### **School Action Plan for**

## Oak Creek Elementary School

**Principal:** Lilian Sarlos **Grades:** K-5

**Enrollment:** 573 **Address:** 55 Kingsgate Rd.

First bell: 8:10 a.m. Lake Oswego, OR 97035

Last bell: 2:40 p.m., 2:00 p.m. on Thursdays

This report summarizes existing conditions, observations, and recommended improvements and programs for Oak Creek Elementary School resulting from the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) walk audit conducted on September 11, 2018. A summary map on Page 12 illustrates the audit location, area characteristics, and locations of infrastructure recommendations.

This audit supports the county-wide SRTS efforts of Clackamas County. For more information on the program, visit: <a href="www.clackamas.us/engineering/srts.html">www.clackamas.us/engineering/srts.html</a>.

### What is Safe Routes to School (SRTS)?

SRTS is a comprehensive program to **make school communities safer** by combining engineering tools and enforcement with education about safety and activities to enable and encourage students to **walk and bicycle to school**. SRTS programs typically involve partnerships among municipalities, school districts, community members, parent volunteers, and law enforcement.

Although most students in the United States walked or biked to school before the 1980s, the number of students walking or bicycling to school since has sharply declined in both urban and suburban areas.

The benefits of implementing a SRTS plan are far-reaching and include improving safety, encouraging physical activity, and reducing traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions near schools. Implementing SRTS

programs and projects benefit adjacent neighborhoods as well as students and their families.

Clackamas County SRTS has a Program Handbook that outlines activities and local resources that school and community members can use to encourage walking and biking and promote traffic safety in school areas.

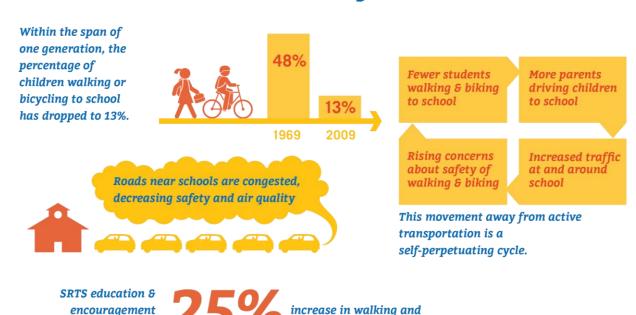
See <u>www.clackamas.us/engineering/srts.html</u> for more information.







# Why Safe Routes to School for Clackamas County?



A comprehensive SRTS program addresses reductions in walking and biking through a multi-pronged approach that uses education, encouragement, engineering and enforcement efforts to develop attitudes, behaviors, and physical infrastructure that improve the walking and biking environment.



programs can result in a

#### **How Do Students Get to School Now?**

As part of the Clackamas SRTS program, Oak Creek Elementary students and families participated in student hand tallies and parent surveys in fall 2018.

#### **Student Hand Tallies**

Hand tallies are a standard way of tracking the different ways (modes) students used to get to school. Students are asked how they traveled to and from school over a 2-3 day period. Students used stickers to indicate how they got to and from school on posters in each classroom. Fourteen classrooms' hand tallies are included in this Action Plan.

Figure 1 shows the results of the fall 2018 hand tallies. In the morning, family vehicle is the most common way to get to school (36 percent), followed closely by walking (30 percent) and taking the school bus (27 percent). In the afternoon, slightly more students take the bus (38 percent) and walk (35 percent), followed by getting picked up in the family vehicle (21 percent). A few students bike to and from school (3 and 4 percent, respectively.)

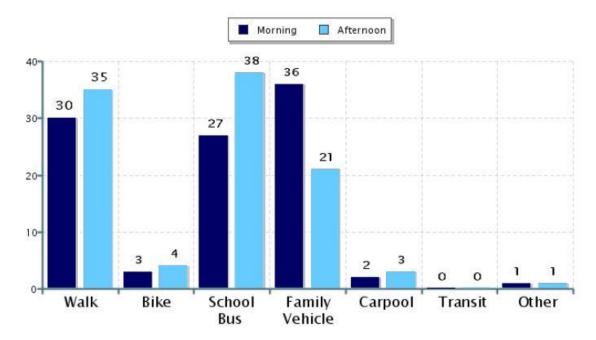


Figure 1. November 2018 Student Hand Tally Results, Morning and Afternoon Mode Split

Tracking the change in mode over time can indicate how successful the SRTS program is at addressing concerns and promoting walking and bicycling. Resources and best practice programs for conducting hand tallies include:

- The Oregon SRTS website provides evaluation resources.
- The National Center for SRTS has forms, data collection guidelines, data center, and automaticallygenerated reports.

