



# Morningside Elementary

## Safe Routes to School 2008

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Morningside has been a participant of KidsWalk, PEDS' Safe Routes to School program for the metro Atlanta region, since 2002. The KidsWalk program has provided a variety of tools and resources in the areas of education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation. Students will continue to participate in KidsWalk's various educational activities throughout the school year, including safety crossword puzzles, creating maps of travel routes, and participating in the Slow Down Campaign to increase pedestrian awareness in the Morningside community and surrounding areas.

Morningside will utilize its physical education program, as well as a variety of activities inside and outside of the classroom to educate its students on bicycle and pedestrian safety. Morningside will host a back to school bike rodeo in October of each school year for children grades K-5 to equip them with bicycle safety skills for the remainder of the year. The bike rodeo will cover basic traffic safety rules such as helmet safety, looking left and right, stopping, crossing, and traffic signal rules. The rodeo will be held as an after school event in the teacher's parking area which will be closed off for the evening. Volunteers from PEDS and the East Atlanta Kids Club will provide props and necessary material, as well as assist in the implementation of the rodeo. Rodeo stations will vary in intensity according to each grade level.

Morningside will also implement educational programs through our annual Family Science Night which takes place in February. This event enables students and parents to participate in various science-based presentations that address issues such as the environment and the impact of automobile pollution on air quality. Students will also be given taken-home activities to further educate them on vehicles' impact on the environment and the benefits of walking and biking to school.

The school Wellness Committee sponsors Spring into Health Day, a popular walk to school day event, in April. The Wellness Committee will also be working on other educational promotions such as "Walk Across America".

### **Encouragement**

Students will participate in PEDS' walking logs which enables them to receive various incentives (i.e. reflective wrist bands, reflective vests, watches, and stickers) accordingly to the number of days they walk to school. Morningside will also host three walk-to-school day events per school year, including International Walk to School Day and the Walking Food Drivers event in the fall, and Spring into Health Day in the spring. International Walk to School Day encourages students, parents, teachers, community members and leaders to join together to celebrate the health benefits of walking and to increase pedestrian awareness in the Morningside community. This event also motivates non-walkers and cyclists to adopt walking and biking to school as a part of their lifestyle. Spring into Health Day keeps kids motivated to continue to walk throughout the spring and reminds drivers that Morningside is a walking community. The Walking Food Drivers event encourages kids to walk to school with a nonperishable food item that is donated to the food bank of the school's choice. In the fall of 2006, Morningside



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contributed to the 2,000 tons of food donated to the Atlanta Food Bank as a result of PEDS' Walking Food Drivers event. Kids will be encouraged to create their own safety signs for each event, as well as draft letters and create Safe Routes to School post cards to recruit sponsors for each event. Students will also participate in various contests sponsored by PEDS' Safe Routes to School program throughout the school year, including the Draw Your Route to School contest and Walking Food Drivers Event.

### **Enforcement**

Morningside will rely on speed radar signs to enforce the speed limit on E. Rock Springs. Police officers of zone 6 will also randomly issue tickets for speeding and parking violations throughout the school year. Morningside will also participate in a law enforcement charrette in which the school community can address concerns related to enforcement (i.e. ticketing, police presence, crossing guards, traffic relief, etc.) with their local enforcement officers.

### **Evaluation**

Morningside Elementary will evaluate the success of its Safe Routes to School program by implementing a the Student Travel Tally Sheet, a "show of hands survey" developed by the Safe Routes to School National Clearinghouse, three times a year: September, January, and April. The surveys will be conducted among grades K-6 and will allow the school to assess students' modes of transportation. It will allow the school to observe compare travel modes according to grade level, as well as enable the school to observe any change in behavior or measure any shifts. Morningside also plans to utilize PEDS' Walking Logs which enables kids to record the number of days they walk, along with the number of miles and minutes they spend walking. Students will participate in the Student Travel Tally Sheets and Walking logs simultaneously so that comparisons can be made between both tools in the areas of walking and bicycling. The Walking Logs will also help evaluate the frequency of walkers and bicyclist, and the average time students spend walking and bicycling to and from school.

Walk-to-School Day events will be used to evaluate participation from both students and the greater Morningside community. A head count and/or count of the number of material and props distributed will be taken at each event in order to track the number of participants. Evaluating these events will enable the school to measure changes in student participation, as well as involvement from the Morningside community. Students will be asked to turn in a comment card, also known as an index card, after each walk-to-school day event, as well as other activities of encouragement and educational activities. Students will indicate the activity at the top of each card and write suggestions about their likes and dislikes. This will give students the opportunity to express their thoughts in an open-ended manner, and will also provide the Safe Routes to School Team with insight on the types of activities that motivate the students to participate in the Safe Routes to School program.



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Parent surveys will be conducted at the start of each school year to evaluate changes in attitude regarding children walking to school. Morningside will use the version of the Parent Survey that was created by by GDOT's SRTS Coordinator. Survey questions will help identify school proximity and motivators and hindrances to walking to school. These surveys will be issued through the school's newsletter, which has a high response rate from Morningside parents.

Enforcement and engineering will be evaluated by comparing crash analysis data from the local police department and the department of transportation yearly. Parent surveys will also help to indicate whether or not the school's approach to enforcement is effective.

### **Engineering**

Existing conditions, data analysis, and studies conducted by the City of Atlanta indicate that the following infrastructural changes are needed in order to make walking and biking safer for students at Morningside Elementary:

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**Morningside Elementary SRTS Plan**

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