

Texas Safe Routes to School

ELGIN Safe Routes to School Plan 2014

TEXAS



1. Introduction

Policy Statement

Booker T Washington Elementary School, Elgin ISD, and the City of Elgin are committed to ensuring that all our students can utilize *physically* active transportation, such as walking and bicycling, for a safe and enjoyable trip to school. This Safe Routes to School Plan aims to address the issues that will impede active transportation and seeks to strategically solve these problems by implementing a Safe Routes to School program.

Our community is motivated to pursue Safe Routes to School because:

- We highly value student physical activity and health.
- We want to improve the air quality and environment around our school(s).
- We wish to improve unsafe or insufficient walkways, bikeways, and crossings
- We are committed to reducing speeding and reckless driving near school(s).

2. The Safe Routes to School Team

We believe that a diverse Safe Routes to School Team develops the most successful Safe Routes to School Plan. Our Team is comprised of a variety of stakeholders, each lending their own unique perspective and expertise in order to make walking and bicycling to school more safe, accessible, and fun for our students.

The stakeholders on our team include:

Bobby Vasquez, EISD Academic and Organizational Planning, Lauri Schroeder, Booker T Washington Elementary Principal, Deanna Olson, Booker T Washington Elementary Vice Principal, Linda Tamez, BTW 5th grade classroom teacher, Coach Robert Davis, physical education teacher, Karla Rivers, PE instructional aide, Erin Flores, BTW PTA member and Parks & Recreation Board member, Carl Newstrom, grand parent volunteer, Colby J. and Isabel G., student representatives from 5th grade and Student Council, Amy Miller, Community Development Director, Michael Gonzalez, Parks & Recreation Manager, Lt John Corbett, Elgin Police Department, Gary Cooke, Planning & Development Director.

The Champion (primary) contact person for our Safe Routes to School Plan is:

Name and Title: Bobby Vasquez, Assistant Superintendent

Address: 902 W 2nd St

City: Elgin

State: Texas

Zip: 78621

Phone: (512) 285-9226

Email: rvasquez@elginisd.net

Organization: Elgin ISD

Stakeholder contributions to the development and /or execution of the Plan:

All of the stakeholders listed above were an integral part of creating the plan, continue to be involved, and are a major component of the future success of and implementation of the plan.

3. The Public Input Process

Our team worked to include the community in developing our Safe Routes to School Plan. To accomplish this we:

- Administered parent surveys
- Administered student surveys
 - The EISD conducted parent and student surveys:
Surveys were sent home to parents in English and Spanish about parents' perception of the safety of students walking or biking to school. The majority of respondents indicated that they would like for their children to walk or bike to school but will not allow it because it is not safe. Their specific concerns include the lack of sidewalks, lack of safe street crossing, distance, and general perception that it is not safe. Additional survey results are available in section 5.
- Discussed the plan at an EISD School Board meeting.
- Hosted public meetings
 - Safe routes and pedestrian and bicycle safety were discussed at Elgin City Council meetings, EISD Board meetings, Public Safety Advisory Committee meetings, PTO meetings, Friends of Elgin Parks meetings, Elgin Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings, and Envision Elgin meetings. All are aware of Safe Routes to School Plan.
- Interviewed key stakeholders
 - Police Chief, parents and students at BTW, and Elgin ISD officials.
- Solicited student opinions
 - Conducted student surveys in the classroom.
- Incorporated our cities existing bike and/or pedestrian plan recommendations
 - Utilized the Master Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan and tied into planned trail routes in that plan.
 - The Master Parks and Recreation Plan for the City of Elgin addresses developing trails city wide to promote safe pedestrian and bicycle access throughout Elgin.
 - TRC solutions, the primary engineering firm for the City of Elgin, is working with the city to develop infrastructure plans that support SRTS plan.
- Incorporated our School Wellness Policy objectives
 - The EISD School Wellness Policy includes objectives related to the health benefits of walking and bicycling to school.

4. School Description

Our school Safe Route to School Plan addresses the needs of:

- an individual school – Booker T. Washington Elementary School

The school and district included in our Safe Route to School Plan are:

- Booker T. Washington Elementary School
- Elgin Independent School District

The location of the school is:

- Martin Luther King Boulevard
- City of Elgin, Bastrop County (Elgin ISD serves Bastrop, Lee and Travis Counties)

The environment type is:

- Rural

Type of school:

- Elementary

Student participation data for each school, including, but not limited to, the following elements:

- Total number of enrolled students: 615.
- % participating in a free or reduced lunch program: 72%.

