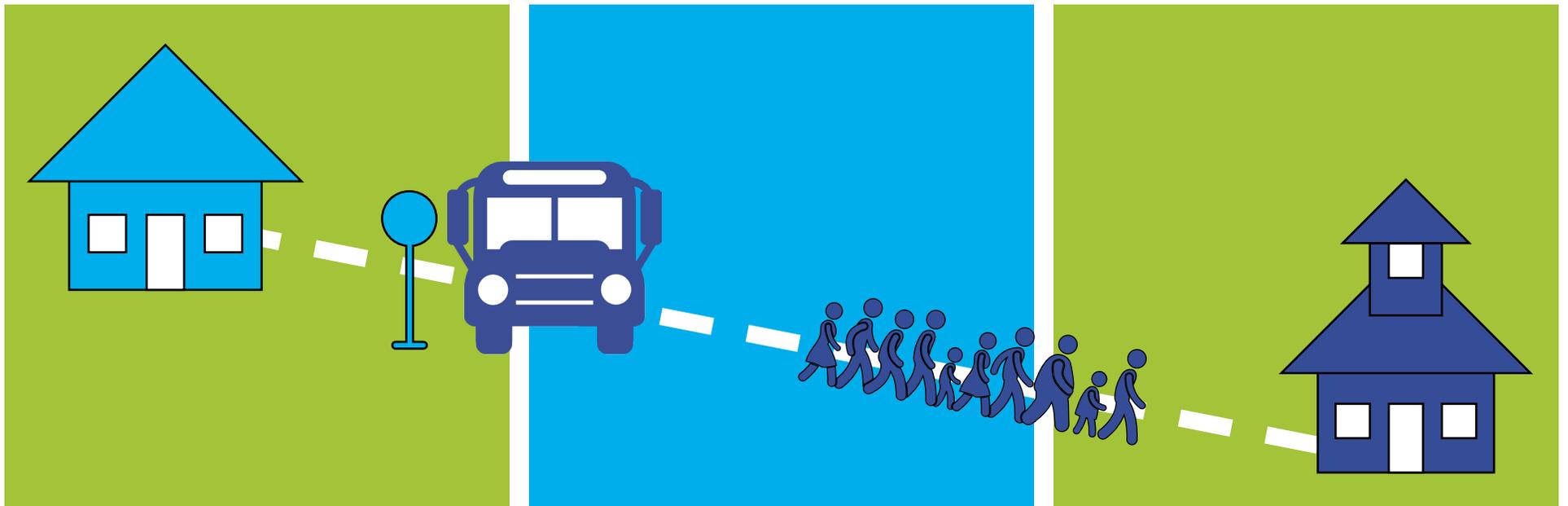


# Organizer's Guide to Bus Stop and Walks





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# 1

## Introduction

### What is a Bus Stop and Walk?

A bus stop and walk (abbreviated BSW in this guide) is an event that occurs in the morning before school where buses drop students off at an established location approximately 0.5 miles from school. Students are greeted at the location by school staff and supervised on their walk to school. A BSW allows students who



Figure 1. Students walking to school (Credit: Toole Design Group)

otherwise are not able to walk to school to enjoy and benefit from walking to school. A BSW program may be a one-time event or become a regular activity.

A BSW is different from a “walking school bus.” A “walking school bus” is formed by a group of students and parents who live within walking distance of school. The “walking school bus” is a name for the group, which follows a set walking route and picks up additional students along the way.

Other names for a BSW may include “alternate” or “remote drop-off.” Since these terms may have a negative connotation, this guide recommends using BSW. BSW also emphasizes both travel modes: riding the bus and walking to school.

### Goal of Bus Stop and Walk

The goal of a BSW is to provide three main benefits to students, staff and community members:

- Improve physical and mental health
- Increase academic performance
- Build community through positive interactions with neighbors

# Benefits of a Bus Stop and Walk

A BSW provides students who would otherwise not have the chance to walk to school with that option. Walking to school gives children time for physical activity and a sense of responsibility and independence; allows them to enjoy being outside; and provides them with time to socialize with their friends and to get to know their neighborhoods. The following benefits are therefore made available to students who usually take the bus.

## Physical and Mental Health

- Walking a half-mile to school in the morning equals about a quarter of the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.
- Exposure to nature and free outdoor play can have additional health benefits including stress reduction, relief of ADHD symptoms in children and increased cognitive and motor functioning.

