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FINAL REPORT

JACKSON HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION STUDY

10.3.2014



PREPARED FOR:

ADIRONDACK / GLENS FALLS TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Adirondack / Glens Falls Transportation Council, RSG has conducted an analysis of traffic operations and overall safety at the Jackson Heights Elementary School in Glens Falls, NY. The objectives of this study include:

- An evaluation of current access patterns,
- An evaluation of safety issues that are commonly observed
- Proposed short-term and long-term congestion mitigation strategies with improvements to the circulation patterns and bicycle and pedestrian safety considerations.

This report summarizes the methods of data collection, the analysis techniques, a review of the alternatives investigated, and short-term and long-term recommendations. This study has been organized into the following sections:

Section 1.0 – Introduction: Provides background information, explains the goals of this report, states the formal purpose and need of the study and provides a general description of the campus area, school characteristics, and adjacent street network within the City of Glens Falls.

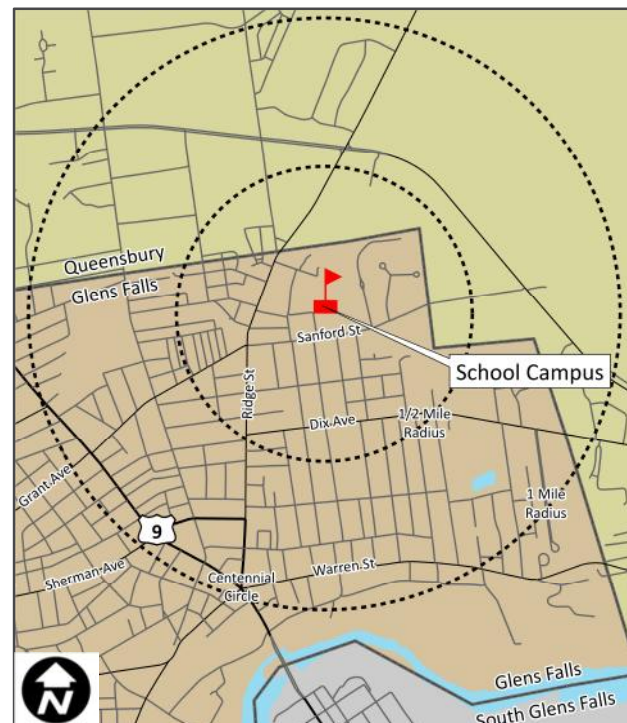
Section 2.0 – Traffic Observations: Documents the data collection methodology and presents the observed operational characteristics of the pick-up and drop-off periods.

Section 3.0 – Safety Analysis: Reviews the available crash records and documents anecdotal evidence.

Section 4.0 – Programmatic Congestion Mitigation Strategies: Presents the investigations into the various short-term and long-term congestion mitigation strategies.

Section 5.0 – Implementation Matrix: Summarizes the strategies, costs, project leaders, and other partners that will participate in or support the proposed mitigation techniques.

FIGURE 1: SCHOOL CAMPUS WITHIN GLENS FALLS



1.1 | STUDY AREA

The analysis area for this transportation study is the Jackson Heights Elementary School campus and the adjacent street network, including the Jackson Avenue and Sagamore Street intersection.



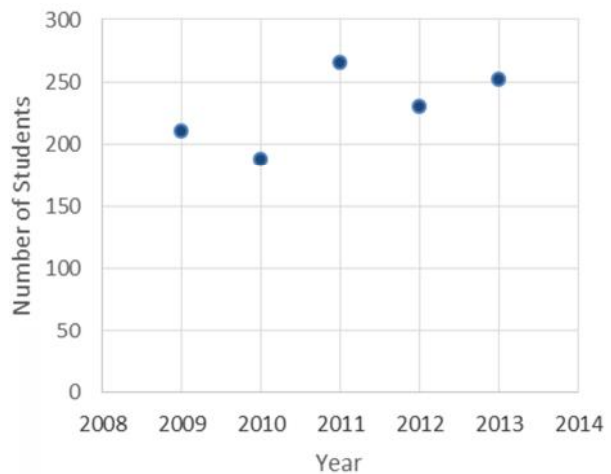
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Jackson Heights Elementary School is one of three elementary schools in the Glens Falls School District. The 75-year-old school serves kindergarten through grade 4, and currently has a population of 252 students. Figure 2 illustrates annual enrollment figures for the last five years. A re-districting occurred in 2011 which explains the jump in enrollment between the 2010-11 school year and the 2011-12 school year. Enrollment has varied, but it is generally considered stable.

ADJACENT STREET NETWORK

Jackson Heights Elementary School is located at the corner of Sagamore Street and Jackson Avenue, both classified as minor collector roads and seeing relatively low

FIGURE 2: JACKSON HEIGHTS POPULATION OVER FIVE YEARS



volumes. A reduced speed school zone of 15 miles per hour is designated by speed limit signs and school warning signs in the vicinity of the campus. The speed limit is 30 miles per hour outside the school zone. Sanford Street and Ridge Street, designated as minor arterials, are located within half a mile of the school and have speed limits of 30 miles per hour.

