



Progress and Activity Report - Georgia Safe Routes to School: Task Order 9

This Progress Report reflects the third¹ invoice for Task 9 for activities ending September 28th. Through this billing period, the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center project team continued to provide services and outreach for schools and community stakeholders throughout the state.

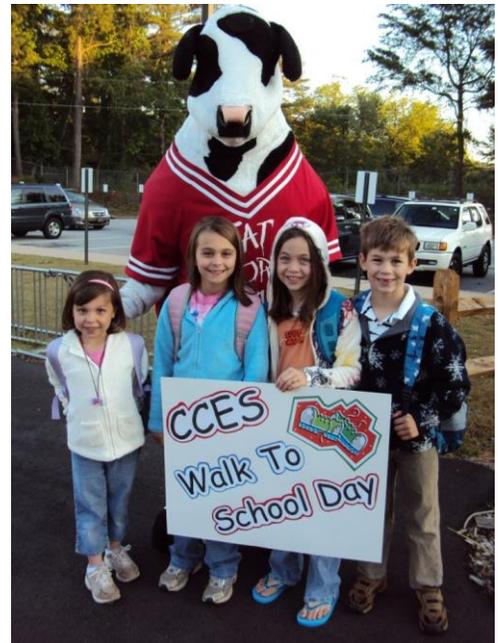
Eight new partners signed on during this period: Lithonia Middle School in Lithonia, Colbert Elementary School in Colbert, Comer Elementary School in Comer, Danielsville Elementary School in Danielsville, Hull-Sanford Elementary School in Hull, Ila Elementary School in Ila, Madison County Middle School in Comer, and Oglethorpe Point Elementary School in St. Simons Island. Additionally, Madison County High School signed on as a Friend of the Resource Center. The Resource Center team made three presentations, conducted 62 meetings, and contributed to four different events.

School Outreach Coordinator Highlights

Highlights from around the state include:

Crabapple Crossing Elementary School, Gold Partner (Fulton County)

Crabapple Crossing Elementary School students kicked off the school year with their first “Be Cool, Walk to School” Day on September 7th. (Event pictured at right.) Nearly 400 students, their siblings, parents, and pets walked to school despite bad weather, to celebrate safe walking. In addition to Resource Center stickers and pencils, students received a small, brightly colored, foot-shaped backpack charm for participating. Students can collect a new charm at each walk-to-school day event.



Dunwoody City Schools Walk-to-School Day (DeKalb County)

On September 5th the City of Dunwoody’s schools joined together for the Second Annual Dunwoody Walk-to-School Day, kicking off another year of safe walking and biking. Thousands of students filled the sidewalks to Austin Elementary, Chesnut Charter, Dunwoody Elementary, Kingsley Charter, and Vanderlyn Elementary Schools. Chesnut Charter had 47% of its students participate – its highest participation rate yet – with 224 walkers, up from 147 participants during the Georgia Walk-to-School Day last March.

¹ The last progress report through August was incorrectly identified as the first report and invoice for Task 9, rather than the second.

Parkside Elementary School, Bronze Partner (Atlanta Public Schools)

Parkside Elementary is an Atlanta neighborhood school. Although 75% of students live within one mile, only 10% currently walk or bike to school regularly. SOC, Nykia Burke, met with a group of energized and concerned parents to develop a plan that would expand Parkside's SRTS program. To-date this partner school has been moderately active, sending home safety information and including walk/bike safety in the annual health fair. The parents and PE teacher expressed interest in increasing the number of students walking regularly, and building a program to increase bicycling. Nykia will continue to work with this group to identify opportunities to build SRTS in the school and throughout the surrounding community.

Lithonia Middle School, New Partner (DeKalb County)

Back in February 2012, Nykia partnered with the Georgia Conservancy and City of Lithonia to host a SRTS National Course at Lithonia Middle School (LMS). Attendees expressed interest in developing a Safe Routes program at LMS and building SRTS into the Lithonia community, with a primary focus on identifying opportunities to improve infrastructure and connectivity between the school and residential areas. Nykia encouraged partnership with the Resource Center and provided information and resources to support the school's efforts. LMS officially partnered with the Resource Center in September 2012! Nykia will partner with the school's champion to plan their first ever Walk-to-School day event and develop a school specific SRTS plan.

Madison County Schools (Colbert Elementary, Ila Elementary, Danielsville Elementary, Danielsville Middle, Hull-Sanford Elementary)

SOC, Alicia Hatcher, participated in a meeting with John Devine, of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission; Dr. Allen McCannon, Superintendent of Madison County Schools; Todd Higdon, Mayor of Danielsville; and several Danielsville community members. Danielsville Elementary currently does not have any walkers due to a lack of sidewalks, but would like to have a Park and Walk Site so that students can participate in SRTS programs. All eligible Madison County Schools signed on as School Partners and plan to participate in International Walk to School Day. Alicia is in the process of setting up meeting with all new School Champions to help develop an SRTS plan for each school.

Barrow Elementary (Gold-level, Clarke County)

Alicia met with School Champion, Janice Flory, to discuss the SRTS program at Barrow Elementary. Barrow has temporarily relocated to a location on the other side of town while the school is being remodeled. The school has weekly Walk to School Days and will continue in their temporary location by having a Park and Walk Site from a nearby shopping center. The school administrators frequently meet with parents after Walk to School Days to have coffee and chat informally or discuss anything going on at the school. This has proven to be a great way to draw in parents and increase participation in Walk to School Days.