## Academic

- Research shows that physical activity improves student focus, academic performance and classroom behavior.
- Teaching pedestrian safety skills at a young age helps prepare students for more independent travel later in life.



Figure 2. Lincoln Elementary Safety Patrol (Credit: Minneapolis Public Schools)

## Community

- Students who walk to school have a better understanding of their community than those that ride the bus or are driven.
- Groups of children walking to school are a visible reminder of the importance of high quality pedestrian facilities and can help spur changes in the built environment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Safe Routes to School. "Safe Routes to School Talking Points," January 2013. <http://saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/srts-talking-points-2013.pdf>

# How to use this guide

This guide is designed primarily for school administrators, staff and parents interested in starting a BSW program at their school. Each of these people can play a leading role in a BSW program, and each brings a different perspective to the process. On the following pages, you will find a wealth of information and advice to help you organize a BSW at your school.

This guide is supported by a suite of downloadable resources available on the BSW page of the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center. All the resources are listed here for reference:

- **BSW Introductory PowerPoint**
- **BSW One-Pager**
- **BSW Planning Checklist**
- **Crossing Guard Training Resources**
- **Mapping Guide**
- **Sample Letters for parents, bus drivers, volunteers, and neighbors**
- **Pedestrian Safety Education Resources**
- **BSW Sample Survey Questions**

The guide is organized as follows:

The **Getting Started** section of the guide will help you determine your role in the planning process and steps to take next.



**Setting the Schedule** covers the time-related planning considerations for a BSW.



**Choosing the Route** provides guidance for planning the physical route.



With the schedule and route in place, **Communicating About BSW** will help ensure its success.



Another way to ensure success? **Evaluating Your BSW** and using responses to make it the best it can be.

# 2

## Getting Started

This section will help you understand your role in bringing BSW to your school, and introduce you to the other key actors.

### For School Administrators

Your support is crucial for a successful BSW at your school, so thank you for reading this guide! Whether you support the idea 100 percent and want to start planning right away or have concerns about safety and liability you need addressed, you've come to the right place. What is your current attitude about BSWs?

<b>Let's do this!</b>	Go to the step-by-step <a href="#">Planning Checklist</a> .
<b>I'm interested, but need more information</b>	<p>What are you concerned about?</p> <p><b>Liability</b> – Go to page 7.  <b>Logistics</b> – Go to page 10.  <b>Safety</b> – Go to page 18.</p>
<b>What is a bus stop and walk?</b>	We're so glad you asked. Refer to the <a href="#">Introduction</a> for a basic definition, and then continue to the <a href="#">Key Stakeholders</a> section in this chapter

### For School Staff

Having the support of school leadership is essential. If you want to start a BSW program at your school, the first step is setting up a meeting with your principal to enlist his or her support. Which of these descriptions best match your situation?

<b>My principal is on board. What do I do next?</b>	<p>Great news! Have you and the principal identified a school staff person to lead the BSW?</p> <p>If not, continue to the <a href="#">Key Stakeholders</a> section in this section.</p> <p>If so, continue to the step-by-step <a href="#">Planning Checklist</a>.</p>
<b>My principal needs more information</b>	<p>What are his/her main concerns?</p> <p><b>Liability</b> – Go to page 7.  <b>Logistics</b> – Go to page 10.  <b>Safety</b> – Go to page 18.</p>
<b>What is a bus stop and walk?</b>	<p>Refer to the <a href="#">Introduction</a> for a basic definition, and then continue to the <a href="#">Key Stakeholders</a> section in this chapter.</p> <p>You'll probably also want to look at the <b>BSW Power Point</b> and <b>One-Pager</b> for more ideas.</p>

# For Parents

Having the support of school leadership is essential. If you're interested in starting a BSW program at your school, the first step is setting up a meeting with your principal to enlist his or her support.

Before the meeting, do your homework so you'll be prepared to answer questions. Be clear about the benefits of BSW and review the **BSW One-Pager**.