Many side streets in the study area are offset from each other when they intersect a main road. This geometry creates longer crossing distances and complicates vehicle turning movements. The Jackson-Sagamore intersection is an example of this geometry with the western leg of Jackson Avenue farther to the south than the eastern leg (Figure 3). The northern crossing on Sagamore Street is about 78 feet along the crosswalk and the eastern crossing on Jackson Avenue is about 58 feet along the crosswalk. Pedestrians accessing the school by these crossings will require additional time to cross than at typical crossings.

FIGURE 3: OFFSET JACKSON-SAGAMORE INTERSECTION WITH CROSSING DISTANCES



With the exception of Mauro Avenue, sidewalks are present on at least one side of the street and, in many cases, on both sides throughout the study area. This network of walkways is generally sufficient to provide a route to the school from most parts of the school district; sidewalks are recommended on Mauro Avenue to further encourage pedestrian access to the school campus. Curb ramps in some places are not flush with the pavement, and maintenance is required on some sidewalk sections.

TRAVEL OPTIONS TO SCHOOL

Children are able to walk to school, ride their bicycle, or be driven to school. The school district is classified as a walking school district, meaning that bus service to and from the school is not offered for most students. It is assumed that children live close enough to the school that they are able to walk or bike, but many parents choose to drive their child. Driving is more common on winter days and during inclement weather.

Third grade students may participate in a bicycle safety education program called the Bike Rodeo, which is offered once per year as the weather warms up in the spring. Third graders may not bike to school unless they have participated in this program; all fourth graders are allowed to bike to school regardless of past participation. Bicycle racks are provided in the front and rear of the school, and students are required to walk their bikes on school property. During a site visit with ideal weather conditions for active commuting, the front rack was well utilized but had room for additional bicycles. The rear rack was empty, likely because students do not arrive near its location. It may be intended for school employees or for use of the adjacent recreational fields.

In 2006 and 2008, studies were conducted into travel mode choice of parents at surrounding schools. The main reasons for choosing to drive a student to school rather than walk or bike were safety related, including perceptions about crime, and concerns related to traffic and students walking alone.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

Kindergarten through second grade enters at the main entrance A on Jackson Avenue, and third and fourth graders enter at entrance C on Sagamore Street (Figure 4). Students line up in front of their respective entrances starting at 8:10 and are admitted into the building between 8:20 and 8:30. Although aides are present to monitor the students while they are lined up, the school is not technically responsible for the students until they enter the building. This arrangement encourages parents to stay parked in front of the school until they see their child enter the building, which adds to congestion. The school places cones along the curb to discourage parents from parking (Figure 5), but parents will attempt to park in between them, just outside of them, and occasionally drive over a cone.

FIGURE 4: SCHOOL ENTRANCES ON SAGAMORE STREET AND JACKSON AVENUE



FIGURE 5: SIGNAGE AND CONES ALONG JACKSON AVENUE TO DISCOURAGE



Signs located along Jackson Avenue and Sagamore Street were noted as being confusing, with some signs saying “no parking stopping or standing any time” located between other contradictory “drop-off and pickup only” signs (Figure 5).

Jackson Avenue frequently experiences congestion during drop-off time. People will park on both sides of Jackson Avenue, which leaves little room for through traffic or parents exiting. Given the timing, parents are usually in a hurry to leave, and the congestion and resulting frustration can lead to arguments between parents. Minor fender benders were reported as common, and the school’s front office receives many complaints. Inclement winter weather can compound the situation causing more people to drive, slippery road conditions, and tall snow banks along the side of the road, roadway width and student access to the school. Several times in the 2013-2014 school year winter, students waited inside from 8:10-8:20 to shield them from very cold days.

In contrast, drop-off at the Sagamore Street entrance is not perceived as a problem. The roadway is wider and longer, giving cars more room to maneuver. Parents are also less likely to wait for the older children, which reduces congestion. Given the lack of concern over the Sagamore entrance, mitigation measures focus on the Jackson Avenue circulation and congestion through the Jackson Avenue / Sagamore Street intersection.

PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Pick-up procedures differ in that many parents arrive early, park, and wait for their children. Students also may wait for their parents outside the school until their parent arrives. They cannot leave the school until they see their parent. Kindergarten students are dismissed at 2:40 and then the remainder of the students are dismissed at 2:45. Like drop-off, grades three and four are staged on Sagamore Street while the lower grades are staged on Jackson Avenue.

Generally, pick-up is more orderly than drop-off because some parents park well before their children are dismissed. Some parents will also park on streets not immediately adjacent to the school and walk to the school entrance to retrieve their child. Parents and children also tend to congregate on the sidewalk after school is dismissed, and this mass of people can create an obstacle for children on bicycles, scooters, and skateboards, particularly for inexperienced riders. On days where more parents drive, such as rainy days, the congestion is more significant and causes unsafe situations.

Similar to drop-off, cones are placed along Jackson Avenue and Sagamore Street to discourage parking.

CROSSING GUARDS

To assist the students in travelling to and from school safely, a crossing guard is located at each of three intersections:

- Jackson Avenue and Sagamore Street (All-way stop controlled)
- Jackson Avenue and Ridge Street (Signalized)
- Sanford Street and Ridge Street (Signalized)

The crossing guards are part-time employees of the Glens Falls Police Department whose main responsibility is to ensure that students cross the street safely. A traffic officer will work with crossing

guards when they start until they are comfortable with their duties. At unsignalized intersections, a guard is instructed to stop all traffic to allow a pedestrian to safely navigate the intersection.

