

Oregon Department of Transportation

Safe Routes to School



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OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL HANDBOOK



Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
About Safe Routes to School	3
What Is ODOT Safe Routes to School?	3
Program Partners	4
TAP Team	4
Local SRTS Coordinators	4
SRTS Coordinator Resources	5
Regional Hubs	5
Monthly Webinars	6
SRTS Quarterly Meetings	7
SRTS Annual Meeting	7
Equity Trainings	7
Activity Kits	8
Jump Start Training and Curriculum	8
Jump Start Train the Trainer	8
Jump Start Curriculum	8
ODOT SRTS Website	9
Guides	9
Toolkits	9
Newsletters	9
SRTS Video Library	9
SRTS Outreach and Activity Materials	10
Additional Resources	14



Introduction

This handbook is for anyone interested in learning more about the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Whether you are a teacher, parent, principal, SRTS Coordinator, grantee, or planner – the ODOT SRTS Team is thrilled that you’re here. This handbook will take you through what makes the Oregon SRTS program unique and how you might tap into programming depending on what you need. If you have additional questions about anything in this handbook, please contact Info@OregonSafeRoutes.Org.

About Safe Routes to School

What Is ODOT Safe Routes to School?

SRTS is a national effort to encourage students and families to walk and bike to school. In Oregon, SRTS is broken up into two categories: education programs and construction programs. On the education side, SRTS Coordinators are on the ground leading walk and bike to school events, walk, ride, and roll safety education training, surveying families, promoting traffic safety through campaigns, and getting bicycle and pedestrian safety efforts into school policies and activities. On the construction side, millions of federal dollars are awarded in grant funding across the state to create new bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and more. Education and construction complement each other and create a holistic program toward long-term behavior change. ODOT strongly encourages communities to incorporate both education and construction for a comprehensive approach.

ODOT SRTS Terms and Acronyms

- **Jump Start:** Training program to guide PE teachers in bicycle and pedestrian safety education. Also includes curriculum, drill guides, access to borrowing bicycle fleets and pedestrian education kits
- **ODOT:** Oregon Department of Transportation
- **Regional Hub:** Three regions across the state that connect SRTS Coordinators and practitioners with each other and learning resources, led by a Regional Hub Lead. These Hubs meet monthly online, and coordinate over email to share resources, celebrations, and questions.
- **SRTS:** Safe Routes to School-



- **TAP team:** Technical Assistance Providers who provide technical assistance to SRTS programs across the state including serving as Regional Hub Leads and leading monthly webinars for the Oregon SRTS community.
- **TSO:** Transportation Safety Office at ODOT
- **Walk+Roll event:** Five events throughout the year to celebrate walking and rolling to school, a great way to build excitement about your SRTS work!

Program Partners

TAP Team

ODOT contracts with Technical Assistance Providers (TAP) to provide technical assistance to local SRTS practitioners and support SRTS efforts across the state. The TAP team leads the SRTS Hubs in your region and will be the main source of information and resources available to all.

Local SRTS Coordinators

Coordinators are a cornerstone to the success of SRTS programs! They are often funded through ODOT Education grants. To find out if your community has a coordinator, contact your Hub lead (contact information on page 6). Coordinator roles are unique to each region. Depending on your communities, number of schools involved, and additional resources available, SRTS Coordinator responsibilities may include:

- Coordinating district-wide SRTS programming, resources, and communication
- Facilitating formation of school teams to identify and prioritize walking and biking routes and engineering and enforcement recommendations
- Creating, promoting, and providing district-wide education and encouragement programs and resources for schools
- Attending monthly Hub meetings and SRTS Quarterly Meetings to stay connected with the statewide network

SRTS Coordinator Resources

Regional Hubs

ODOT SRTS Regional Hubs connect Coordinators in regions of Oregon through monthly opportunities to meet online in semi-structured office hours or focused meetings based around a specific topic. While

