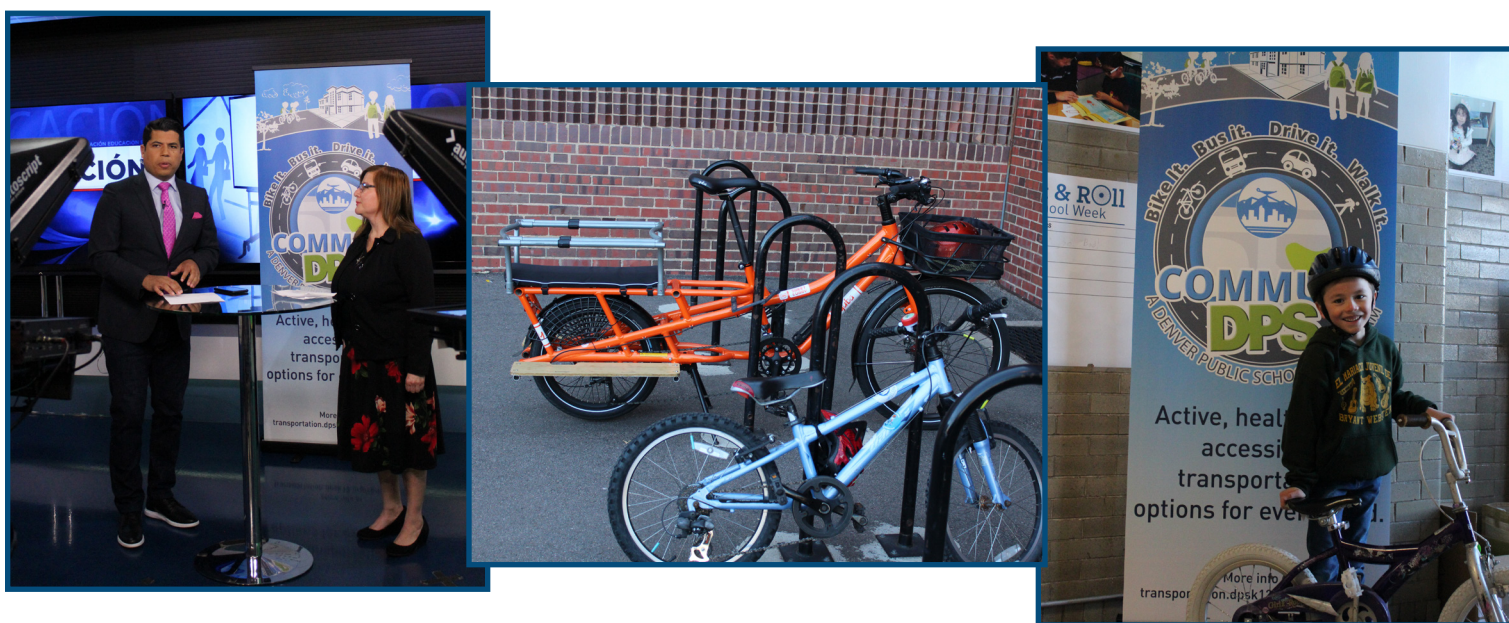
## How to create a Pick-Up Card System:

- Determine how many different card colors you will need based on the number of students at your school. Assign card colors by grade or create a color system that makes the most sense at your school. An 8.5 x 11 in., colored cardstock is ideal. Click for a template: <http://bit.ly/CDPSPUCST>.
- Provide each parent or caregiver with two colored and numbered cards with detailed drop-off and pick-up instructions.
- Recruit school staff to help with pick-up. Keep in mind that the recommended adult to child supervision ratio is 1:8 or less.

Use this worksheet to give your Pick-Up Card system the best chance for success: <http://bit.ly/CDPSPUCI>.

## Special Considerations for Half Day Students:

A number of your students may be on a half-day schedule. Schools that introduce Crossing Guards, a Kiss-And-Go Program, or a Pick-Up Card System, will need to create a varying schedule of shifts to accommodate.