Crossing guard procedures were observed at the Jackson/Sagamore intersection during the site visit. When a pedestrian approached the intersection, the crossing guard would walk to the center of the intersection and stop all traffic, including vehicles that would not be in conflict with the pedestrian, then motion the pedestrian to cross the street.

Stopping all traffic prevents turning vehicles from being in conflict with pedestrians crossing the street. However, it also stops some through movements unnecessarily and contributes to queuing at the approaches. Although observed delays were shorter than is typically deemed a problem, drivers became frustrated at not being allowed to proceed when they perceived that there was no conflict. Traffic was also lighter than normal on the day of the site visit due to the large number of students walking and biking. The long crossing distances compound this problem by increasing wait time. In some cases, drivers proceeded through the intersection despite the presence of the crossing guard. This situation put the crossing guard at risk of collision and increased the likelihood of unintended vehicle-pedestrian conflict, particularly for the elementary school age children who may not be aware of the potential danger of the intersections.

1.2 | PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this study is to develop short term and long-term recommendations to improve the safety and use of Jackson Avenue in front of Jackson Heights Elementary School and the Jackson Avenue/Sagamore Street intersection during drop-off and pick-up times at the elementary school.

The need for this study is demonstrated by the congestion and unsafe conditions in the study area. Specifically:

- Arguments and fender benders between parents dropping off and picking up their children are common in the study area.
- Driver frustration is common and frustrated drivers are more likely to engage in unsafe behaviors.
- Elementary school students are less aware their surroundings than older students or adults and therefore more likely to unknowingly place themselves in conflict with vehicular traffic.
- A car hit a student on a bicycle close to the study area.
- Congestion during peak times leaves inadequate space for emergency vehicles to park and maneuver in front of the school.
- Snow events may result in unplowed sidewalks and snowbanks in pedestrian paths, resulting in greater potential for pedestrian-vehicle conflict, particularly in the morning.

These conditions present a clear danger to roadway users, both pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

It should be noted that the peak pick-up and drop-off periods are short, traffic volumes are low, and the traffic delay and congestion exhibited at the school are acceptable according to industry standards. Under similar motorist delay circumstances in commercial areas or along busy roadways, an intersection would most likely not exhibit unsafe conditions. It is likely the impatience of the road users, or at least some of the road users, that are causing this danger. By increasing the perception of

acceptable delay and the time required to drop off and pick up their children, the safety issues may be resolved.

Unfortunately, appealing to poorly behaving drivers is rarely a viable mitigation strategy. This report will focus on two areas with the goal of improving safety. First, we look to minimize the time drivers and pedestrians spend in conflict points, and, ideally, remove conflicts. Second, we explore ways to reduce the congestion and increase the efficiency of the intersection, thereby reducing frustration and reducing dangerous behavior. Some strategies work towards both of these goals.

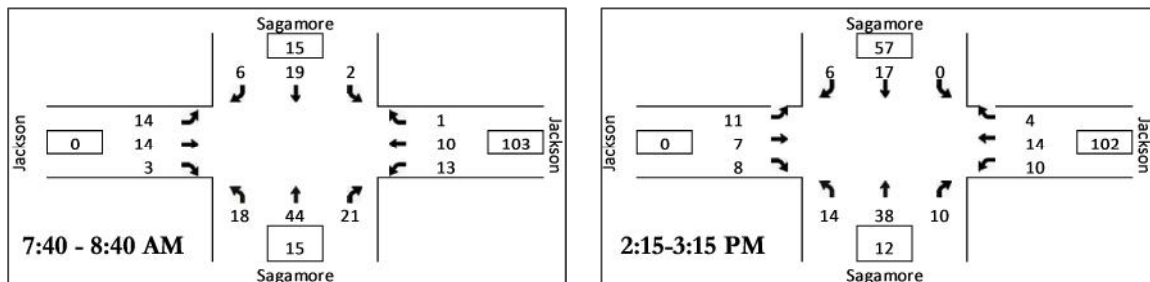
2.0 TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

This analysis examines turning movements at the intersection of Jackson Avenue and Sagamore Street on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times as well as roadway volumes and vehicle speeds on Sanford Street and Ridge Street.

2.1 | TURNING MOVEMENTS AND PEDESTRIAN VOLUMES

RSG performed turning movement and pedestrian crossings counts from 7:40-8:40 AM and 2:15-3:15 PM to capture traffic patterns while students were entering and leaving the school. Data was recorded in five-minute increments to capture the short peak related to school opening and closing. The weather was clear and warm, which likely encouraged children to walk or ride their bicycles to school. On cold, snowy, or rainy days, there are likely more vehicles present and fewer, if any, people commuting on foot and bicycle. Figure 8 shows the observed morning and afternoon turning movement and pedestrian counts.

FIGURE 6: MORNING AND AFTERNOON TURNING MOVEMENT AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF JACKSON AVENUE AND SAGAMORE STREET



In the morning, half the vehicle traffic is traveling northbound on Sagamore and half of that continues north on Sagamore. The rest of the traffic is approximately evenly distributed between the other three approaches.