#### **Parent Surveys**

Parent surveys ask families about the barriers to walking or biking to/from school, health information, how children travel to and from school, and perception of crime and other social behaviors.

The Clackamas SRTS program collected 105 parent surveys in November 2018, primarily from families with children in second, third, and fourth grade. A majority of respondents live within a mile of the school (79 percent), while only 3 percent live more than 2 miles from the school. Respondents report that most students who live within a half mile of the school walk or bike to school. Students who live between a half mile and one mile from school are evenly split between walking, taking the bus and traveling in a family vehicle. Students who live more than a mile mostly take the bus or family vehicle.

Figure 2 shows the main barriers for parents of students who did not walk or bike. Safety of intersections and crossings is the primary barrier for those who do not already walk and bike to school, followed by distance and weather. These findings indicate that there is potential for promoting walking and biking to school by creating safer crossings at key intersections. Distance and weather are tougher to address. SRTS programming during the school day would allow students to participate who live too far to walk and bike.

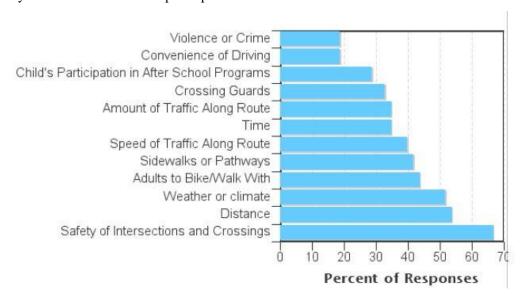


Figure 2. Barriers to Allowing a Child to Walk or Bike to/from School

Resources and best practice programs for conducting parent surveys include:

- The Oregon SRTS website provides <u>evaluation resources</u>.
- The National Center for SRTS has forms, data collection guidelines, and data center.

### **Walk Audit Summary**

Walk Audit September 11, 2018 Meeting Time: 7:30-9:00am

Date:

Weather: Day of Week: Tuesday Cloudy and rainy

#### Attendees:

- Scott Hoelscher, Clackamas County
- Anja Bump, Oak Creek parent
- Mike Ward, City of Lake Oswego
- Alexi Lamadrid, Oak Creek parent
- Christian Snuffin, Clackamas County

- Nicole Perry, The Street Trust
- Hannah Day-Kapell, Alta Planning + Design
- Katie Selin, Alta Planning + Design
- Lilian Sarlos, Oak Creek principal
- Mallorie McDowell, Clackamas County

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **School Layout**

Oak Creek Elementary School is located on Kingsgate Rd, just north of Melrose St near West Lake Park. The neighborhood is primarily residential, with quiet streets and a few collector roads with higher vehicle traffic.

Most students enter and are dismissed through the main door on the north side of the building, closest to the parking lot. Some students enter school property through the open gate on the south east corner of the school grounds. These students are either informally let in through a back door or they walk around to the main entrance.

#### SITE CIRCULATION

#### Vehicles:

Student drop-off occurs in the parking lot to the north of the school. Vehicles line up and circle counter-clockwise around the parking lot, using the inside lane closest to the school. As vehicles arrive at the front of the line, the student may exit the vehicle. For student pick-up, vehicles line up in the same lane through the parking lot and wait for the dismissal bell. Signs remind families not to idle their vehicles.

There is substantial student loading along Melrose St as well, with families dropping-off or picking-up students using a gate on the east side of the field.



Idle Free Zone signs in the Oak Creek Elementary

#### **School Buses:**

In the morning, all buses drop students off in front of the main school entrance using the outside lane. Some buses use a cut-through within the parking lot to minimize waiting in drop-off vehicle traffic.

In the afternoon, the four to five larger school buses pick students up along the north side of Melrose St south of the school.

**Pedestrians:** There is a crosswalk across Kingsgate Rd, just south of the school's entrance. A crossing

> guard is stationed there during drop-off and pick-up. To the northeast, a dirt path connects several cul-de-sacs to the school and continues south to Melrose St. From the south, crosswalks across Melrose St at Kingsgate Rd allow students to access the school. Students can also walk along the east side of the fields directly to Melrose St, to walk

home or access the busses or family vehicles along Melrose St.