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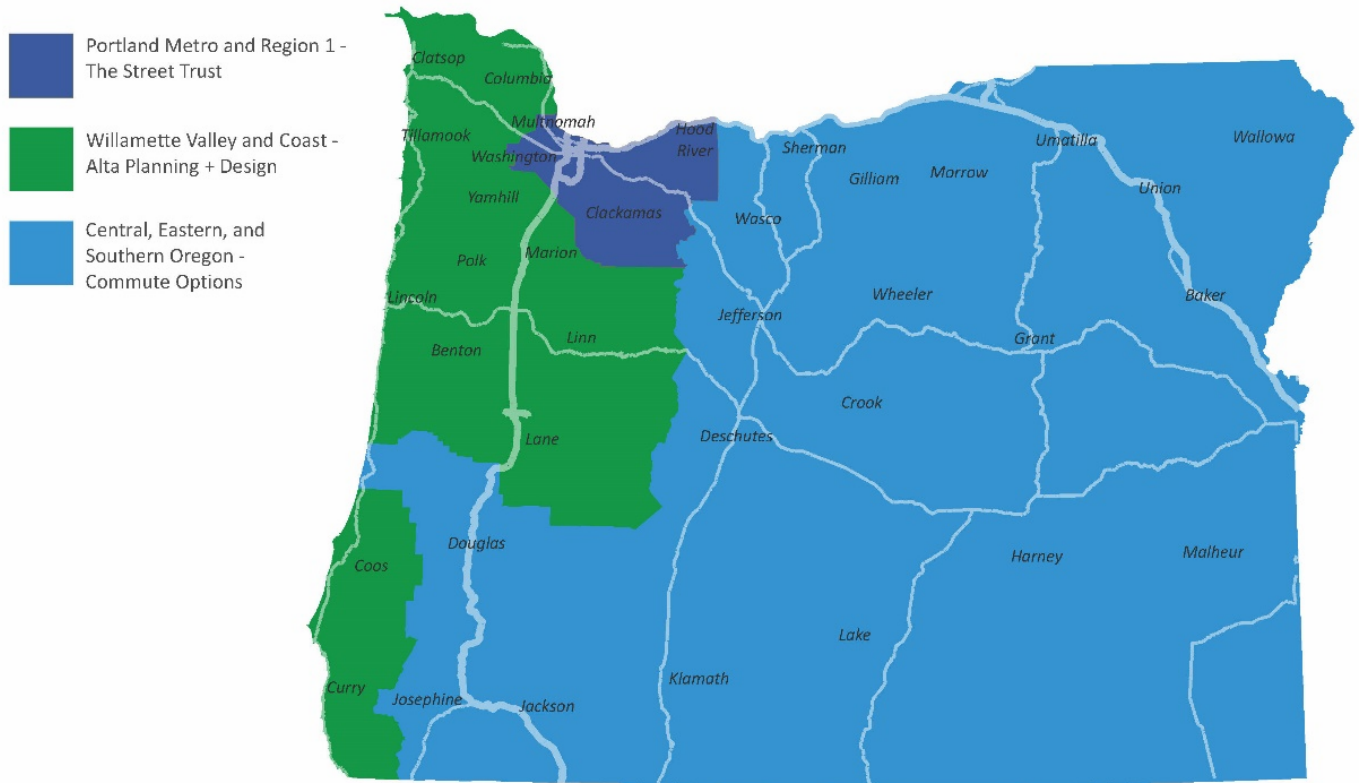
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Hub meetings are designed to focus on practitioners within a specific region, anyone is welcome to register and attend meetings to learn and connect with SRTS practitioners in other parts of the state. Hubs are run by a Hub Lead, who acts as a resource for regions without a SRTS Coordinator to help create and sustain successful SRTS programs.

Services and support offered by the Regional Hubs include:

- Monthly practitioner webinar trainings on SRTS topics
- Monthly online meetings to share information and discuss challenges
- Monthly themes and activities to get families excited about walking and rolling with free incentives and outreach materials
- Art contests, transportation safety campaigns, and much more

Regional Hub Contact and Meeting Times



Portland Metro and Region 1:

- Lindsay Huber – lindsay@thestreettrust.org



- Meeting: every second Thursday of the month, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Willamette Valley and Coast Hub:

- Nora Stoelting – norastoelting@altaplanning.com
- Meeting: every second Thursday of the month, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Central, Eastern, and Southern Oregon Hub:

- Indigo Larson – indigo@commuteoptions.org
- Meeting: every third Wednesday of the month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Monthly Webinars

The ODOT SRTS TAP team hosts monthly webinars on different topics related to equity, event planning, capacity building, and more. Webinars happen on the third Tuesday of the month at 11:00 a.m., and topics are announced in our monthly newsletter and listed on the [ODOT SRTS website](#), where you can also access recordings of our past webinars. Attending these webinars is an excellent way for you to expand your knowledge and network as you build your SRTS program. If there are topics you would like to see covered, please reach out to your Hub Lead or the TAP team with your suggestion. Past webinars have been recorded and are saved to the [Oregon SRTS YouTube page](#).