Pedestrians crossing a street are shown in a box behind the turning movements. Bicycles riding on the sidewalk are included in these numbers. The majority of pedestrians (103, including 14 bicycles) cross Jackson to the east of the intersection while equal numbers (15 at each crossing) cross Sagamore north and south of the intersection. This pattern indicates that the majority of pedestrian are traveling northbound on the sidewalk adjacent to Sagamore on their way to and from the school. In most cases, an adult was observed walking with a child or group of children to the school and then the same adult was observed walking in the opposite direction alone after dropping the child

off. In this case, the adult was double counted, i.e. counted crossing the street first with the child and then again without the child.

Only three bicycles were observed riding on the street during this period.

The afternoon vehicle traffic exhibits similar trends to the morning with the majority of vehicles traveling northbound on Sagamore and the remainder of the traffic approximately evenly distributed between the other three approaches. Overall, vehicle volumes are slightly lower in the afternoon than in the morning.

Similar to the morning, the majority of pedestrians (102, including 3 bicycles) cross Jackson to the east of the intersection. However, a large number of pedestrians (57) also cross Sagamore to the north of the intersection, while fewer (12) cross Sagamore south of the intersection. These numbers are consistent with observations of parents parking on Jackson west of the intersection and Sagamore south of the intersection, then walking to the school to pick up their child.

Five bicycles were observed riding on the street during this period.

2.2 | SCHOOL PEAK TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Figure 7 and Figure 8 show the number of vehicles and pedestrians utilizing the intersection every five minutes. A clear peak in pedestrian volumes is seen between 8:15 and 8:20 AM when the school begins to let children enter. Vehicular traffic also peaks at 8:20, although the trend is less pronounced. In the afternoon, a clear peak in pedestrian traffic is observed at 2:45, which is when the majority of children are let out of school. However, vehicle traffic is largely constant throughout this period. The lack of a spike in vehicular traffic is likely due to some parents using the intersection well before school lets out and then parking until they see their child. Others will park before the intersection and walk to the school to pick up their child or not drive at all, thereby avoiding the intersection. Inclement weather may increase the number of parents driving to pick up their child, which could create a spike around 2:40-2:45.

FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS UTILIZING THE JACKSON-SAGAMORE INTERSECTION EVERY FIVE MINUTES DURING THE MORNING DROP-OFF PERIOD

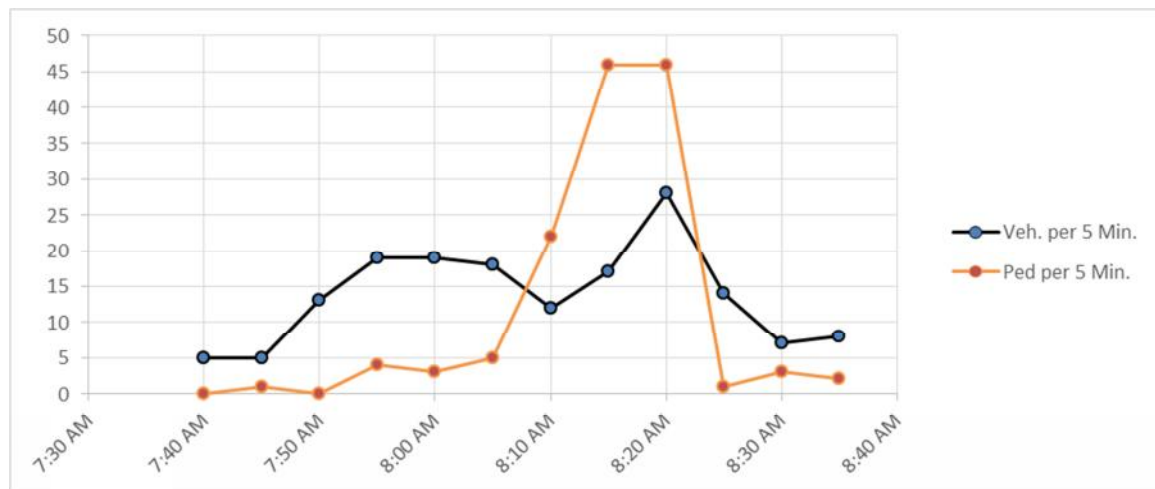
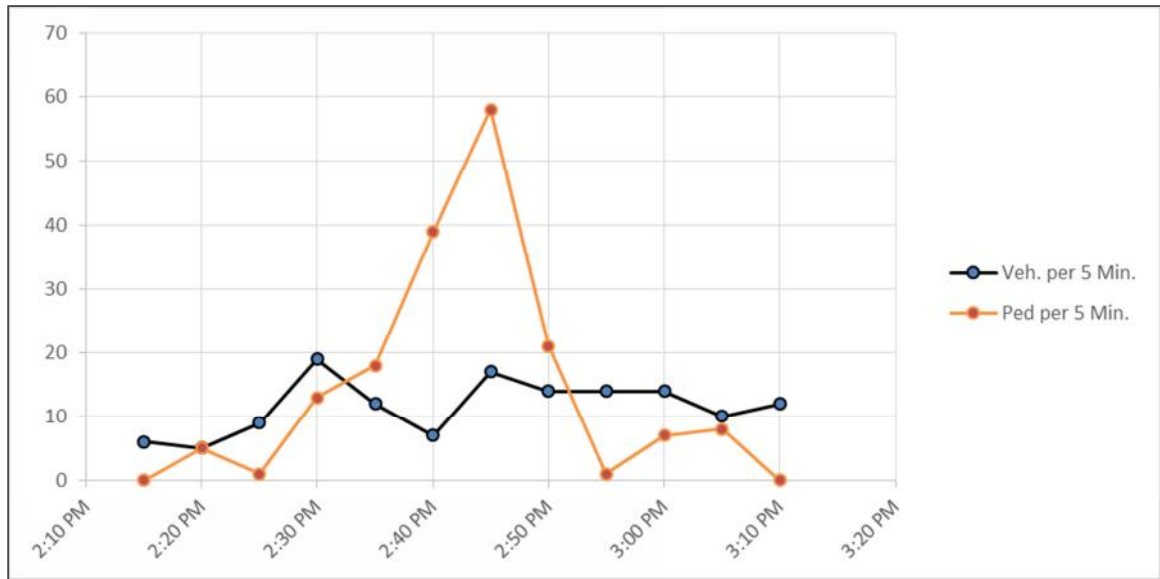


