

OREGON SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
NEW COORDINATOR TOOLKIT
JULY 2022



Oregon Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School



ALTA · COMMUTE OPTIONS · THE STREET TRUST

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the participation of the following individuals and organizations in the development of the New Coordinator toolkit.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Heidi Manlove
Oregon Department of Transportation

LeeAnne Fergason
Oregon Department of Transportation

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COORDINATORS

Julie Van Horn

Jessie Wilson

MaryJo Anderson

Nicole Perry

Lale Santelices

Sarah Mazze

Whitney Bennett

CONSULTANT TEAM

Hannah Day-Kapell
Alta Planning + Design

Nora Stoelting
Alta Planning + Design

Caroline Crisp
Alta Planning + Design

Contents

What is Safe Routes to School?	4
.....	
The Role of the Coordinator	5
.....	
Planning for the School Year	10

What Is Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School: National and Local

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national effort to encourage students and families to walk and roll to school—whether that’s on a bike, bus, scooter, or mobility device. SRTS programs work to improve street safety around schools, and provide education and encouragement activities to kids and their families or caregivers.

At the local level, SRTS practitioners run education and encouragement programs with families and schools and encourage strong municipal and district policies to support safe walking and bicycling. To learn more about how SRTS is funded in Oregon, visit <https://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/oregon-safe-routes-to-school-history/>.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) SRTS programs are split up into the following three categories, and each has a [grant funding process](#) for local programs to apply for ODOT funds:

- **Construction** programs focus on infrastructure improvements to walking and biking routes through investments in crossings, sidewalks and bike lanes, flashing beacons, and more.
- **Education** programs focus on education and outreach to increase awareness and safe use of walking and biking routes.
- **Planning assistance** is available through the Project Identification Program, which builds a SRTS Plan for each school or cluster of schools that outlines street safety and education needs to address barriers for students walking/biking to school. These plans help communities apply for the ODOT SRTS Competitive or Rapid Response Construction Grants.

ODOT SRTS Vision

ODOT’s SRTS program envisions a future where all Oregon students and families can choose and access safe, active, and shared transportation options for their school commute. To make this vision a reality for all communities, the ODOT SRTS program includes:

- Investing in and evaluating safe construction, education, and encouragement programs
- Prioritizing underserved communities for program resources, support, and opportunities
- Building and leveraging partnerships with agencies, schools, and community organizations
- Using transparent communication and evaluation that engage and support communities

The Role of the Coordinator

What Is an SRTS Coordinator?

SRTS Coordinators work with school communities to identify transportation barriers and opportunities, and organize events. They are hired by nonprofits, school districts, State, City, or regional government to be the point person for all SRTS efforts. Coordinators often plan events at schools or in communities to communicate the importance of taking active transportation to school. They may also table at school open houses, or be involved in the parent-teacher association (PTA), other school organizations, and community groups. Below are more details about some of the typical tasks and responsibilities of an SRTS Coordinator in Oregon.



Typical Tasks and Responsibilities

SRTS Coordinators in Oregon are a crucial part of ODOT programming. Coordinators (aka you!) are typically the people on the ground facilitating events, coordinating between many community partners and school staff, and applying for grants to fund safety improvements. Though there are many ways to represent SRTS as a Coordinator, here are some typical responsibilities you can expect to take on:

Build relationships with students, school districts, and school staff: By being a presence around schools, and getting to know who students are, Coordinators increase awareness of SRTS. Developing these relationships builds the SRTS program and overall awareness of what the SRTS program can offer. Coordinators are often present for Walk+Roll to school days to pass out incentives and reward safe walking and rolling behavior. Coordinators also meet with school staff and administration to understand, through surveys and conversations, the current needs and practices around active transportation in order to develop programs to address those needs.

Organize events such as monthly Walk+Roll events: Using ODOT SRTS flyers, social media graphics, and outreach materials, Coordinators can customize monthly Walk+Roll events for different communities. In addition to Walk+Roll events, linking up with other efforts adjacent to SRTS can help create connections between topics and programs, which builds capacity. For example, a “no idling” campaign highlights environmental sustainability and SRTS. For a breakdown of the monthly events ODOT SRTS typically supports, reference the school year calendar on page 9.

Coordinate volunteers: Coordinators often tap into existing groups like the PTA, retirees, neighborhood associations or similar parent groups that would be willing to assist with Walk+Roll events. This not only helps with logistics like setup and cleanup, but also helps with community building. It is extra important to thank volunteers often, and try to make the experience fun for them too.