Other characteristics of our school include:

Located in the heart of old town Elgin, Booker T. Washington Elementary School supports a neighborhood that includes traditional homes, duplexes, the public housing authority, Senior Assisted Living housing, Thomas Memorial Park, A Plus Learning Center, Abreo Law office, and churches. The school and neighborhood are within walking distance of the historic downtown district. Martin Luther King Boulevard is a major arterial for our community and it does not have any sidewalks. The streets in the neighborhood are not wide and when vehicles are parked on the street, it becomes even more unsafe for pedestrians due to the lack of sidewalks. The neighborhood does not have any accessible ramp access at intersections and crosswalks are not marked at intersections. Students walk to school or home in the street and students walk to and from school bus stops in the street. Booker T Washington Elementary School has 72% of students on free or reduced lunch program. It has a very active PTA, many opportunities for parent involvement, special programs for students such as the Safety Patrol, and is a recognized campus.

5. Travel Environment

Safe Routes to School Report by Teacher

Classroom Tallies – Average – November 2013

<u>Teacher/Grade</u>	<u>Walkers</u> am/pm	<u>Bicycle</u> am/pm	<u>Bus</u> am/pm	<u>Family</u> <u>Auto</u> am/pm	<u>Carpool</u> am/pm	<u>Other</u> am/pm
Althoff - K	0/3	0/0	5/9	14/7	0/0	0/0
Flores - K	0/3	3/0	11/11	7/7	0/0	0/0
Pease - K	1/2	0/0	6/6	10/10	0/0	0/0
Vaquera - K	1/0	0/0	10/14	11/7	0/0	0/0
Wampler - K	1/1	0/0	7/10	8/5	0/0	0/0
Willet - K	0/0	0/0	3/3	12/8	0/1	0/3
Christian - 1	1/1	0/0	6/8	13/11	0/0	0/0
Hoem - 1	0/0	0/0	7/14	9/6	0/0	0/0
Moher - 1	0/0	0/0	2/9	18/10	0/0	0/0
Pruitt - 1	0/4	0/0	3/7	11/2	0/0	0/0
Ruiz - 1	0/0	0/0	6/8	12/10	1/1	0/0
Scott - 1	0/0	0/0	6/13	10/4	1/1	0/0
Davis - 2	1/2	0/0	6/7	10/7	0/1	0/0
Freeman - 2	0/3	0/0	4/6	13/8	2/3	0/0
Knock - 2	1/1	0/0	9/10	6/3	1/1	0/2
Lopez - 2	0/0	0/0	7/11	9/7	2/0	0/0
Selestino - 2	0/2	0/0	4/7	12/7	0/0	0/0
Strassner - 2	3/3	0/0	4/7	10/7	0/0	0/0
Decamp - 3	1/2	0/0	5/8	16/12	1/0	0/0
Parker - 3	0/1	0/0	7/11	15/9	0/1	0/0
Sanchez - 3	0/2	0/0	4/12	13/4	1/1	0/0
Smith - 3	0/0	0/0	7/11	10/6	2/1	1/1
Trevino - 3	0/1	0/0	6/10	12/7	0/0	0/0
Caldera - 4	0/0	0/0	9/13	10/6	0/0	0/0
Reagin - 4	0/2	0/0	7/12	14/8	0/1	0/0
Grimes - 4	0/2	0/0	11/14	11/6	1/0	0/0
Leifester - 4	0/1	0/0	8/10	11/6	0/3	0/0
Martinez - 4	0/5	0/0	5/8	15/8	0/0	0/0
Cook - 5	0/1	1/0	0/17	17/5	7/1	0/0
Hagaman - 5	0/0	0/0	12/15	10/7	0/0	0/0
Linda Tamez - 5	0/0	0/0	2/6	18/14	1/1	0/0
Taylor - 5	0/0	0/0	5/11	20/10	0/1	0/0

A summary of parent surveys from November 2013 are included in the appendix.

We have the following supports or activities in place during student travel times:

- crossing guards
- student safety patrol
- Watch Dog Dads
- staff presence during drop-off/pick-up
- law enforcement support
- arrival and dismissal plan
- Martin Luther King Boulevard is designated for one way Traffic from Ward Street to Hall Street 7am to 4:30pm school days. This is the primary route to access the campus.