Cobb County School Champions Meeting

The bi-annual Cobb County School Champions meeting was held on September 18th at the Cobb County Public Health Department. Champions from **Floyd Middle, Mountain View Elementary, Addison Elementary**, and representatives from **Cobb County Public Health Department** and **Cobb County Department of Transportation (DOT)** were in

attendance. The Champions discussed plans for International Walk to School Day and picked up incentive items for their events. Marty Sewell, of Cobb County DOT, gave a progress update on each of the projects underway near the schools and offered to serve as a contact for any further questions or issues.

Safe Kids Savannah Presentation (Chatham County)

Patti Sistrunk was the keynote presenter at the monthly Safe Kids Savannah Coalition meeting on September 9th. Patti provided attendees with information about bicycle and pedestrian safety laws for Georgia. Handouts were provided that reminded drivers about their responsibilities in relation to pedestrians and cyclists, with a special focus on driving around children. Additionally, Patti and Alison Gramza, Safe Kids Coordinator for Savannah, spoke about International Walk to School Day events happening around the city in October and leading up to the event. At the time of the meeting, five schools had registered with the national website and were planning events.

Oglethorpe Point Elementary (Glynn County)

Oglethorpe Point Elementary is located on St. Simons Island in Glynn County. In August, the school registered for International Walk to School Day with www.walkbiketoschool.org, and Patti called the school's PTA contact to discuss partnership. Oglethorpe Point Elementary is an infrastructure awardee as part of the Glynn County School District application. The school is located in a residential area where many children walk and bicycle regularly from nearby neighborhoods. More children could walk, however, and plans are in place for improved signage and pavement markings to make routes even safer. For Walk to School Day events, organizers expect over 400 participants. Nearly 700 students attend Oglethorpe Point. On September 5th, Patti traveled to the school to deliver incentives and pick up the partnership form. Patti also provided the school with a copy of the NHTSA Ped Ed Curriculum Binder and poster calendars.

SRTS Marketing (Toole Design Group and Outreach Staff)

Tally Week/Month: The Resource Center Team encouraged school partners to complete their Student Travel Tally Surveys throughout September and especially during Student Travel Tally Week, September 10-14th. Student Travel Tallies are a resource provided by the National Center for Safe Routes to School and provide evaluation of travel patterns for schools and for the program as a whole. As schools submit travel tallies, the Resource Center will collect them and turn them over to the National Center, which then scans and reports on the outcomes. The Resource Center will have information on the results in future progress reports.

International Walk to School Day: International Walk to School Day is October 3, 2012. Preparations began in June and continued through September. At the end of September, 94 schools had registered their events at www.walkbiketoschool.org. Outreach staff spent much of September reaching out to those schools with registered events – providing incentives, downloads, and support, while encouraging partnership with schools that registered but are not yet Partners. Staff is working with **Campbell Elementary** in Fulton County to host the state media event for International Walk to School Day on October 3rd. The marketing team also developed a Walk to School Day template press release for participating schools and a press release draft.

Newsletter: An e-blast was sent via the School Outreach Coordinators to all contacts in each region on September 6th. The “Wayfinding” e-blast provided schools and community contacts with reminders about Walk to School Day, completing student tallies, and implementing SRTS during school activities.

Website, Hotline, and Social Media: The website was updated with information about International Walk to School Day and Student Travel Tallies. Partners and calendar information were also updated. A webform requesting Partner and stakeholder feedback on events is currently posted on the website. Partners and others are encouraged to report events and strategies implemented online; the SOCs can then solicit more information and promote these events online, on Facebook, and in other marketing outlets.

The Hotline received six calls during this reporting period. Three of the calls were about Walk to School Day, two were stakeholders looking to get in touch with Alicia, and one was the National Center calling looking for information specific to Georgia.

The Resource Center’s Facebook page was updated by the Project Team at least weekly and encourages followers to visit the program’s web site, to find coordinated information. The Facebook page is promoted in email communications, on the web site, and on other materials as appropriate. Facebook updates in September focused on International Walk to School Day; highlighted Gold Level Partner Crabapple Crossing Elementary; and provided links to interesting resources, like a CDC graphic that demonstrates that kids who are physically active get better grades. (See graphic at right.)



Marketing Materials and Incentives: The Outreach team continued to distribute event incentives to registered schools, including: zipper pulls, bracelets, pencils, blinkies, stickers, and bookmarks.

Looking Ahead

In October, the Resource Center team will focus on International Walk to School Day and Walk to School Month. October 3rd is Walk to School Day. Events are planned primarily on that date, but many will take place throughout the month. Additionally, the Resource Center will send out a post-event survey to registered events. A post-event “eblast” newsletter will go out with event highlights and participation information.

Marketing staff members from the Resource Center are creating a walk audit toolkit that focuses on middle school students and provides an educational resource for our Middle School Partners. Staff will meet with Floyd Middle School in Cobb County for input into the toolkit in early October and will continue to involve the school in the creation of the toolkit. Each SOC will continue to reach out to schools to offer materials for the fall; to encourage pedestrian safety education; to schedule events; and to promote other SRTS strategies.