FIGURE 8: NUMBER OF VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS UTILIZING THE JACKSON-SAGAMORE INTERSECTION EVERY FIVE MINUTES DURING THE AFTERNOON PICK-UP PERIOD



3.0 SAFETY ANALYSIS

3.1 | HISTORICAL CRASH DATA

The Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council obtained three years of reported crash data from October 2010 to September 2013, illustrated in Figure 9. Note that the symbol at the Sagamore/Sanford intersection represents two crashes: one vehicle/vehicle collision and one vehicle/bicycle collision. One collision occurred at all other symbols.

Figure 9 only includes crashes that were reported to and recorded by the Glens Falls Police Department. As such, minor collisions not reported to the police or collisions involving small dollar amounts may not be represented.

3.2 | ANECDOTAL CRASHES

While no records were available regarding minor collisions, stakeholders noted that a large number of crashes have occurred on Jackson Avenue near the school. These are likely low speed collisions associated with vehicles arriving or departing the school, so damage would be minor. However, the existence of these collisions shows that congestion is a problem in the area and that some parents are not paying

FIGURE 9: COLLISION LOCATIONS



adequate attention to their surroundings as they enter or exit the school. This situation is particularly dangerous in the presence of young children who may be less observant of traffic. Even at low speeds, a vehicle collision with a child could cause significant injuries.

4.0 CONGESTION MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The primary issues that have arisen out of the study are summarized below:

- Congestion during pick-up and drop-off cause to arguments and fender benders
- Driver frustration is common and can lead to unsafe behaviors.
- Vehicles entering and exiting the school area may conflict with the children also occupying that space.
- Congestion and queuing seem excessive for the amount of traffic present in the study area
- Congestion during peak times leaves inadequate space for emergency vehicles to park and maneuver in front of the school.

The following sections discuss potential strategies that may be employed to address these issues.

4.1 | ONE-WAY JACKSON AVENUE

The Jackson Heights Parent Teacher Association (PTA) requested that this study consider a one-way Jackson Avenue. This realignment has a number of advantages:

- Simplifies driving on Jackson Avenue and turning movements at the intersection
- Prevents vehicles from attempting to turn around on Jackson Avenue
- Unused travel lane can be used for pick-up and drop-off
- Reduces the number of children crossing the Jackson Avenue
- Emergency vehicles will have an easier time navigating the street

It is suggested that Jackson Avenue be made one-way westbound from Mauro Street to the intersection with Sagamore Street. Cars will drive on the same side of the street as the school making drop-off and pick-up easier. If there is inadequate space for arriving vehicles, they will spill back into Mauro Street rather than the Jackson-Sagamore intersection.

Any proposed changes to the circulation along Jackson Avenue should be reviewed and approved by the appropriate emergency response personnel.

FIGURE 10: COLLAPSIBLE TEMPORARY BARRIER



SHORT-TERM

A one-way Jackson Avenue can be created by placing a temporary barrier such as the one shown in Figure 10 at the entrance to the eastbound lane of Jackson Avenue. It should be placed such that drivers exiting Jackson Avenue will see pedestrians walking in the crosswalk. A Do Not Enter sign should be placed in front of the barrier to instruct drivers not enter there. Additionally, a sign telling drivers to enter at Mauro Street would be useful. Ideally, parents should be notified of this change before the start of the school year to minimize confusion when school opens. This barrier should be

removed at the end of the drop-off and pick-up periods to allow two-way traffic on Jackson Avenue at off-peak times.

With Jackson Avenue operating as one-way, the southern side of the street could be designated for through traffic while the northern side serves as a drop-off and pick-up point for parents. This lane use will enable through traffic to avoid the school traffic, but it will only be effective if school traffic leaves after dropping off or picking up a child. Parents remaining parked until their child enters the school will prevent the queue of school traffic from advancing and defeat the purpose of the two lanes. Lane separation may be accomplished with cones.

LONG-TERM

Setting up and breaking down the signage required for a one-way Jackson Avenue everyday may become too burdensome for school staff, and a permanent one-way Jackson Avenue could be implemented. Simple “Do Not Enter” LED signs may be activated during peak periods, or a more permanent restriping of the roadway with curb bulb outs at the exit onto Sagamore Street may be appropriate. This change could have effects beyond school operations and an engineering study would be required to determine costs and benefits associated with making Jackson Avenue one-way.