Our school arrival and dismissal procedures include: Students are released when the bell rings by class or grade level. Cars line up to pick-up students and teachers place student into cars. Other students ride a bus home. School buses and cars are separated into different areas of the campus for dismissal. Students walking in the neighborhood are escorted off campus to Alamo Street by a staff person, students attending A Plus after school care are walked to the facility across the street from the school, and parents walk to campus, pick up students in the Courtyard and walk home with them.

Other school travel policies include:

Our school district **does provide “hazardous route” busing** to students.

Students who are within walking/bicycle distance are bused due to serious safety hazards. The safety hazards include, lack of sidewalks, inadequate crossings, traffic traveling at 40mph or more, heavy traffic during school hours, and railroad crossings.

Our school is already engaged in activities that enhance safe and active student travel, including:

- Lessons about safety in P.E. classes.
- Paid crossing guards at school cross walk in the A.M and P.M.

6. Barriers to Active Transportation:

Booker T Washington Elementary School

We have identified and prioritized the following barriers to walking and bicycling to school:

- Missing or insufficient walkways (sidewalks and paths)
 - No sidewalks are in place along Martin Luther King Boulevard from Alamo Street to Thomas Road (Street prior to Hwy 95)
 - Incomplete sidewalks and lack of ADA access on Alamo Street from Main Street to Old McDade Road.
 - No sidewalks on Brenham Street, Madison Street, Ward Street, Church Street
- Crossing streets and intersections are difficult or dangerous
 - No crosswalks
 - at Alamo and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Brenham and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Ward and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Church Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Alamo Street and Madison Street
 - Main Street and Alamo Street
 - Crossing streets is difficult due to the speed of the traffic, and lack of clearly defined intersections.
- Martin Luther King Boulevard is a major arterial for the community.
- Walkways are not accessible to students with disabilities
 - No ADA Curb ramps are in place
- Traffic violations include:
 - Use of cell phone in a school zone
 - Dangerous driving and speeding on streets
 - Vehicles traveling the wrong way on designated one way street, Martin Luther King Boulevard, during school hours.
- Distance to school is too far for many students
- Housing – the neighborhood immediately surrounding BTW Elementary school includes Public Housing and duplexes which increases the population density in that neighborhood. While more people live close enough to school to walk, they choose not to walk due to the lack of safe routes.
- Bus routes – There are 8 bus stops for elementary school, Elgin Middle School and high school students in the neighborhood. These students walk home in the street because there are no sidewalks.

7. Outreach and Publicity Strategy

- Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, appointed by City Council
- Public Safety Advisory committee, appointed by City Council
- PTA for BTW Elementary
- Site Based Decision Making Committee also known as the CAC or Campus Advisory Committee for the BTW Elementary School
- EISD School Health Advisory Committee, or SHAC
- Articles in the Elgin Courier, local weekly paper
- PE Curriculum – safe pedestrian and bicycle activities and information
- Flyers sent home with elementary students
- Proposed Rewards program, mileage program
- Discussed at EISD Board meetings and City Council meetings

8. Creating Solutions

Goals

Our primary goal(s) for active school transportation are:

- Increase the number of students walking and bicycling to school
- Improve the safety of students walking and bicycling to school
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety for the whole community
- Encourage healthy activities for the neighborhoods

9. Strategies

We have identified strategies involving the 5 E's (Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Encouragement, and Evaluation) of Safe Routes to School to address the barriers to walking and bicycling in our school community and to achieve our stated goals. **We have selected at least one strategy from each of the categories of Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation.**

The strategies we will use include:

a. Engineering Strategies within 2 miles of schools

- Construct, replace, or repair sidewalks
- Sidewalks to be installed on Martin Luther King Boulevard, Alamo Street, Madison Street, Church Street, Brenham Street.
- Provide striped cross walks at the following intersections
 - crosswalks
 - at Alamo and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Brenham and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Ward and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Church Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard
 - at Alamo Street and Madison Street
 - Main Street and Alamo Street
- Adequate signage to be added for school zone and speed limits
- Signs to be installed for new crosswalks
- Add ADA ramps as needed on Martin Luther King Boulevard, Alamo, Brenham, Ward, Church, Main Streets
- Bicycle parking is in place on school campus