**Bicyclists:** There are no dedicated bike facilities connecting to the school. Bike parking is available

in the courtyard west of the main entrance. The bike parking is an older, less effective

design.

### Walk Audit Observations and Infrastructure Recommendations

Key locations are described below, including issues identified during audit observations and discussions. Project numbering refers to the Improvements Map on page 11. The party responsible for implementing each recommendation is in parentheses (i.e., City of Lake Oswego or Lake Oswego School District).

#### 1. School Parking Lot and Grounds

The school parking lot becomes quite congested during student drop-off and pick-up times at Oak Creek Elementary. For morning drop-off, parents wait in a long line of traffic to drop off their students. One of the patterns that creates congestion is vehicles waiting for a gap in traffic to turn left out of the school parking lot. During the audit, teachers had trouble crossing the parking lot because of the car traffic. To avoid this traffic, some families park in the surrounding neighborhood and walk their students a few blocks to school, causing some neighbors to complain about blocked driveways and congestion on their street.

The existing bike parking is an older style, shown in the photo below, which does not support a bicycle from two points of contact and makes it difficult to lock bikes to the rack.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a. Replace bike parking with modern, Inverted-U racks and cover bike parking area for long-term bike storage. Allow at least 4 feet between racks to provide enough maneuvering room. (Lake Oswego School District)
- b. Sign right turn only for vehicle and bus traffic leaving the school to turn right onto Kingsgate Rd, in



Oak Creek Elementary Bike Parking

coordination with emergency vehicle access requirements. (Lake Oswego School District)

#### 2. Kingsgate Road

The only access to the Oak Creek Elementary parking lot, Kingsgate Rd is a calm neighborhood street posted as a school zone near the school driveway. Traffic mainly flows from Melrose St to the south approaching the school; fewer vehicles access Oak Creek Elementary along Kingsgate Rd from the north. Both directions on Kingsgate Rd are routes to the freeway on SW Lesser Rd. South of the school, Kingsgate Rd has sidewalks on both sides of the street and north of the school there are only sidewalks on the west side of the street. The sidewalks were generally in good condition, except for one instance of heaving on the east side of Kingsgate Rd south of the school entrance.

A signed and marked crosswalk crosses Kingsgate Rd just south of the entrance to the school. During the walk audit many students were observed crossing here on foot and by bike with the assistance of the school's crossing guard.

The intersection at Kingsgate Rd and Melrose St includes crosswalks on the north and west legs of the intersection, crosswalk signs, and advance warning signs. One of the three curb cuts has tactile dome landing pads.

Kingsgate Rd has no specific bike facilities, but many students were observed biking down the sidewalk from the north to get to the school.



Marked crosswalks on the north and west legs of the Kingsgate Rd and Melrose St intersection

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Upgrade curb cuts with tactile domes for ADA accessibility. (City of Lake Oswego is responsible for curb cuts crossing Kingsgate Rd; Lake Oswego School District is responsible for curb cuts crossing the school driveways)
- b. Repair sidewalk heaving on east side of Kingsgate Rd, south of the school entrance. (Lake Oswego School District)

#### 3. Melrose Street

Melrose St is a busy collector located south of Oak Creek Elementary, which is used by most people who drive to Oak Creek. Speed limits are 30mph and it is designated as a school zone near the school. With good sight lines and no stop signs for about a half mile, stakeholders report speeding as a major issue. Additionally, Melrose St provides freeway access from many Lake Oswego neighborhoods.

There are sidewalks in good condition on both sides of Melrose St near Kingsgate Rd, as well as marked crossings at Kingsgate Rd, West Lake Dr, and Peters Rd. However, bushes and vegetation impede visibility for several of the crossing and school zone signs along the north side of Melrose St. The advance crossing warning sign for eastbound traffic is too far from the crosswalk for vehicles to understand where the crossing is located along Melrose St.