4.2 | SHORTEN CROSSING DISTANCES AT JACKSON AND SAGAMORE

SHORT-TERM

A barrier at the entrance to Jackson will allow pedestrians to cross half of Jackson Avenue before they are in conflict with vehicles, which will reduce crossing times at the most utilized crosswalk of the intersection. Shortened crossing times in conjunction with modified crossing guard procedures that allow non-conflicting traffic to proceed (see below) will significantly reduce congestion at the Sagamore-Jackson intersection.

The north crossing on Sagamore Street is the longest at the intersections and is heavily utilized during pick-up. Shortening that crossing distance is also desirable, but the offset intersection provides no short-term mean for doing so. Any attempt to square off the intersection by reducing the radius of the northeast corner would likely restrict vehicles turning westbound-right out of Jackson Avenue.

LONG-TERM

Bulb-outs on the northeast and northwest corners of the intersection would significantly reduce the crossing distance, illustrated in Figure 11. The

FIGURE 11: LONG-TERM CROSSING DISTANCE



northeast corner currently consists of a wide turn that causes the two longest crossing distances at the intersection. Extending the sidewalk into the intersections also allows parents and children to congregate on the corner without blocking sidewalk traffic. Finally, this layout reduces the amount of lane width available to vehicles, which will have a traffic calming effect. However, this layout will also likely restrict commercial truck and fire truck maneuverability to turn in some directions and an engineering study will be required to determine the most appropriate design.

Combined with a permanent one-way circulation of Jackson Avenue, a bulb out on the southeast corner of the intersection could further reduce the crossing distance.

4.3 | MODIFY CROSSING GUARD PROCEDURES

The current procedure of stopping all traffic when a pedestrian comes to a crosswalk would provide maximum safety to the pedestrian if drivers consistently followed the crossing guard's directions. However, there is potential for unforeseen vehicle-pedestrian conflicts when a driver fails to yield to the crossing guard. It also creates extra delay for vehicles and contributes to driver frustration. An alternative method of crossing pedestrians that would help alleviate some congestion without compromising pedestrian safety is outlined below.

Typically, at a four-way stop controlled intersection, drivers will take turns proceeding through the intersection based on the order of arrival. Pedestrians could be crossed in a way that minimizes conflict with vehicle procession order. For example, if a northbound through movement is about to proceed through the intersection, the guard could choose to cross pedestrians on Jackson Avenue (north-south) but hold pedestrians on Sagamore Street (east-west). Alternatively, the guard could choose to stop all traffic if she feels that is warranted in particular situation.

FIGURE 12: CROSSING GUARD IN CROSSWALK



When crossing pedestrians along a single leg, the guard should stand in the middle of the crosswalk with her "STOP" paddle raised when pedestrians are crossing. This will provide an additional visual clue to drivers that pedestrians are present. Standing on the crosswalk that is currently being utilized will allow other movements to proceed normally. Pedestrians should only cross when directed to do so by the crossing guard. The guard will need to move around the intersection at times to be in the correct place as pedestrians approach.

An important additional step will be to reeducate students and parents to pay attention to the crossing guard's directions. Currently, pedestrians do not need to wait when they approach the intersection. They will need to learn to watch the guard and wait for a signal to cross. It may be best to start this new option at the beginning of the school year so that reeducation is not attempting to overcome any ingrained habits. The school should send a letter to parents alerting them of this change in the summer and again close to the start of the school year.

Further details about crossing procedures may be found in the Safe Routes to School “Crossing Guard Guidelines” and the AAA “School Safety Patrol Operations Manual” in the Appendix.

4.4 | REDUCE PARENTS PARKING ON JACKSON AVENUE AT PEAK TIMES

Much of the congestion along Jackson Avenue results from parents remaining parked until their child enters the school building. The school policy of not being responsible for the students until they are inside while allowing parents to drop off their children before the school is open creates a responsibility for parents to remain in view of their children and therefore parked until 8:20. There are two approaches to addressing this issue: provide more parking by either spreading the staging area out or by building an off-site lot, or changing the school policy to receive the children as they arrive prior to 8:20.

SPREAD OUT THE STAGING AREAS

Currently, two grades utilize entrance C to the building, and three grades utilize entrance A, leaving an unused entrance at B. It is suggested that Second Grade stage may use this entrance, spreading out the drop-off and pick-up staging areas along Sagamore Street, which has been noted as having excess capacity.

DESIGNATE A SUPERVISED STAGING AREA FOR BEFORE SCHOOL OPENS

If the school could modify the policy on student arrival and accept children prior to the school day, parents would not need to remain parked. Children could enter the school at their current entrances and proceed to the back recess area, or wait inside during inclement weather events in the cafeteria or gymnasium.

In the long-term, the school could build a new parking lot on the northern edge of the property and use this as new drop-off area. Illustrated in Figure 13, children would exit the vehicle in the eastern circular turn around and drop off area. The area to the east this new circulating lot could be fenced off, which would provide children with a safe, enclosed area to run and play before school started.

FIGURE 13: NEW PARKING AND DROP OFF AREA NORTH OF THE SCHOOL



The proposed lot could also provide approximately 20 new parking spaces and provide truck access to the rear of the school. Additional study would be required to determine the exact dimension of the new lot and how best to handle truck traffic.