b. Education Strategies

- Organize a Bicycle Rodeo or training course to teach on-bike skills
 - Parks and Community Development Department in cooperation with Elgin ISD and Elgin Police Department provides at least one bike rodeo annually.
- Teach pedestrian and bicycle safety skills to students
 - To be covered in Gym class for all grades Kindergarten through 5th
- Teach personal safety skills to students
 - To be covered in Gym class for all grades Kindergarten through 5th
- Teach the health, environmental, and sustainable transportation benefits of walking and bicycling to students
 - City of Elgin and Elgin ISD will provide this information to students at BTW Elementary
- Educate parents and caregivers about safe driving procedures at the school
 - BTW provides information to parents.
 - City of Elgin includes in City E E-Newsletter,
- Create bicycle and pedestrian safety awareness

- A poster contest will be offered to students at BTW with the theme Walking and Biking to school, safety tips, why it's fun, why it's good for the earth. Posters will be displayed around the campus
- Information about walking and cycling will be shared in periodic newsletters for all grade levels, and on the BTW Facebook page
- Train school and community audiences about Safe Routes to School
 - Elgin ISD and City of Elgin will provide public service announcements and information at public meetings throughout the year.

c. Encouragement Strategies

- Elgin ISD and City of Elgin will host a Walk or Bike To or From School Week event, encouraging students to walk or bike at least one day of a specially selected week.
- Elgin ISD and City of Elgin will initiate a walking/biking mileage club contest, after routes to campus are improved
- Elgin ISD and City of Elgin will promote Safe Routes to School in the community by addressing SRTS at board meetings and city council meetings. Also by placing announcements in City E-Newsletter, on community website, in Elgin Courier, and in direct mail publication Downtown 78621.
- BTW campus and City of Elgin will conduct a community safe driving awareness and education program including social media outlets and flyers at the beginning of the school year, at return from winter break, and for summer school when it is hosted at this campus.

d. Enforcement Strategies

- Parent and student patrol programs
 - The Elgin ISD has a student safety Patrol Program, approximately 15 students participate annually. They have an annual orientation, and then working with teachers they assist with morning and afternoon dismissal.
 - Watch DOG dad's program – adult volunteers receive an orientation to procedures and safety and then provide assistance with dismissal procedures.
- Add designated crosswalks with appropriate signage so that officers may ticket if needed.
- Increase traffic law enforcement during school hours
 - Elgin ISD and the City of Elgin have 2 SRO (School Resources Officers) based at the Elgin Middle School and Elgin High School. They provide support throughout the year to all campuses and can be called to any campus.

e. Evaluation Strategies

- Counting the number of students who walk and bicycle to and from school
 - Elgin ISD student and parent surveys conducted in Spring and Fall
- Traffic Counts – the Elgin Police Department will provide traffic counts when requested
- Tracking the number of traffic violations and accidents within 2 miles of school
 - The Elgin Police Department will continue to provide data related to traffic violations
- Elgin ISD will measure parent/guardian perceptions of safety during the spring and fall. Parent and student surveys will be conducted twice annually and recorded.

- The following table is an example of how information can be tracked and presented. Data is collected in the fall and spring of each year.

EVALUATION METHOD	“BEFORE” MEASURE AND DATA COLLECTED
Count number of walking/bicycling students	Date: % Walking: % Biking:
Track number of traffic violations	Time period: # of crashes: 0
Measure parent perceptions of safety	Date: % who believe walk/bike environment is safe:

10. The Action Plan

The Safe Routes to School team is committed to realizing our vision for a safe, enjoyable, and accessible walking and bicycling environment for our students. We will utilize the following Action Plan to keep our efforts focused and on track:

Strategy Type	Strategy Detail	Timeframes	Responsible Party	Status	Funding Source
Education	Bike Rodeo	annually	Elgin PD and City of Elgin		City
	Lessons taught in PE classes	Twice per year	Elgin ISD		Elgin ISD
	Personal safety skills	Twice per year	Elgin ISD		
	Health & Environment in PE Classes	Twice per year	EISD		EISD
	Safe driving procedures	Twice per year	EISD		EISD
	Bicycle & Pedestrian safety materials	Twice per year	Elgin PD City of Elgin and Elgin ISD		
	Safe Routes to school training	Twice per year	City of Elgin and Elgin PD and EISD		City and EISD
Encouragement	Walk or bike to school week	Annually	EISD and City of Elgin		EISD and City of Elgin
	Walking Biking mileage club contest	Annually	EISD		EISD
	SRTS Overviews	Twice per year	City of Elgin & EISD		Both
	Community safe driving awareness	Twice per year	City and EISD		City