Host bicycle and pedestrian safety education: Coordinators can facilitate [bicycle](#) and [pedestrian safety](#) education or support teachers in bringing it into classrooms and PE. Teachers are often focused on their own curriculum, and it can be important to have the help of a Coordinator to facilitate bringing in something new. Starting in 2022, Coordinators will have the opportunity to get trained through the ODOT SRTS Technical Assistance Providers in facilitating bicycle and pedestrian safety education in schools. Visit the [ODOT SRTS Train the Trainer](#) page to learn more.

Distribute outreach materials: Whether it’s materials for an [event](#), or lawn signs for a traffic safety campaign, Coordinators often distribute materials and make sure each school has what they need. This is also helpful for relationship building. Any opportunity to show your face in the school building reminds school staff and students about the program!

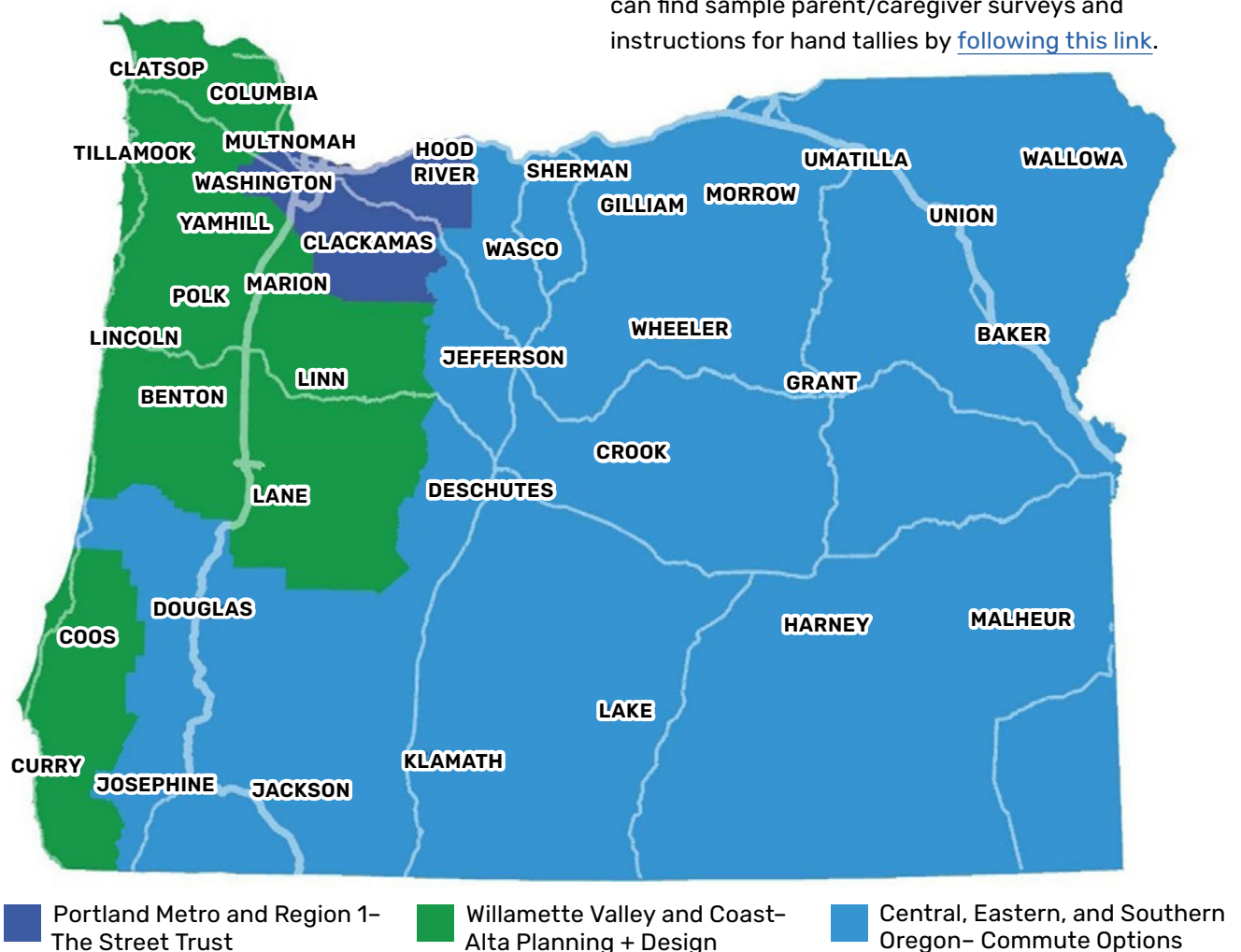


Attend webinars and trainings: The ODOT SRTS Technical Assistance Providers (TAP) team hosts monthly webinars on different topics related to equity, event planning, capacity building, and more. Information about upcoming webinars and how to register can be found on [ODOT SRTS's website](#). Attending these webinars is a great way to expand your knowledge and network as a new Coordinator. 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.