Additional resources for SRTS-related webinars and training are available through the [Safe Routes Partnership](#) and the [Transportation Research and Education Center \(TREC\)](#) at Portland State University.

SRTS Quarterly Meetings

Quarterly Meetings happen once per season and are an opportunity for all three Hubs to come together. These meetings include opportunities to get to know each other, showcase our programs, and engage in focused discussion around a particular topic. They are a great opportunity to build camaraderie with other SRTS practitioners and gain an extra dose of inspiration. Two of the Quarterly Meetings (fall and spring) happen in person, and two of them happen virtually (winter and summer). Examples of past Quarterly Meeting topics include:

- Crossing guard programs
- High school engagement
- Disability justice
- Reflections on the school year
- Site visits to see community SRTS projects

SRTS Annual Meeting



The Annual Meeting is a staple of the ODOT SRTS program and serves as one of the four Quarterly Meetings. Typically held in April as a part of the Oregon Active Transportation Summit (OATS), the meeting is a big celebration for the statewide community to share stories, connect, and celebrate each other.

Equity Trainings

Equity is a central tenant to SRTS work in Oregon. The TAP team has hosted several equity trainings for the SRTS community and plans to continue to offer ways for practitioners to deepen their equity work. Past training topics include:

- Disability justice and accessibility
- Trauma-informed practices
- Understanding and interrupting ableism

At the request of the facilitators, these trainings were not recorded. If you would like more information on the topics already covered at trainings, reach out to your Hub Lead or the TAP team for resources.

Activity Kits

The ODOT SRTS Activity Kit program will be launching in mid-October 2024. SRTS Coordinators, school staff, parent volunteers, and City staff will be able to request kits to support their local programs. This 2024 round is expected to be a competitive process based on need. Kits include:

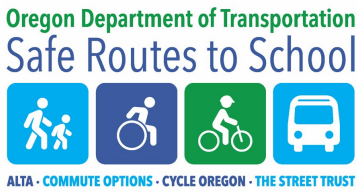
- Walking School Bus Kit
- Bike Bus Kit
- Crossing Guard Kit
- Circulation Kit

These kits include physical materials such as bike lights, how-to guides, traffic cones, reflective vests, and more. Talk with your Hub lead or TAP Team contact to learn more about requesting kits.

Jump Start Training and Curriculum

Jump Start Train the Trainer

The Jump Start program offers training for educators interested in teaching students how to walk and bike safely. The training is geared toward PE teachers to learn how to integrate bicycle and pedestrian safety education into PE class and possibly another type of class such as health or afterschool, summer



programming. If you are interested in building staff skills in teaching the Jump Start curriculum, you can request a training from the Jump Start team, ideally for multiple teachers within your district or Regional Hub, by filling [out the form on the ODOT SRTS website](#).

Jump Start Curriculum

The Jump Start curriculum contains lessons to teach students to safely walk and roll to school and around the community. The curriculum was developed in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Education standards and has options for adapting to a variety of skill levels, ages, learning styles, and abilities. The curriculum includes lesson plans and drill guides for reference when setting up activities. You can view the entire curriculum on the [ODOT SRTS website](#).

ODOT SRTS Website

The resources below can all be found on the ODOT SRTS website. They are all free and available to download or can be requested to be shipped directly to you.

Guides

Free downloadable guides are available for educators, parents, and SRTS practitioners focused on commute safety for bicycling, transit, and walking, as well as guides for implementation of SRTS infrastructure and crossing guard programs. You can access the current library of [guides on the ODOT SRTS website](#).

Toolkits

ODOT SRTS offers practical toolkits designed to help you implement your SRTS program in your community. Toolkit topics include an overview of SRTS for practitioners, safety and education, bicycles, walking, data collection, construction, and media. Some example toolkits are:

- 2024 Bike Bus Toolkit
- 2024 Walking School Bus Toolkit
- New Coordinator Toolkit
- Rural Programs Toolkit
- Keep Calm and Carry On to School: Improving Arrival and Dismissal for Walking and Biking
- Building Momentum for SRTS – A Toolkit for Districts and City Leaders (English Only)

The full library of free [ODOT SRTS toolkits](#) is available on our website and updated regularly.