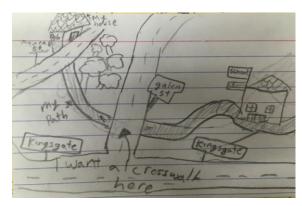
Some families park along Melrose St to drop-off or pick-up their students, which obstructs bus pick-up and through traffic. During the walk audit, families were observed parking at West Lake Park, then crossing Melrose Sr without a marked crossing from the entrance of the park to enter the school property through the back-corner gate.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Trim bushes and trees along north side of Melrose St to make crossing and school zone speed limit signs more easily visible from the street. (Lake Oswego School District)
- b. Consider moving advance crossing warning sign on the south side of Melrose St closer to crosswalk, along Melrose St. (City of Lake Oswego)
- Consider adding a pull out for bus pick-up and drop- off, where buses can have unobstructed parking and avoid impacting traffic on Melrose St. (Lake Oswego School District)
- d. Update school zone signs with flashing warning lights. (Lake Oswego School District install; City of Lake Oswego maintain)
- Add a mid-block crossing with a striped crosswalk and pedestrian-activated flashing beacons (RRFBs) near the entrance of Westlake Park. (Lake Oswego School District install; City of Lake Oswego maintain)
- Consider adding westbound-facing school crossing signs to the south side of Melrose St for better visibility. (City of Lake Oswego)
- Consider adding traffic-calming on Melrose St between Fosberg Rd and Westlake Dr. (City of Lake Oswego)

#### 4. Galen Street

Galen St is a neighborhood street north of Oak Creek Elementary with mostly complete sidewalks. There is a fourway stop at the intersection with Kingsgate Rd. However, students were observed crossing half a block east of the intersection to access the cut-through path that leads to Oak Creek Elementary instead of traveling out of their way to use the four way stop. Walk audit participants noted that vehicles regularly do not stop to let students cross to the pedestrian trail. Several weeks after the walk audit, a student was nearly hit by a car crossing on their way to school.



After almost getting hit by a car at the Galen St path crossing, an Oak Creek elementary student submitted this photo advocating for a safer crossing on their walk to school.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Add a striped crosswalk, remove parking for approximately 20 ft around the trail crossing, and add "Watch for Pedestrian" signs before and after the crossing. Consider adding temporary or permanent bump outs to shorten the crossing distance and make people walking move visible to cars. (City of Lake Oswego)

#### 5. Pedestrian Trails

The neighborhood around Oak Creek Elementary includes many pedestrian paths that cut through cul-de-sacs to the nearest other street. These paths make it possible for people to walk or bike to Oak Creek Elementary (and other destinations) by a more direct route than is possible by car. Many students were observed using these paths. Walk audit attendees reported that some of the paths could use maintenance or have had issues with vandalism.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures, such as trimming bushes, picking up trash, cleaning up graffiti to improve safety for students. (Lake Oswego School District)



Pedestrian trail connecting a cul-de-sac to Oak Creek Elementary.

Consider adding low-level lighting along trails to improve safety. (Lake Oswego School District)

### **Cost Estimates**

Table 1 summarizes recommendations for Oak Creek Elementary, provides order-of-magnitude cost estimates, and places the projects in priority tiers.

**Table 1. Oak Creek Elementary School Recommended Improvements** 

		LEAD	PLANNING -	_		
RECOMMENDATIONS		AGENCY	LEVEL COST	PRIORITY		
1. School Parking Lot and Grounds						
a.	Replace bike parking with modern, Inverted-U					
	racks and cover bike parking area for long-term	Lake Oswego				
	bike storage. Allow at least 4 feet between racks to	School				
	provide enough maneuvering room.	District	\$	Medium		
b.	Sign right turn only for vehicle and bus traffic					
	leaving the school to turn right onto Kingsgate Rd,	Lake Oswego				
	in coordination with emergency vehicle access	School				
	requirements.	District	\$	Medium		
2. Kingsgate Road						
-		City of Lake				
		Oswego;				
		Lake Oswego				
a.	Upgrade curb cuts with tactile domes for ADA	School				
	accessibility.	District	\$\$	Low		
		Lake Oswego				
b.	Repair sidewalk heaving on east side of Kingsgate	School				
	Rd, south of the school entrance	District	\$	Low		