<p><b>My principal is on board. What do I do next?</b></p>	<p>Great news! Have you and the principal identified a school staff person to lead the BSW?</p> <p>Committed parents can lead BSW programs, but a point of contact within the school is recommended to help with logistics.</p> <p>Have a champion? Continue to the step-by-step <a href="#">Planning Checklist</a>.</p>
<p><b>My principal needs more information</b></p>	<p>What are his/her main concerns?</p> <p><b>Liability</b> – Go to page 7.</p> <p><b>Logistics</b> – Go to page 10.</p> <p><b>Safety</b> – Go to page 18.</p>
<p><b>What is a bus stop and walk?</b></p>	<p>Refer to the <a href="#">Introduction</a> for a basic definition, and then continue to the <a href="#">Key Stakeholders</a> section in this chapter.</p> <p>You'll probably also want to look at the <b>BSW Power Point</b> and <b>One-Pager</b> for more ideas.</p>



Figure 3. Walking Wednesdays at Seward Montessori (Credit: Minneapolis Public Schools)



Figure 4. Key Stakeholders

# Key Stakeholders

Depending on the size and structure of your school and school district, there may be quite a few stakeholders at various levels involved in setting up a BSW program.

## School

From the principal and school staff to the parents and students, everyone has a role to play in a BSW program. Staff are needed to greet the buses at the drop-off site and walk with students to school. Parents must give consent for their students to participate, and older students can assist younger students on the route to school.

## School District

Most schools will need to work with employees in the school district transportation and risk management or legal departments to start a BSW program. The school district transportation department can help assess potential drop-off sites and coordinate with bus drivers. The school district risk management or legal departments can advise on the necessary steps to gain parental permission and limit liability.

### *Transportation Department*

Experts in the logistics of transporting hundreds, if not thousands of students to school each day, the school district transportation department should be involved

in the conversation about starting a BSW program from the very beginning. They will know the most about the bus schedules and routes, and can help streamline communications with individual bus drivers. The school district transportation department should also be involved in the selection of a drop-off site. Go to the Infrastructure Considerations section for more information about selecting a drop-off site.

### *Legal / Risk Management Department*

The legal or risk management department at the school division level needs to be made aware of the BSW program, and can advise on any additional steps required to limit liability. In most cases, schools with BSW programs just need to ensure they are meeting their responsibilities for children's safety just as they would routinely do with all other forms of school transportation and with other school activities. School buses are routinely used to transport students for field trips that involve locations other than school or home. And like a field trip, school staff and adult volunteers accompany students along the BSW route to school.

The text box below illustrates how Minneapolis Public Schools addressed liability for their BSW programs. By working with their legal department, Minneapolis Public Schools was able to utilize the concept of "passive consent" for their BSW. Parents only had to act if they did not want their students to participate. At one school, only two

students opted out the first year, but once they saw how much fun their friends were having, joined in the following year.

All of the information regarding liability is adapted from resources developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School<sup>2</sup> and the Safe Routes to School National Partnership.<sup>3</sup> It is not intended as legal advice and should not be used as such.

2 National Center for Safe Routes to School. "10 Tips for Safe Routes to School Programs and Liability." <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/liabilitytipsheet.pdf>

3 Safe Routes to School National Partnership. "Liability 201." [http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/liability\\_201\\_sara\\_slides.pdf](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/liability_201_sara_slides.pdf)

## Community

If the drop-off site is in a residential neighborhood, it's common courtesy to reach out to the neighbors in the area to let them know what to expect. Neighbors may be interested in volunteering as corner captains (adults offering additional supervision and friendly faces along the route to school) or accompanying students along the walk to school. You may also want to reach out to the local police department to help facilitate safe crossings at larger intersections.

### A BIT MORE ON LIABILITY

Schools with BSW programs must ensure they are meeting their responsibilities for children's safety just as they must routinely do with all other forms of school transportation and other school activities. To avoid liability for negligence, the school must exercise "reasonable care" under the circumstances. If the school directly sponsors walking or bicycling activities such as a BSW, the school generally has greater responsibilities just as they would for other school sponsored forms of transportation. At minimum, the school should follow any rules, policies, or protocols established by the school district for school-sponsored activities occurring off school property such as volunteer training, screening, or adult to child ratios. Responsible planning for a BSW includes:

- Using reasonable care in setting up and running programs.
- Anticipating potential dangers and taking reasonable steps to avoid them (i.e. altering the route, enlisting additional volunteers, etc.)
- Communicating clearly about roles and responsibilities.
- Providing pedestrian and bus safety tips to parents as well as students.
- Lastly, parents and designated caretakers are ultimately responsible for deciding how their children get to school and the opt-out bus provides them with that choice.

## HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS DO WE NEED? WHERE CAN WE FIND THEM?

There are a few factors to consider when determining the number of adult volunteers your BSW program will require. First, check with your school or school district to determine the recommended ratio of adults to students. The number and complexity of intersections along the designated route from the drop-off area to the school will also influence the number of volunteers required. Best practice is to have an adult at every major intersection (signalized or stop-controlled intersections with high traffic volumes). If there are particularly complicated or busy intersections in the neighborhood around your school, you may want to reach out to the local police department to assist with traffic control.

Most established BSW programs in Minneapolis rely on school staff and parent volunteers. Other sources for volunteers may include neighborhood associations, churches, nearby colleges and universities, and senior centers.



Figure 5. Loring Light Rail (Credit: Minneapolis Public Schools)

# Planning Checklist

Start conversations about BSW several weeks in advance of the first event, allowing plenty of time to get the word out and confirm all the details. There’s a lot of legwork to do before the first BSW, but each successive event will become easier.

The checklist below is adapted from one developed by Minneapolis Public Schools’ Safe Routes to School program. It can also be downloaded as a standalone resource on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.

## Four to six weeks before launch:

Task	Person In Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Identify the school lead(s).</b> This person is the point of contact for the transportation department, parents and school administrators. The leader should also be the one responsible for meeting the buses at the drop-off site.			
<b>Choose day of the week and start date.</b> Once the start date has been identified, it will be easier to work backwards and fill in the dates on this chart.			
<b>Identify drop location and route.</b> Be sure to involve the Transportation Department and school crossing guards in the decision-making process.			
<b>Name the BSW.</b> Customize the name to make it memorable! Use your school mascot or neighborhood in the name – alliteration is nice too!			
<b>Draft letter to parents, explaining BSW and opt-out procedure.</b> Find an example Parent Letter on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.			
<b>Get approval from</b> school administration, determine distribution method (paper or electronic), and make translations available as needed.			
<b>Send parent letter.</b>			
<b>Record names of opt-out students.</b>			
<b>Communicate with Special Education team</b> to determine how students with special needs will participate.			

Task	Person In Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Determine the number of staff/volunteers needed.</b> There should be an adult at EVERY intersection on the route, as well as an adult to walk with the first group; additional walk along volunteers to meet adult/student ratios and a greeter at the school who can direct buses that forget about the BSW.			
<b>Recruit volunteers as needed.</b> Find a sample Parent Letter on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.			
<b>Ensure staff/volunteers understand roles and have equipment</b> (adults: vests & stop paddles; students: vests & flags). The Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center also has Crossing Guard Training resources to help train volunteers.			
<b>Share cell phone and emergency numbers</b> among BSW leader, school, and intersection/walk along staff/volunteers.			
<b>Establish procedures</b> for inclement weather days and other cancellations.			
<b>Communicate procedures</b> to school administration and volunteers.			

## About a week before the launch:

Task	Person in Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Communicate with bus drivers.</b>			
<b>Find an example Bus Driver Letter</b> on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center. Be sure to emphasize that drivers should not drop off students if the lead staff is not there to greet them.			
<b>Distribute letter to bus drivers.</b>			
<b>Inform school nurse.</b>			
<b>Share safety information and expectations with students.</b> Find Pedestrian Safety Education Resources on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.			

Task	Person in Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Inform neighbors that live along the route.</b>			
<b>Customize the sample Neighbor Letter</b> on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.			
<b>Print and distribute</b> the letter to neighbors.			
<b>Design signs</b> to post at the drop-off location and along the route to school (optional). Handheld signs are another option.			

## The day before the launch:

Task	Person in Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Gather materials.</b> Prepare signs, clipboard or other way to keep track of the buses and opt-out students at the drop location.			
<b>Check the route.</b> Construction or other surprises can pop up overnight.			
<b>Post signs at the drop-off location and along the route to school.</b> This can also be done the morning of			

## At the end of the season:

Task	Person in Charge	Target Completion Date	Check When Complete
<b>Communicate end date</b> to transportation department and bus drivers.			
If you think there may be confusion, on the first NO BSW day, <b>go to the drop location and direct buses to go straight to school.</b>			
<b>Evaluate the program.</b>			
<b>Draft a survey for teachers</b> using the Sample Survey Questions from the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center.			
<b>Distribute the survey.</b> Set an end date.			
<b>Publicize the results</b> at staff meetings, PTA meetings, on the school website or in a newsletter.			