Newsletters

The ODOT SRTS newsletter goes out once a month. It includes upcoming training opportunities, announcements about new programs and grants, as well as celebrating the amazing work happening around the state. If you are not already on it, you can email Indigo@CommuteOptions.Org to get added to the statewide newsletter. Additionally, ODOT has a newsletter through Gov Delivery, where you can opt in to receive SRTS announcements only [through clicking this link to sign up](#).

SRTS Video Library

The ODOT SRTS Video Library has videos geared toward SRTS Coordinators, educators, and parents to teach skills necessary for cultivating safe and confident road users. Videos are grouped into three categories: general information, pedestrian, and bicycle safety. While most videos are available only in English, one general video on SRTS is also available in Vietnamese, Russian, Spanish, and Chinese. You can access the full video library on [the ODOT SRTS website](#).

SRTS Outreach and Activity Materials

Coordinators, parents, and educators can access and order outreach education materials from the ODOT



storeroom for FREE! These materials have been provided to support teaching the knowledge and skills necessary for everyone to be safe and confident road users, from student educational materials such as comics, activity books, and games; promotional materials such as brochures; and digital media to share with your school community. Additionally, parents and educators can order guides on topics such as walking safely and helmet fitting. You can

browse the [full library of ODOT Safe Routes to Schools materials](#) at any time on the website. You can also download many different digital toolkits through ODOT [by clicking this link to the storeroom](#).

Walk+Roll Event Incentives

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ODOT SRTS offers free resources and incentives to hand out to promote five yearly [Walk+Roll events](#). These events are excellent ways to boost excitement and raise awareness about Safe Routes to School. You can order materials for individual schools through [our online order form](#) and educational materials to support events through [the ODOT Storeroom](#). If you need to order incentives in bulk for multiple schools, talk to your Hub lead about the bulk order form. You can view a recorded webinar on how to order educational resources and incentives [by clicking this link](#).

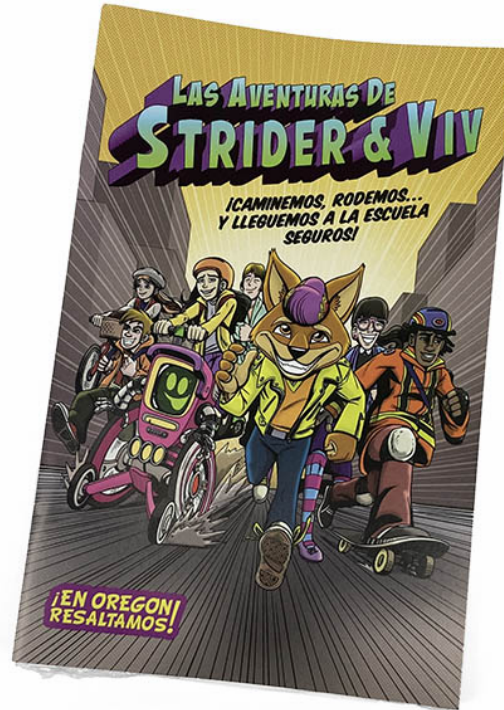
You can order free incentives such as stickers, reflective shoelaces, and more in advance of each event from the [event page on the ODOT SRTS website](#). Each event page also contains free graphics for event promotion on social media and more.

Comics, Activity Books, and Coloring Sheets

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Comics, activity books, and coloring sheets are another way for students to engage with safely walking and rolling. The comics star our mascots, Strider and Viv. Reading level is grade 3+ or can be read to students by an adult. There are currently four issues out, and the comics are available in both English and Spanish.



SRTS Games and Activities

Games such as SRTS Bingo Cards and Scavenger Hunts can create activities for students and families working to walk and roll safely to school and around the community. Many of these resources are available in Chinese, English, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.