Participate in regional Hub meetings: Regional Hubs meet each month to discuss different topics, and share resources by region. The three regions are Portland Metro and Region 1, Willamette Valley and Coast, Central, Eastern, and Southern Oregon, as shown in the accompanying map. Find out how to connect with your regional Hub lead [here](#).

Evaluate programs: Because Coordinators often have strong relationships with school staff, it is important to evaluate programs through speaking with students and staff directly. Sometimes this is in the form of a survey after a bicycle safety lesson, a focus group after a Walk+Roll event, or surveys for administrators to learn more about the challenges they are witnessing. Student hand tallies and parent/caregiver surveys can be ways to gauge program impacts over time. You can find sample parent/caregiver surveys and instructions for hand tallies by [following this link](#).

ODOT SRTS HUBS AND TAP TEAM LEADS



How to Get Started as a New Coordinator

As a new Coordinator, you will be oriented to the specific city, town, school district, or region you're working in, as well as the statewide SRTS program. Below are some first steps that ODOT SRTS recommends for all new Coordinators:

Meet with your regional Hub lead: Soon after starting, your regional Hub lead will meet with you to get to know you more, and learn about what you are hoping to accomplish as an SRTS Coordinator. If multiple Coordinators are hired across the state, Hub leads may choose to group new Coordinators together for these initial meetings.

Join SRTS email lists: You will be added to your regional Hub email list, which is one way that Coordinators can communicate with each other through asking questions, sharing resources, and collaborating regionally. Upon starting in your role, you will be introduced to other regional SRTS contacts through this email list. You can also coordinate with your Hub lead to be added to the National Safe Routes listserv.

Work with a mentor: During your initial meeting with your Hub lead, you will also be given the option to have a Mentor, who is also an SRTS Coordinator in Oregon, and has been in the role longer. You will be encouraged to meet with your Mentor monthly either online or in person, and you will be provided with exercises and questions from the ODOT SRTS TAP team to guide your meetings. You can also make this time your own and spend it however is most useful to your development in the role.

Observe and learn about your community: Much of your time as a Coordinator will be understanding the needs and barriers around walking and rolling to school in your community. In order to develop strategies and solutions that are useful, you will need to spend some time observing as well as walking and rolling around the schools and neighborhoods yourself. You can conduct a [walk audit](#) with community members, observe school pick up and drop off, join a PTA meeting, or set up a table at school events to introduce yourself.

Create a work plan. All Coordinator roles will be different, and it will be important in the beginning to determine some short and long term goals for yourself to measure your progress and celebrate successes (no matter how small!) In your work plan, consider how you will delegate and collaborate with others in the community. There is a lot to do, and often just one Coordinator. Building coalitions will be an important part of working toward goals and program sustainability.





Planning for the School Year

Month to month, each Coordinator's specific tasks will differ. The table that follows is an example of what to expect generally throughout the school year and summer break. It can be used as a jumping-off point during your first year to build the program.

Coordinators may be hired at different points in the school year. This calendar is most directly applicable to Coordinators hired to start in the fall. If you are hired midyear, your work plan will still start with similar relationship-building tasks outlined in the table for September, but with the seasonal events and outreach relevant to the month you start in.

It is also important to note that some Coordinators serve many schools within a region or district, and their work will look different than a Coordinator working with just one school. If you are working with a whole region or district, you may choose to prioritize working with certain schools based on equity considerations and need, or coordinate with district and County staff more than teachers and students. The scale at which you conduct the following tasks will differ depending on your context, and many of the recommendations here are related to prioritizing one to two schools to more deeply engage with for the school year.



September*Back to School***Administration Coordination**

- Coordinate with administration to get on the agenda during school community meetings to introduce yourself.
- Create a “welcome” letter to families with safety tips and transportation options for the school year.
- Coordinate with administration to begin promoting International Walk+Roll to School Day by hanging posters and including information in a newsletter.

City, County, and District Coordination

- Research who the City, County, and school district transportation department staff are and send emails to each of them to introduce yourself.
- Coordinate with the district to figure out about SRTS related events and programs that already exist at other schools within the district.