# Active Transportation

**Active Transportation** is any self-propelled mode of transportation. This includes walking and biking. Encouraging kids to walk and bike is a great way to increase physical activity and contribute to “Support the Whole Child” goals!

## How to engage students

Individuals and classroom groups can be rewarded for using active transportation. Consider incentives like punch cards that can be exchanged for rewards upon completion. Get template from: <http://bit.ly/CDPSPCT>.

## Free and Low-Cost Rewards:

- Verbal praise and high fives
- Extra recess time and class parties
- If your system involves a contest, have the winners’ signatures on posters in visible locations or give them certificates
- Ask neighboring businesses to sponsor prizes

## Generate Excitement with School-Sponsored Themed Events:

- SEPTEMBER – Create an active transportation poster contest.
- OCTOBER – Register for Safe Routes to School’s Walk to School Day. For more information visit <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/learn-more/about-the-events/about-walk-to-school-day/>. Also, every third full week in October is National School Bus Safety Week. For more information visit <https://www.napt.org/nsbsw>.
- NOVEMBER – Support a Turkey Walk/Trot fundraiser or a bike ride event such as a Bike Parade.
- DECEMBER – Launch a student video contest. Or, write walking and biking safety tips with chalk in visible locations such as school sidewalks or place signs near the school bike racks. Save time and print these signs that have already been created for you: <http://bit.ly/CDPSATG>.
- JANUARY – Begin a weekly Walk and Wheel Wednesday’s program. Don’t forget to reward students who participate!
- FEBRUARY – Valentine’s Day themed walk or bike ride. You can pass out healthy treats!
- MARCH – St. Patrick’s Day or Kidney Month themed walk or bike ride. Students can wear green, the awareness color for Kidney Month and for St. Patrick’s Day.
- APRIL – National Pet Month! Children can walk or bike to school with family pets which must return home.
- MAY – Register for Safe Routes to School’s Bike to School Day <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>. You can also put on your own Walk & Roll to School Week/Day event. Use this guide to give your Walk & Roll event the best chance for success: <http://bit.ly/CDPSWRH2G>.

Register for Safe Routes to School Bike and Walk to School Days which occur every October and May respectively. Registration is FREE – visit [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org). Try to register two months prior to event days so that you can promote your school’s participation.

## Get Recognition for your Participation:

Students, parents, and staff can submit articles, photos and videos of themselves having fun walking, biking, scootering, etc., to school. Submissions will be considered for the DPS Transportation Department’s Facebook page and the CommuteDPS webpage, <http://transportation.dpsk12.org/commutedps/>! Please email submissions to [commuteDPS@dpsk12.org](mailto:commuteDPS@dpsk12.org).

# Campus Safety

## Tips for Families and Students

Parents should schedule student arrival and pick-up only when there is formal adult supervision on campus. Students should have contact information for parents, trusted adults and teachers at all times. Students should know safety guidelines.

## Walking and Biking Safety Tips

- Children should walk on sidewalks in a group facing traffic.
- Children should be visible while walking or biking. Consider having children wear bright colors or adding reflective strips or clip on lights to their backpacks.
- Children should watch for traffic and never dart into or play in the street.
- Pedestrians should always check for traffic by looking left, right, and left again at curbs, driveways, and alleyways.
- Adults should hold children's hands while walking, especially if they are under 10.
- Walkers and bikers should travel in a straight line. Bikers should ride in the same direction as vehicles if they are riding in the street.
- On campus walkers and bikers should both be on the right.
- Obey traffic signs, signals, and school Crossing Guards.
- Children on bikes must wear a helmet!

NOTE: In Denver, children 10 and under are ALWAYS permitted to ride their bikes on the sidewalk.