COORDINATE SIGNING

Drop-off and pick-up locations should be clearly marked. Signs that disallow stopping or standing should not be used in pick-up locations. Although stopping or standing can be interpreted as different from dropping off or picking up, it is best to be unambiguous with sign wording. A sign directing vehicles to pull forwards should be installed along Jackson Avenue to encourage drivers pull as far forward as possible when dropping-off or picking-up children.

4.5 | SNOW REMOVAL AND STORAGE POLICES

Snow on Jackson Avenue shoulders reduces capacity and can block emergency vehicle access. The school should work with the City department responsible for plowing to prioritize Jackson Avenue roadway and sidewalk plowing during the school year and ensure that the street is fully cleared of snow prior to school. Snow can be stored in the spaces on the corner of Jackson Avenue and Mauro Street.

4.6 | EXPAND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM SCHOOL

Increasing the number of students that utilize active transportation such as walking or biking as their primary transportation method to school will decrease the number of vehicles accessing the campus, thereby reducing congestion and queuing. Additional benefits to active commuting include:

- Increased levels of physical activity,
- Improved alertness,
- Heightened self-image and independence,
- Contribution to healthy social and emotional development, and
- Increased likelihood of future active lifestyles.

As witnessed during the site visit, Jackson Heights already has a significant number of students and parents that walk to school. To increase the mode share of active transportation, the following actions are recommended:

- Close any remaining sidewalk gaps, particularly along Mauro Avenue.
- Develop a Safe Route to School plan to ensure that safe pedestrian routes exist and are maintained. Share the plan with parents to encourage them to use safe routes.
- Educate parents on the health, lifestyle, and educational benefits of biking and walking to school; encourage students to walk or bike to school on their own.
- Educate parents on the reality of safety risks on walking or biking to school, and compare to the generally higher risk of driving.
- Conduct a second “Bike Rodeo” earlier in the school year to give fourth graders a refresher on bicycle safety, and provide additional opportunities for third graders to bike to school.
- Encourage the formation of “walking school busses” where a group of students walk together. Walking school busses increase student safety while reducing the amount of time required by parents. See the appendix for additional information on walking school busses.

4.7 | ENCOURAGE CARPOOLING

Carpooling will reduce the number of vehicles accessing the campus and reduce the time required of parents. The school should try to connect parents interested in carpooling who live close to each other. Implementing a staging area for before school starts will also allow parents of children in different grades to share carpooling duties.

4.8 | SURVEY PARENTS' RESISTANCE TO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND CARPOOLING

The Glens Falls School District and Adirondack / Glens Falls Transportation Council conducted studies at Abraham Wing Elementary School and Big Cross Elementary School in 2006 and 2008 to understand barriers to active transportation modes. A survey of parents' attitudes will help the school respond directly to parents' concerns and stimulate conversation between parents.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The implementation task schedule for the proposed mitigation strategies follows below:

5.1 | SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Description and Responsible Party (RP)</i>	<i>Approximate Cost</i>
One-Way Jackson Avenue	Set up temporary barrier and signage at the entrance to Jackson Avenue RP: School District	\$2,000 for equipment; daily staff maintenance
Shorten Crossing Distances	Use the temporary barrier RP: School District, Crossing Guard	Accomplished with one-way Jackson Ave
Modify Crossing Guard Procedures	Minimize the conflict between vehicles and crossing pedestrians RP: School District, Crossing Guard, Glens Falls Police Department	Police Department training
Coordinate Signing	Update signing to have unified message RP: School District, DPW	\$200 / sign, total of \$2,000
Spread Out Morning Staging Area	Line up second graders at entrance C RP: School District	Minimal; notice to parents
Designate Supervised Staging Area	Allow students to wait in gym, cafeteria, or classroom rather than outside in the morning RP: School District, PTA	Varies depending on available staff resources and contracts
Snow Removal and Storage	Designate a snow storage area and completely plow Jackson Avenue RP: DPW, School District	None additional; snow removal currently occurs
Expand Active Transportation	Develop Safe Routes to Schools Plan, Form walking school busses RP: School District, PTA	Minimal; educational / promotional materials
Encourage Carpooling	Develop a portal to connect parents interested in carpooling RP: School District, PTA, DPW	Minimal; educational / promotional materials

5.2 | LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Description and Responsible Party (RP)</i>	<i>Approximate Cost</i>
One-Way Jackson Avenue and / or Shorten Crossing Distances	Perform engineering study, neck down Jackson Avenue exit with bulb-outs RP: DPW	\$60,000 – 75,000
Designate Supervised Staging Area / North Parking Lot	Install a new parking area north of school, fence off staging area RP: DPW, School District, PTA	\$500,000 - \$600,000
Expand Active Transportation	Develop Safe Routes to Schools Plan, Form walking school busses RP: School District, PTA	Minimal; educational / promotional materials
Encourage Carpooling	Develop a portal to connect parents interested in carpooling RP: School District, PTA, DPW	Minimal; educational / promotional materials
Survey Parents	Determine the resistances to active transportation RP: School District	Varies depending on complexity of survey; school could administer for minimal funds

5.3 | RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the short-term proposals, all of them can be implemented immediately in the 2014 – 2015 school year and will likely improve congestion and safety. Some of the proposals, such as temporary, one-way closure of Jackson Avenue, may be best approached as a short term pilot study with parental feedback. Others, such as encouraging greater active transportation, conducting a bike rodeo earlier in the school year, and moving the Second Grade entrance, can be implemented immediately.