ACTIVITY BINGO

Find something in your neighborhood that starts with the letter 'F'	15 x	Walk or roll to your favorite park	Count the trees on your block	Push up Pop up Jump!
15 x	Arms up and wiggle your fingers and toes for 30 seconds	Go up and down the stairs 5 times	Visit a Traffic Playground <small>GreshamOregon.gov/ Traffic-Playgrounds</small>	Do your favorite yoga pose for 1 minute
Walk or roll to the nearest bus stop	Shake out your whole body for 30 seconds		Walk or roll to a school near you	15 x
1 minute 	Count the number of wheels on your street	15 x	Teach someone how to cross the street safely	Have a spontaneous dance party
Walk or roll to a library near you	Travel on a bike path	Walk or roll to the nearest park	30 seconds	Count the stop signs on your street



Brochures and Caregiver/Educator Resources

While many resources are focused on directly engaging students and the school community, ODOT also offers brochures and educational guides directed at SRTS Coordinators, educators, and caregivers on important information for getting around safely. Examples include a helmet fitting worksheet, Five Steps to Being a Safer Pedestrian brochure, and When Can My Child Walk Safely Alone? handout.



When Can My Child Safely Walk or Ride to School Alone?

As parents, you get to determine when your child is ready to travel to school alone. But how do you know when your child is actually ready to do so? Here are a few questions to consider when making your decision.

Is there a legal age for my child to travel to school alone?

Oregon has no legal minimum age requirement for children traveling to school on their own.

Your child's school or school district may have policies and guidelines along with recommendations for walking and biking routes to the school or bus stop.

If there's no legal age, how can I know when my child is ready to travel to school alone?

Being "old enough" is different from being ready. Think about your unique child – can your child:

- Pay attention?
- Remember and follow rules?
- Make good decisions?
- Feel comfortable on their own?

Some kids may be ready at a younger age or later than their peers. As parents, you know your child best, so use your parental judgment.

Age Practice Experience Attention Readiness Responsibility

What can I do to prepare my child to walk or bike to school safely?

Your child will need to recognize, remember and obey traffic signs, signals and pavement markings. Practice with your child by walking or biking together. Repeated practice helps kids get better at it and you feel more comfortable with their skills.

Identify a safe route to and from school or the bus stop. The school may already have route maps with recommendations. If not, here are some considerations:

- Look for less busy roads and slower speeds.
- If there are no sidewalks, choose roads with shoulders where walkers can face oncoming traffic.
- Find the locations of your school's crossing guards.
- Choose crossing locations that have a clear view of traffic.
- Practice the route with your child until you are both comfortable.

Consider the time of year. Shorter days and weather conditions will affect visibility and safety. Dress your child in bright and reflective clothing so they can be seen easily by others.

Can my younger child be accompanied by another older child?

Use your parental judgment to decide if the older child is mature and experienced enough to be a safe travel companion. Consider if your child can accept direction and is comfortable in the company of the older child. Walking or biking in groups is a great way to teach kids getting to and from school on their own.

What about walking to and from the school bus stop?

Follow the same criteria as you would for determining your child's readiness to safely get to school alone. Use your parental judgment to determine what's best for your child.

For younger children:

- Check with your school for their protocol and guidelines.
- Establish an appropriate routine for pick-up and drop-off.
- Make sure your child knows and can repeat your full name, address and telephone number.

By walking and biking to school, kids learn valuable life-long skills. They arrive to school more prepared to learn, discover their neighborhoods and gain needed independence and confidence.

Walk and Ride Safely. The Way to Go. Transportation Safety — ODOT



Additional Resources

Safe Routes Partnership

[Building Blocks: A Guide to Starting and Growing a Safe Routes to School Program](#)

This toolkit will help you kick off a new Safe Routes to School program or strengthen your existing one. This step-by-step guide describes how to start a program, get buy-in, and make the program stronger over time.

[The Basics of Safe Routes to School](#)

A webpage run by Safe Routes Partnership that introduces the different components that go into a Safe Routes to School program and provides links to resources to learn more.

[Community Engagement for Safe Routes to School \(Virtual Training\)](#)

This virtual training from Safe Routes Partnership provides an overview of Community Engagement strategies for SRTS.

[Let's Get Together: A Guide for Engaging Communities and Creating Change](#)

This guide offers tips and strategies for effective community engagement, including building an understanding of community, leveraging partnerships, and creative ideas for engagement activities.

[Policies to Support Safe Routes to School](#)

This Safe Routes Partnership webpage compiles resources to learn more about effective policies for implementing a sustainable SRTS program in your community.