# 3

## Setting the Schedule

This section covers the time-related planning considerations for a BSW.

### One-time versus Reoccurring Events

A BSW is a great compliment to special events like Walk and Bike to School Days, enabling all students, even those who live far from school, to participate. However, almost the same amount of prep work is required for a one-time event as for a regularly occurring one.

Maximize the benefits of your BSW by making it a regular event. Weekly events are the easiest to remember and quickly become a habit for all involved. You could also have monthly or bi-weekly events if scheduling challenges or other commitments preclude a weekly option. One-time events are great too, and are a low-risk way to test the concept at your school.

When choosing the day of the week for your BSW, remember to look at the school calendar for early morning staff meetings and other conflicts. You may also want to consult the breakfast menu and coordinate with cafeteria staff to see if some menu items take longer to prepare and eat than others.

### Weather Considerations

All the existing BSW programs in Minneapolis are seasonal, operating for several weeks during the fall and spring, with a hiatus during the winter to avoid the most extreme weather conditions. Even with the break for the worst weather, many schools may decide to cancel or postpone their BSW the day of if it's raining. More information about procedures during inclement weather can be found in the Canceling the BSW section below.



Figure 6. Students walking to school in the snow (Credit: Toole Design Group)

If students do not have the appropriate attire for weather conditions, they can take the opt-out bus from the drop-off site to school. If weather conditions change at the last minute making it unsafe for students to walk, the school staff person assigned to greet the buses should still go to the drop-off site to direct the buses to take the students directly to school.

## Opt-out Bus

Every BSW should have a designated opt-out bus. The opt-out bus waits at the drop-off location for all the other buses to drop off their students, and will transport any students unable to participate the rest of the way to school. The students unable to participate may be those whose parents have requested that their students not walk to school, students without proper attire for the weather conditions, or students with temporary or permanent mobility limitations. The opt-out bus can also provide transportation for students that may have lost the privilege of walking to school with their friends due to disciplinary issues.

BSW organizers should work with the school district transportation department to identify which bus will serve as the opt-out bus and communicate the drop-off procedures to drivers. To assist with communications, see the Sample Letter for Bus Drivers.

## Canceling the BSW

Unfortunately, no amount of advance planning can guarantee good weather for every BSW. It's a smart idea to come up with a set of procedures to follow in the event of a cancellation caused by inclement weather, construction, testing schedules or other events.

The school BSW Leader is the primary point of contact on BSW days, and should be responsible for notifying bus drivers, school administrators and volunteers when a change in plans occurs. The method of communicating these changes may vary; posting to the school website and social media channels, starting a phone tree, etc., but should occur early enough to accommodate the changes in schedule. As part of the initial BSW planning, BSW organizers should work with the Transportation Department and school administrators to identify the best time to announce any changes to the original plan.

# 4 Choosing the Route

This section covers many of the physical planning considerations for a BSW. For more details about choosing a school walking route, check out the **Minnesota Safe Routes to School Mapping Guide**.

## Length (Distance and Time)

Most able-bodied adults walk a mile in about 20 minutes. Since students have shorter strides and an abundance of potential distractions on the way to school, this guide recommends a route between 0.25 and 0.5 miles long. Walking these distances should take the group no more than 8 to 15 minutes, respectively and are usually well within the school walk zone.

Be sure to allow enough time for students to walk from the drop-off location to school. Since bus pick-up times do not change, and walking takes more time than riding the bus, classroom teachers should be made aware that students will arrive a few minutes later than usual. In Minneapolis, classroom teachers report the benefits of BSW, such as increased focus and more positive attitudes, far outweigh the minor change in schedule. On-time arrival may differ by grade level, or depending on whether students eat breakfast at school. Work with school administrators and classroom teachers to ensure the BSW schedule is compatible with regular morning routines.



Figure 7: Bus Stop & Walk route at Lucy Laney Community School (Credit: Minneapolis Public Schools)

## Infrastructure Considerations

There are multiple considerations when choosing a drop-off site and walking route for the BSW.

### Drop-off location

The drop-off location will need space to accommodate the total number of school buses and perhaps a few parent vehicles at approximately the same time. If using a curb, the length of the drop-off area is dependent on the number of buses expected at a given time; for planning purposes, most school buses are 40 to 45-feet long. Buses will also need easy access to and from the drop-off site; it's best to avoid locations where buses would have

to back up to exit. Examples of potential drop-off sites may include:

- A nearby park or trail head
- Middle or high school a few blocks away
- Neighborhood street with sidewalks and low traffic
- Place of worship
- Public library
- Senior center
- Shopping center

Note: The use of a parking lot as a drop-off site at another institution or on private property must be cleared with the owner ahead of time.