Strategy Type	Strategy Detail	Timeframes	Responsible Party	Status	Funding Source
Enforcement	Parent program Watch DOG Dads	Throughout year	EISD		EISD
	Student patrol program	Once per year	EISD	Ongoing	EISD
	Law Enforcement	Regularly	Elgin PD		City
Evaluation Strategies	Student surveys of travel behavior	Twice per year	EISD and COE		EISD and COE
	Parent Surveys of travel	Twice per year	EISD and COE		EISD and COE
	Number of traffic violations	Annually	Elgin PD		Elgin PD
	Staff observation	Twice annually	EISD		EISD

11. Evaluation, Coordination, and Support Activities:

- Activities that address the monitoring, review, and update process
 - The Elgin ISD will have primary responsibility for monitoring this effort through the twice per year surveys of students and parents. The Elgin Police Department will be responsible for traffic surveys and providing data on traffic violations and staffing for enforcement in the area. The City of Elgin will have primary responsibility for engineering solutions, the implementation, monitoring, and maintenance of those solutions. The PTA, City Council and Elgin School Board will receive periodic updates on the overall effort.
- Plan for how initiatives(s) will be sustained
 - The Safe Routes to School initiative will be sustained primarily by the cooperative relationship between the City of Elgin and the Elgin ISD. The Safe Routes to school initiative may be added to the Envision Elgin Plan, this is an overall community planning document that addresses all aspects of community life. Safe Routes to School would fall under Education strategies as well as Quality of Life in that plan. Envision Elgin has a quarterly reporting process and an annual meeting for the public.
- Methods and measures of success for strategies
 - See table on previous page with strategies and responsible parties.
- Reference to or inclusion of a non-motorized master plan or similar document
 - The Master Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan contains a major component related to a trail system throughout the community. Elgin has a Master Trails and Elgin Alternative Transportation and Trails master plan.

12. Plan

We believe that building a strong partnership between schools and the local government is fundamental to the success of a Safe Routes to School Plan.

Our Safe Routes to School Plan has been endorsed by the following representatives:

REQUIRED: SCHOOL OFFICIAL

Name: Lauri Schroeder
Title: Principal
Representing: Booker T Washington Elementary
Phone: 512-281-3411
Email: lauri.schroeder@elginisd.net

REQUIRED: SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIAL

Name: Bobby Vasquez
Title: Academic and Organizational Planning
Representing: EISD
Phone: (512) 285-9226
Email: rvasquez@elginisd.net

REQUIRED: LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIAL

Name: Kerry Lacy
Title: City Manager
Representing: City of Elgin
Phone: 512-281-5724
Email: Klacy@ci.elgin.tx.us

REQUIRED: LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIAL

Name: Chris Bratton
Title: Police Chief
Representing: City of Elgin
Phone: 512-281-5757
Email: CBratton@pd.ci.elgin.tx.us

REQUIRED: LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIAL

Name: Amy Miller
Title: Community Development Director
Representing: City of Elgin
Phone: 512-281-5724
Email: amiller@ci.elgin.tx.us

OPTIONAL: BASTROP COUNTY

Name: Bubba Snowden
Title: County Commissioner Precinct 4
Representing: Bastrop County

Phone: 512-332-7267

Email: bubba.snowden@co.bastrop.tx.us

OPTIONAL: PARENT volunteer

Name: Erin Flores

Title: PTA member, parent, Parks Board volunteer

Representing: BTW parent volunteers

Phone: 512-779-7960

Email:

OPTIONAL: HEALTH ORGANIZATION (public health agency, hospital, etc.)

Name: Naomi Magel

Title: School Nurse

Representing: Elgin ISD, BTW school nurse

Phone: 512-281-3411

Email: nmagel@elginisd.net

13. Appendix

The following support files and images are attached for this plan:

- Maps of proposed improvements
- City Sidewalk Ordinance passed 2006
- Minutes/Agendas
 - Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
 - Public Safety Advisory Committee
 - City Council
 - Elgin ISD School Board
- Parent Survey Summary Fall 2013
- Classroom Tally Summary Fall 2013
- Photos of project area