		LEAD	PLANNING -	
RECOMMENDATIONS		AGENCY	LEVEL COST	PRIORITY
2 Mal	anna Stuant	-		
a.	Trim bushes and trees along north side of Melrose	Lake Oswego		
a.	St to make crossing and school zone speed limit	School		
	signs more easily visible from the street.	District	\$	High
b.	Consider moving advance crossing warning sign	21501100	Ψ	111811
	on the south side of Melrose St closer to	City of Lake		
	crosswalk, along Melrose St.	Oswego	\$	Medium
c.	Consider adding a pull out for bus pick-up and	J		
	drop- off, where buses can have unobstructed	City of Lake		
	parking and avoid impacting traffic on Melrose St.	Oswego	\$\$\$	Medium
		Lake Oswego		
		School		
		District; City		
d.	Update school zone signs with flashing warning	of Lake		
	lights.	Oswego	\$\$	Medium
		Lake Oswego		
		School		
e.	Add a mid-block crossing with a striped crosswalk	District; City		
	and pedestrian-activated flashing beacons	of Lake	<b>ሰ</b> ስ	M . 1'
C	(RRFBs) near the entrance of Westlake Park.	Oswego	\$\$	Medium
f.	Consider adding westbound-facing school crossing	City of Lake		
	signs to the south side of Melrose St for better visibility.	City of Lake Oswego	\$	Medium
σ	Consider adding traffic-calming on Melrose St	City of Lake	Φ	Medium
g.	between Fosberg Rd and Westlake Dr.	Oswego	\$\$	Medium
	between 1 050etg Rd and Westake D1.	Oswego	ΨΨ	Wicdiani
4. Gale	en Street	1		
a.	Add a striped crosswalk, remove parking for			
	approximately 20 ft around the trail crossing, and			
	add "Watch for Pedestrian" signs before and after			
	the crossing. Consider adding temporary or			
	permanent bump outs to shorten the crossing distance and make people walking move visible to	City of Lake		
	cars.	Oswego	\$\$	High
	cars.	Oswego	ΨΨ	Tilgii
5. Pede	estrian trails			
a.	Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental			
	Design (CPTED) measures, such as trimming	Lake Oswego		
	bushes, picking up trash, cleaning up graffiti to	School		
	improve safety for students.	District	\$	Medium
		Lake Oswego		
b.	Consider adding low-level lighting along trails for	School		
	safety.	District	\$	Medium

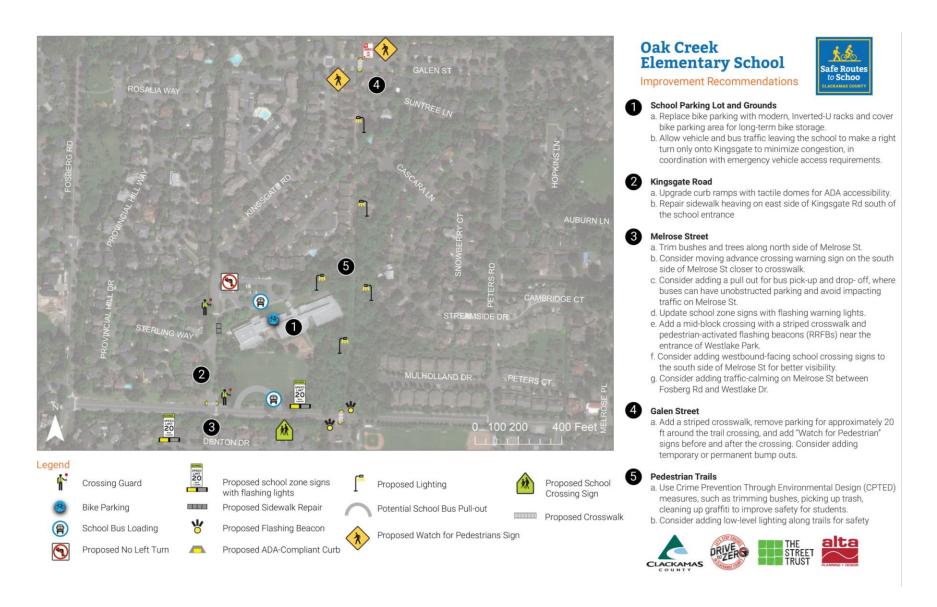


Figure 3. Oak Creek Elementary School Improvements Map

#### OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPORT



### Oak Creek Elementary School

#### LEGEND

- Enrollment area
- Park or natural area
- School campus
- Suggested Route
- Suggested Route Off-Street Path
- III Crosswalk
- 4-Way stop
- Traffic Signal
- Crossing Guard

### Clackamas County Safe Routes to School

Visit our website to learn more about how you can support SRTS at your school:

www.clackamas.us/engineering/srts.html

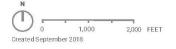




Figure 4: Oak Creek Elementary Suggested Route Map

### **Programmatic Recommendations**

Programmatic activities and events complement infrastructure improvements by empowering students and their families to try walking and bicycling, and by making it safer for them to do so.