TAP Team Coordination

- Coordinate with ODOT SRTS TAP team for ordering incentives.

Teacher Coordination

- If teachers are interested, visit classrooms to familiarize yourself with students and teachers.
- Attend a staff meeting to share about your role in the community.
- Assess teacher capacity and interest in bike/ped education by taking 10 minutes at a professional development session at the start of the school year. Pay attention to opportunities to integrate bike and pedestrian education into what teachers already have planned.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Plan an event for International Walk+Roll to School Day.
- Begin planning for Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

Other Coordination

- Learn more about the school or schools you are responsible for coordinating with this school year, and whether there are specific schools you should prioritize engagement with.
- Start attending community meetings such as the PTA, Back to School nights, Meet the Teacher Days, staff meetings, or other school groups to introduce yourself and observe the school community.
- Order free ODOT materials to use throughout the school year by navigating to this [link](#) and searching for Safe Routes to School, bicycle, or pedestrian.



October***International Walk to School Day******Administration Coordination***

- Coordinate with administration to learn about any school-wide events happening in the fall where you could have a presence (table with information and activities for kids).

Caregiver Coordination

- Create a survey or sign-up form to gauge caregiver interest in volunteering. Options to volunteer may include leading a walking school bus or bike train, helping with education in classrooms, taking photos, or tabling.
- Familiarize yourself with school district volunteer policies so you can utilize those with volunteers.

TAP Team Coordination

- Coordinate with ODOT SRTS TAP team for ordering incentives for Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Monday or Friday morning meetings or assemblies are great for announcements and connecting with the school community. If you can't make it, consider making a video!
- Host International Walk+Roll to School Day.
- Begin to do volunteer outreach for Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

November***Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day******Daylight Savings Time Ends******Administration Coordination***

- Coordinate with administration to send out information about Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day in school-wide communications.
- Coordinate with administration about the best time to send out winter travel tips to families.

Caregiver Coordination

- Send an email or host a meeting to gather caregiver volunteers to talk through what they are interested in helping out with and begin defining volunteer roles. Understanding their skills, time availability, and interests will help maximize these partnerships.
- Begin involving parents and caregivers in events. If some volunteers want to lead walking school buses or bike trains, have additional meetings with them to select routes, define safety measures, and do a trial run.

Teacher Coordination

- Teacher involvement becomes more streamlined through creating a system for teachers to request your services. Make an announcement about this at a staff meeting.
- Consider developing a system for how teachers can request you to present or to be involved in their classes (this could be a survey, or creating a "menu of services" that explain what you would be available to facilitate).

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Host Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

December*Be Visible***Administration Coordination**

- Before winter break, send out a message to families with winter travel tips.
- Get on the agenda for a staff meeting and a PTA meeting to ask participants for feedback on the program or if they need more ways to get involved.

Caregiver Coordination

- Coordinate with caregiver volunteers about what time works best for them for a celebration. Incorporating food and child care can help make participation easier!
- Reflect on how your experience with hosting volunteers is going.

City, County, and District Coordination

- Reach out to City, County, and District transportation department staff and set up meetings with them to learn more about what they observe around transportation challenges and opportunities.

Teacher Coordination

- With fewer events and programming happening in the winter, it can be a good time to reflect on how your experience with communicating with teachers is going, including what kinds of services they're requesting, and if that system is useful.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Decide which winter and spring events you'd like to host, and begin planning for Winter Walk+Roll to School Day if desired.

January*Winter Walk+Roll***Administration Coordination**

- Coordinate with administration to promote Winter Walk+Roll to School Day, and send out an announcement about caregiver volunteers.

Caregiver Coordination

- Similar to the one in the fall, send out another call for parent/caregiver volunteers. This may take place at a PTA meeting or an announcement in the school newsletter.
- Host a celebration for your volunteers. This could be an event at a local coffee shop or the school, or a group bike ride. Letting your volunteers know how much you appreciate them will help sustain relationships!

Teacher Coordination

- Communicate with teachers to see if anyone wants more support or services in their classrooms.

TAP Team Coordination

- Coordinate with ODOT SRTS TAP team for ordering incentives.

Other Coordination

- Read over [Neighborhood Navigators curriculum](#), and consider if and how bicycle and pedestrian safety education may fit into your school.

February*Winter Walk+Roll****TAP Team Coordination***

- Coordinate with your Regional Hub lead about registering for a spring train the trainer.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Host Winter Walk+Roll to School Day.
- If you want to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian safety education, contact your regional Hub lead to learn about upcoming training opportunities.