## Winter Weather

- PLAN AHEAD! and allow a generous amount of travel time.
- STAY WARM! wear waterproof footwear, loose-fitting layers, coats, gloves and hats.
- BE ALERT! to surrounding traffic and watch for wet floors in building entrances.
- STAY HYDRATED! drink water en route to school.
- BE PREPARED! to adjust routes to and from school.

## Riding the School Bus

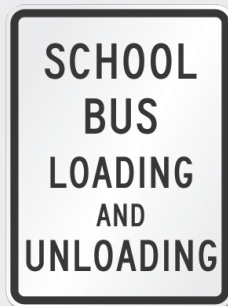
- Students should arrive at stops 10 minutes prior to scheduled pickups and line up away from traffic.
- No roughhousing or playing at the bus stop, and respect property.
- Bus danger zones are six feet, or three big steps, from all sides of the bus.
- Wait until bus comes to a complete stop before boarding and departing one at a time.
- Children must follow bus drivers' directions at all times.
- Street crossing is advised 10 feet, or five big steps, in front of buses and never behind.
- Use handrails while departing the bus and check for cars especially on the right.
- Bus passengers should remain seated at all times with hands and heads inside the bus, and keep aisles clear.
- Do not damage buses or tamper with controls, and report damage to drivers.

## Guidelines for Driver Drop-off and Pick-Up

- DO – Obey speed and traffic signs and Crossing Guard signals.
- DO – Give students right of way when crossing roads and in parking lots.
- DO – Ensure students are ready before entering loading zones. Load on the same side as the school bus.
- DO – Load and unload children at crosswalks, corners, or curbs using the right side car door.
- DO – Bring your vehicle to a completed stop in loading zones but do not get out of your vehicle.
- DON'T – Pass a school bus when the stop arm is extended or lights are flashing.
- DON'T – Use cell phones or play loud music when driving on school property.
- DON'T – Drive or park personal vehicles in school bus loading zones. Park in designated lots only.
- DON'T – Make U-turns, nor drive or park in neighboring driveways.

### What does this sign mean?

The School Bus Loading and Unloading Sign means that the marked area is a no-parking and no-waiting zone for all vehicles except yellow school buses and Transportation Services vehicles. Keep this area clear to ensure that the school bus can operate as efficiently and safely as possible.

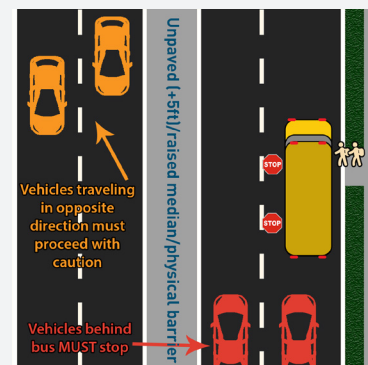
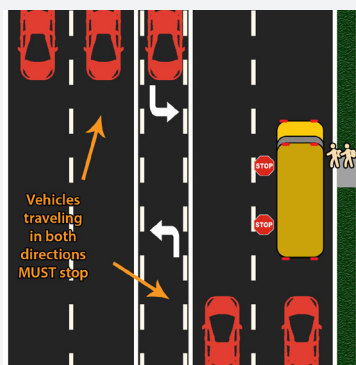
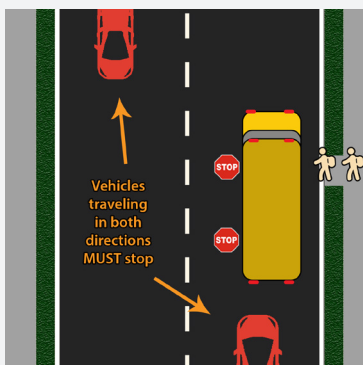


### What does this sign mean?

School Zone signs mark the areas surrounding schools and require drivers to reduce their speed. Be sure to check the reduced speed limit around your student's school to contribute to a safe environment.



## TRAFFIC LAWS FOR SCHOOL BUS FLASHING LIGHTS & STOP SIGNS





[transportation.dpsk12.org/commutedps](https://transportation.dpsk12.org/commutedps)