

# BIKE & ROLL

## TO SCHOOL DAY

# 2024

In May, communities across the U.S. gathered to enjoy an active trip to school by celebrating National Bike & Roll to School Day 2024. This year saw growth in enthusiasm and participation with 2,586 schools registering their events in 45 states and Washington, DC. That marks an increase of more than 1,000 registrations compared with 2023. Communities that celebrate Bike & Roll to School Day offer students, school and community leaders, and families a chance to get outside for a trip by bike, on foot, or through any other active means. Based on the post-event survey results, 58 percent of events included both biking and walking. Communities don't stop promoting safe, active trips when the event day ends; more than one-half of the survey respondents noted that Bike & Roll to School Day is just one of the many activities held throughout the school year.

Communities celebrated in a big way, such as:

- In **MINNEAPOLIS, MN**, 300 students from eight schools all joined in a ten-mile group ride.
- Students from P.S. 372 in **NEW YORK CITY** gathered for a bike bus on their way to school. The group biked, walked, and rode scooters along city streets, meeting up for a celebration with handmade signs before the start of the school day.
- The **PUEBLO OF JEMEZ, NM**, used the day to celebrate completion of a quick-build project for traffic safety. The Pueblo installed chicanes to help reduce traffic speeds and created a separated path for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Across the country, communities like these gathered in groups big and small for Bike & Roll to School Day.





The National Bike & Roll to School Day event took place in Lincoln Park in the Capitol Hill neighborhood in Washington, DC. Hosted by the Ward 6 Public Schools Parent Organization, students, caregivers, school officials, and student performance groups were joined by leaders from the Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DC State Highway Safety Office, District Department of Transportation, the FIA Foundation, and the National Center for Safe Routes to School. Approximately 15 schools departed in bike buses from the park, showcasing the fun and energy that can be possible for the trip to school.



“ We find that having a main bike and roll event tends to be the catalyst that motivates more parents and students to continue biking to school after. By pointing out the safe routes and engaging the community to encourage awareness of our bike riders, parents feel more comfortable with letting their kids continue to ride to school. And we seem to have higher parent involvement as well. By trying it out, it becomes more doable.  
 – NOVATO, CA ”

## WHY WE RIDE

Every year, event organizers share their motivations for planning and hosting Bike & Roll to School Day activities via a post-event survey. This year, the top five reasons selected were:

1. ENCOURAGING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
2. PROMOTING BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND ACTIVE TRAVEL SAFETY
3. BUILDING A SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD
4. INCREASING SCHOOL SPIRIT
5. SUPPORTING A SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

Altogether these motivations show that events are a chance to get students outside and active before a school day. Moreover, the events help to ensure that students can do so safely. Events also continue to rally communities together, whether throughout a neighborhood where students and parents gather to walk, ride, or roll together or the school community that holds a celebration along the way or at school. The support of a Safe Routes to School program shows that Bike & Roll to School Day helps ignite and sustain year-round active travel.



This is our 3rd year of doing a Welcome Station and the word of mouth/kid excitement about the event keeps growing! Several kids came up to me to say that Bike to School Day is one of their favorite events at school and they look forward to it!

– AUSTIN, TX



## INSPIRING CHANGE

Bike & Roll to School Day events not only get students outside and active on the way to school, they also help bring safety into the spotlight. In some cases, schools and communities use their events to advocate for safer streets along the trip to school. An organizer from Sleepy Hollow, NY, shared, “We plan our Walk & Bike Days at the same time as lobbying for improved safety--School Safety Zones, sidewalks, and crosswalks.” Similarly, in Mount Rainier, MD: “Every time Mount Rainier Elementary School participates in National Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day we use the event to highlight lower speed limits around our school and educate residents about the number of students who walk to school, the importance of driving safely in a school zone, and the importance of stopping at stop signs and respecting crosswalks.”

Many events include local elected officials, law enforcement officers, transportation leaders, or other public officials. These guests walk or ride with students and see firsthand what safety needs should be addressed to make active travel to school routine. An organizer in Tempe, AZ, shared how they bring a number of officials to see just how many students want to walk or ride to school when the streets allow it. They use it to show that some engineering changes by the city would go a long way toward making this possible.

Altogether, Bike & Roll to School Day is a part of planning efforts by highlighting conditions near schools and showing the demand for safe streets. Getting the right people involved in Bike & Roll to School Day can make the event a part of real change in the community.



NEW YORK, NY

## MAKING SAFER SPACES

Safety, alongside encouragement of more walking, biking, and rolling, inspires communities to enact change related to Bike & Roll to School Day events. Nearly one-third of event organizers reported some kind of infrastructure change as a result of Bike & Roll to School Day events. These changes included adding signage around the schools for biking and walking; building sidewalks, bike lanes, and paths; installing bike racks at the school; and other types of engineering changes to support active travel.

In addition to changes to physical infrastructure, many schools make changes to keep up the energy of Bike & Roll to School and have more activities throughout the year. An organizer in Denver, CO, shared, “Since Bike & Roll to School Day, we’ve had two bike buses start riding to school weekly!”



We installed a traffic calming quick-build project to address traffic speeding and improve pedestrian safety. We installed a dedicated pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists and narrowed the roadway with chicanes as part of the quick-build project.

– PUEBLO OF JEMEZ, NM



We’re working on a master plan for our Hwy 59 corridor with MnDoT engineers to hopefully get multiuse trails installed and more safe routes to schools as the schools change to a 2-mile non-bussing policy.

– THIEF RIVER FALLS, MN





“ This is our second year holding the event post pandemic, and our student participation doubled year over year. This is an event families look forward to and we received really positive feedback.  
 – VANCOUVER, WA ”

## INCLUSIVITY IS VITAL

Bike & Roll to School Day supports sharing the joy of active travel to school for all students. Event organizers shared many of the ways they’re working for inclusivity for their events. Organizers promote the event using language and imagery to convey that the event is for everyone. Other organizers have emphasized the planning that goes into their events. They ask well ahead of time what accommodations are needed, take extra time to plan appropriate routes and access to the school, offer options for route length and terrain, and work with staff and volunteers to ensure that every student is able to participate.

## KEEP ROLLING

Many communities use Bike & Roll to School Day as part of a year’s worth of activities while others use the day to launch a new monthly, weekly, or even daily tradition. This fall is another chance to start a new tradition and celebrate an active trip to school. National Walk & Roll to School Day will be on **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2024**. Check [WALKBIKETOSCHOOL.ORG](http://WALKBIKETOSCHOOL.ORG) for information on the event and more on walking, biking, and rolling to school.

“ We are still very new to this, but we view it as a great opportunity to open the door to implementing some beneficial safety improvements.  
 – WESTMINSTER, CO ”