March*Spring Walk+Roll**Daylight Savings Time Begins****Administration Coordination***

- Coordinate with school administration and teachers to learn if there are summer programs happening.

Caregiver Coordination

- Host a check-in meeting or send a survey to caregiver volunteers to gauge how their involvement is going so far. Also ask how they might want to be involved in summer programming.

Community Organization Coordination

- Coordinate with local organizations or parks departments to learn about nearby summer programs where bicycle and pedestrian education might fit in.
- Coordinate with local bike shops to learn how they may want to be involved in spring events through raffling off a gift card, tabling, or helping host a bike maintenance event.
- Research transportation- and health-related community-based organizations that may be able to support Walk+Roll events by tabling, providing volunteers, or leading activities.

TAP Team Coordination

- Coordinate with ODOT SRTS TAP team for ordering incentives.

Teacher Coordination

- If you want to host bicycle and pedestrian safety education this spring, begin communication with PE teachers to discuss incorporating this into PE.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Begin planning for summer programming. If you want to host an event, a camp, or a workshop figure out who you need to partner with to make it happen (such as Parks and Recs, CBO's, existing camps).
- Begin promotions for Earth Month and order incentives.



April*Earth Month***Administration Coordination**

- Develop summer safety travel tips flyer to send home in June.

Community Organization Coordination

- Coordinate with bike shops and community-based organizations to support spring events.

TAP Team Coordination

- Coordinate with ODOT SRTS TAP team for ordering incentives.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- If planning a bike maintenance event, follow up with the bike shop and the school to confirm a date. Having this event on a weekend may be a good idea, making it easier for caregivers to come and get their bikes tuned up as well.

Host Earth Month/Earth Day events

- Begin promoting May Challenge by hanging up posters and getting an announcement in the school newsletter.

May*Bike to School Day**May Challenge***Community Organization Coordination**

- Coordinate with bike shops and community-based organizations to support events.

Teacher Coordination

- Develop teacher survey to understand how teachers want to be involved in the program next year.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Host bike maintenance event, if you're able. Thank the local bike shop, and make an effort to maintain that partnership.
- Host May Challenge.

June*Summer Safety***Administration Coordination**

- Coordinate with administration to have summer safety tips flyer sent home with all students. If administration is too busy at this time of year, collaborate with parent groups or staff who work closely with administration.
- Attend the final staff meeting and final PTA meetings of the year to share more about how the program developed throughout the year and what's next.

Caregiver Coordination

- Coordinate with parent/caregiver volunteers on hosting celebrations.
- Host an end-of-the-year celebration for caregiver volunteers similar to the winter one, but outdoors (weather permitting).

Teacher Coordination

- Send out a teacher survey for feedback on the school year.

July

Reflecting on the School Year

Community Organization Coordination

- Partner with farmers' markets, parks and recreation activities and a variety of outdoor neighborhood events.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Host summer programming, if you're able to.

Other Coordination

- Create a table similar to this one to map out your monthly tasks for the upcoming school year.

August

Planning for Next School Year

Administration Coordination

- Meet with principals to find out what they want from SRTS for the year and how they want to partner.
- Coordinate with administration to understand when and how "welcome back" materials get sent home to families.
- Incorporate safety and SRTS program information into back-to-school newsletter packets.

Teacher Coordination

- If there are teachers that want to be involved based on survey feedback, begin communicating with them now to plan for the fall.

Walk+Roll Event Coordination

- Host summer programming, if you're able to.

Other Coordination

- Decide which schools will be your priority for the next school year.

OREGON SRTS RESOURCES



Congratulations on beginning your SRTS Coordinator journey! The ODOT SRTS team is excited to see what you create and is here to support you along the way!

Contact Info@OregonSafeRoutes.Org with any questions.



Additional Resources for New Coordinators

- [Traffic Safe Communities Network Safe Routes to School Coordinator Manual](#)
- [Steps for Creating a Safe Routes to School Program](#)
- [The Basics of Safe Routes to School](#)
- [Policies to Support Safe Routes to School](#)
- [Let's Get Together: A Guide for Engaging Communities and Creating Change](#)
- [Community Engagement for Safe Routes to School](#)
- [Safe Routes Partnership Webinars](#)
- [San Mateo County Parent and Community Empowerment Toolkit](#)





Oregon Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School



ALTA · COMMUTE OPTIONS · THE STREET TRUST