Oak Creek Elementary School currently promotes transportation safety by sending information to families about student drop-off and pick-up patterns, as well as reminders about driving safely.

The activities below are recommended for Oak Creek Elementary School to improve and promote safe

walking and bicycling to and from school and in the community. They can be implemented by school administrators, teachers, families, or even school clubs, such as Oak Creek's sustainability teams.

### **Education Programs**

#### **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY EDUCATION**

Pedestrian and bicycle safety education teaches students basic traffic laws and safety rules.





Resources and best practice programs for elementary school students include:

- ♦ The Street Trust's <u>SRTS Curriculum</u> includes a flexible in-class and on-bike curriculum and pedestrian safety lesson plans.
- Oregon SRTS provides classes and train-the-trainer programs. Oregon-based service providers are listed at: www.oregonsaferoutes.org/bike-ed-service-providers
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offers a child pedestrian safety curriculum and Cycling Skills Clinic Guide to help organizations plan bike safety skills events.
- ♦ The Girls in Gear curriculum is a girlsspecific bicycling program designed to empower adolescent girls by creating selfreliance and building confidence. It is also the first program to creatively integrate STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics — activities, physical exercise and nutrition education by way of the bicycle.

#### PARENT EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Parents are the primary decision-makers about how their children get to school. Informing parents about

their options for walking and bicycling, as well as communicating the benefits of active transportation,

can encourage more families to walk and bike. This can occur through school e-news or announcements, and other informational resources. Suggested route maps can show families the best walking or biking route to the school, overcoming concerns about barriers.

Resources and best practice programs:

- Oregon SRTS provides materials, handouts, and theme ideas for Monthly Walk and Bike events as well as Back to School messages.
- ♦ The Oregon Department of Transportation has a poster that helps families determine When Can My Child Safely Walk or Ride to School Alone?
- The National Center for SRTS has several tip sheets for families on safe walking and bicycling behaviors.

#### **Encouragement Programs**

#### WALK + BIKE TO SCHOOL CHALLENGE

The Oregon Walk + Bike to School Challenge celebrates students walking and bicycling to school. International Walk to School Day is held the first Wednesday in October and Bike to School Day takes place the second week in May. Families can set up a table on the event day to provide refreshments and small rewards for families who participate, as well as maps, lights, and safety information to encourage more students and families to join in the fun.

Even families who live too far from school to walk and bike can participate by driving to a designated central location and walking together from there. Coffee and breakfast can be provided, and students can dress up or hold posters to make a fun, parent-supervised parade to school.

Resources and best practices:

- Schools in Oregon can order incentives to support and promote Walk + Bike Challenge Day and Month.
- Walk Bike to School suggests event ideas and planning resources for encouraging active transportation at schools.
- The National Center for SRTS maintains a national database of walk and bike to school day events as well as event ideas and planning resources.

### STUDENT CLUBS AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP **PROGRAMS**

Clubs and leadership programs allow older students to form groups to support the causes they care about most. Older elementary school student clubs can host Walk + Bike Challenge events, organize a competition, host a neighborhood clean-up, conduct trail maintenance, or work with their peers to promote walking and bicycling. Student clubs can offer



excellent ideas, and provide exceptional energy and drive to get things done.

Resources and best practice programs:

- ♦ HOPE Collaborative in Oakland, California hosts a Built Environment Action Team that works with students and other community members to promote safe streets, anti-dumping, and neighborhood beautification.
- Marin County SRTS's Teens Go Green program partners with teens interested in the environment to bring reduced CO2 and healthy lifestyles to their schools.
- Create a cycling league or club. Leagues can introduce student riders to the sport of mountain biking or road racing, with a focus on skills, fun, fitness, and responsibility.

#### **Enforcement Programs**

#### **AAA SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL**

Older elementary school student volunteers can signup to become a certified AAA School Safety Patroller. With support and leadership from school faculty and families, student patrollers help fellow students develop a better understanding of pedestrian and vehicular traffic hazards.

Resources and best practice programs:

♦ AAA has <u>School Safety Patrol membership</u> information and descriptions of student, teacher, and parent roles.