## Places to walk

To ensure student safety and comfort along the route to school, look for routes with continuous sidewalks or shared use pathways. If there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood surrounding the school, look for streets with low traffic volumes and speeds, ample width for students to walk on the shoulder, and be sure to walk facing traffic. If there are no sidewalks or suitable streets near the school, students can be dropped off at the regular location at school and led to the school track or along another route on school property. While it doesn't provide hands-on safety education or the experience of active transportation, walking around school does provide the same health and academic benefits.

## Intersections

To the extent possible, limit the number of intersections and street crossings along the route from the drop-off site to school. Where intersection crossings are inevitable, look for intersections with simple geometry (i.e. one or two lanes in each direction, streets intersecting at 90 degree angles, and traffic control devices such as stop signs or traffic signals). Also, look for pedestrian infrastructure at the intersection – are there curb ramps leading to marked crosswalks? If there is a traffic signal present, are there walk/don't walk signals? It's often worth it to alter a route, even if it makes it slightly longer, to avoid busy or complicated intersections.



*Figure 8: Bus Stop & Walk at Northrop Elementary School (Credit: Minneapolis Public Schools)*

# Adult Supervision

The physical characteristics of the walking route to school are just one component of the route planning. BSW organizers will also need to determine the amount of supervision needed along the route.

The number of major intersections along the route will influence the number of adult volunteers the route will require. At minimum, at least one school staff member, usually the BSW Leader, needs to be at the drop-off site before the buses arrive to greet the students. Preferably,

there will be two or three adults at the drop-off site: one to greet the buses and coordinate any opt-out bus riders, one to lead the first group of students to school and one ready to take the next group. Along the route, there should be additional adults stationed at every major intersection. Schools with student safety patrols can decide whether to involve these students at minor crossings, on school grounds, or working with adults at some of the busier intersections. As mentioned in the previously, coordinating with the local police department for traffic control assistance may be necessary at very busy intersections.



Figure 9: Group of students walking to Madison-Marietta-Nassau Elementary School (Credit: MnDOT)

# 5

## Communicating about BSW

The Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center has developed several sample letters for various audiences that can be customized and used to communicate about your BSW program. There are letters available on the website for:

- Bus Drivers (includes drop-off location and instructions)
- Parents (includes opt-out information)
- Volunteers (includes roles and expectations)
- Neighbors

In addition to using these letter templates, take advantage of existing communication channels at your school, such as backpack flyers, eNewsletters, emails, social media and robo-calls to help get the word out. It's good practice to prepare your materials in advance and get them approved by school administration prior to distributing them. Follow up with bus drivers in person as they drop students off at school.

Also, don't forget to communicate with students about BSW. Students should not only be made aware of changes to way they get to school, but need to be told what the expectations are for them on their walk to school. Ideally, pedestrian safety skills would be covered in the classroom prior to the first BSW, and students would have a chance

to practice them ahead of time. School announcements are another method of reviewing the rules for the walk and basic pedestrian safety reminders can also be shared on school announcements, and on the bus the day of, before students unload.

### EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Follow all instructions from staff, crossing guards, and school patrols.
- Wait at every intersection for the crossing guard or the school patrol to direct you to cross a street.
- Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic. Walk (don't run) across the street.
- Watch for cars, trucks and bicycles at every parking lot, driveway, alley and intersection.
- Obey all traffic signals and traffic signs.
- When you are near the street, don't push, shove, or chase each other.
- Stay on the sidewalk. When walking on the sidewalk, be mindful of neighbor's plants and flowers.
- Dress for the weather. We will walk rain, shine or snow!
- Leave scooters, skateboards, and sports equipment at home.
- Bigger kids—look out for littler kids.
- Be friendly and courteous to all. You represent yourself, your family, your classroom and our school. Make us all proud.

# 6

## Evaluating your BSW

### Why evaluate your BSW?

Once your BSW program has been planned and implemented, the next step is to evaluate the program. Taking a step back from the logistics and evaluating the program will help you identify things that are working well and things that may need adjustment to ensure your BSW's continued success. The evaluation and results reiterate the importance of the program to school administration and classroom teachers. The results of the evaluation are useful not only at the school level, but can be shared at the district level to support implementation at other schools.

### How to evaluate your BSW

There are a few different methods you can use to evaluate your BSW, ranging from casual conversations at the end of a walk, to a more formal debrief with the BSW team, to a written questionnaire. Regardless of the method you choose, the steps here will help you prepare and get the most out of the evaluation.

### Refer to the goals or reasons for starting the BSW

These will help you formulate the questions for the evaluation. For example, if one of the goals was to increase student focus, a potential question might be: "On BSW days, children are more on task and more focused," with teachers selecting whether they "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," or "strongly disagree." Need more ideas? Check out the **BSW Sample Survey Questions**.



Figure 10. Students walking to school (Credit: MnDOT)

## Choose who you would like to complete the evaluation

Since the BSW occurs before school and is designed to benefit students academically, classroom teachers should be the primary target for evaluation. Also, consider tailored surveys for bus drivers, volunteers, parents and even students. While older students may be able to fill out the same survey as classroom teachers, questions or activities should be adapted for younger students as well. Students in lower grades can be asked to draw or write about what they saw on their walk to school.

## Draft the survey

There are several websites that allow users to create and share surveys. Benefits of using an online platform include ease of sharing and the automatic tabulation of results. Paper surveys may generate higher response rates in areas where internet access is limited, but require additional effort to tabulate the results.

## Set a timeframe and distribute the survey

Surveys should be short to encourage busy teachers and parents to complete them. Set a realistic timeframe to collect results; two weeks is usually plenty of time.

## Compile and share the results

Once the survey results are in, use them to improve the BSW and celebrate its success. Include the results in staff emails, parent newsletters and other regular communications.

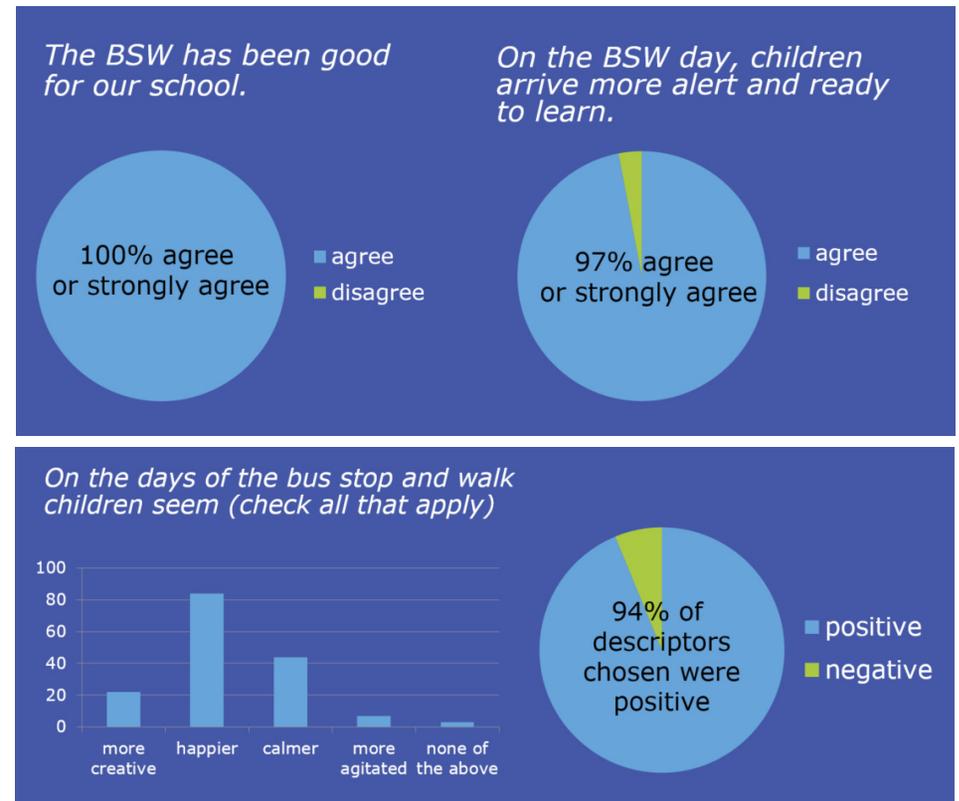


Figure 11. Minneapolis Public Schools surveys staff on an annual basis. The results above are from spring 2016.