The long-term proposals are also all valid recommendations. The behavioral surveys and programmatic modifications to encourage greater walking and biking should be pursued given their relatively low initial cost. The bulb-outs and reduced crossing distance at the Jackson-Sagamore intersection will yield the greatest improvement in pedestrian safety and congestion mitigation. As part of a comprehensive strategy to encourage walking and biking, it is recommended that the School District and City of Glens Falls collaborate with the A/GFTC to seek funding for the reduced crossing widths at the Jackson-Sagamore intersection, perhaps in conjunction with new sidewalk construction along Mauro Avenue.

APPENDIX A. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: CROSSING GUARD GUIDELINES



Adult School Crossing Guard Guidelines



Prepared by the National Center for Safe Routes to School and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, both part of the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, with funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

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Safely Crossing the Street

Adult school crossing guards play an important role in the lives of children who walk or bicycle to school. They help children safely cross the street at key locations. They also remind drivers of the presence of pedestrians. The presence of adult crossing guards can lead to more parents feeling comfortable about their children walking or bicycling to school. While the primary role of an adult school crossing guard is to guide children safely across the street, children also remain responsible for their own safety. In this manner, a guard plays another key function—a role model helping children develop the skills necessary to cross streets safely at all times.

The design and implementation of an adult school crossing guard program is largely the decision of local communities. Some federal guidance exists and there are some state and local requirements pertaining to the operation of guard programs, but these vary across the country. State or local law enforcement, education or transportation agencies can provide information on state and local requirements.

Ideally, the development of an adult school crossing guard program should involve a community partnership that includes the expertise of law enforcement agencies, traffic engineering or planning departments and school systems. Working together with parents, this lead organization or group identifies the locations where adult school crossing guards are needed and the appropriate number of guards for each location. The group establishes crossing procedures for a variety of traffic situations as well as hires, trains and equips the guards and secures long-term funding for the program.

This document describes federal standards and recommendations for adult school crossing guard practices and provides examples of how some states and communities address these issues.



The presence of adult crossing guards can lead to more parents feeling comfortable about their children walking or bicycling to school.

The Role of the Adult School Crossing Guard

The primary responsibility of an adult school crossing guard is to help children safely cross the street as they walk or bicycle to and from school.

A well-trained adult school crossing guard can help to accomplish the following goals:

- Discourage children from behaving unsafely near traffic, such as darting into the street without looking or crossing against a traffic signal. A guard can encourage safe behavior by all pedestrians at the school crossing.
- Use existing gaps in traffic to help students cross safely. When the natural traffic flow does not allow enough time for children to safely cross a street, a guard may need to create gaps by stopping traffic temporarily. The guard stops traffic with hand signals or a STOP paddle, then verbally directs children to cross the street. A guard is always the first person in the street and the last person out of the street.
- Alert motorists that pedestrians are in the process of using the school crossing.
- Observe and report any incidents or conditions that present a potential safety hazard to the school children or the guard.

An adult school crossing guard should not direct traffic unless specifically trained as a traffic control officer.

Adult School Crossing Guards are Eyes on the Street for:

- Unsafe driver behaviors
- Unsafe pedestrian behaviors
- Unlawful parking
- Construction interfering with safe crossing
- Unsafe street conditions
- Damaged signs
- Poor visibility
- Suspicious activity
- Improper or lack of safety belt or bicycle helmet use



Wilmington, DE

Elements of an Adult School Crossing Guard Program

Bringing together the right members of the community is the first step in creating a successful adult school crossing guard program. The school administration, teachers, local traffic engineers, law enforcement officers and parents are among the partners that bring information and expertise to the process and make the steps in setting up an adult school crossing guard program an easier process to manage. A local committee consisting of this group along with other interested members of the community should be established to oversee an adult school crossing guard program.

The adult school crossing guard lead organization is responsible for:

- identifying locations where guards are needed, the number of guards and proper signage for each location, and the time period for crossings;
- hiring and training guards in their responsibilities;
- providing uniforms and equipment to help guards effectively perform their duties; and
- securing funds to manage the program.



Brichta Elementary School, Tucson, AZ

MUTCD Provides National Guidance

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2003 (MUTCD) contains national standards for the installation and maintenance of traffic control devices and is published by the Federal Highway Administration under the Code of Federal Regulation. Some MUTCD statements are considered mandatory, while others are recommended practices, permissive practices, or simply statements of support. Part 7 of the MUTCD addresses Traffic Controls for School Areas (See Resources)

Identifying the Locations Where Adult School Crossing Guards are Needed

No absolute national criteria exist for identifying which street crossings in a community require an adult school crossing guard. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides some general federal guidance on how to determine the need for a guard at a particular location. Some states and local governments provide further guidance or recommendations, but the conditions under which a guard is assigned to a particular location vary around the country. The local lead organization decides the selection criteria by which adult school crossing guards are assigned to crossings. Location decisions reflect relevant federal, state and local policies and funding issues, and are tailored to the individual conditions and needs of a community.

Defining “A Safe Gap in Traffic”

The MUTCD 2003 Section 7E.02 states that adult school crossing guards “may be used to provide gaps in traffic at a school crossing where an engineering study has shown that adequate gaps need to be created and where authorized by law.” An acceptable gap may be defined as the minimum time between vehicles that 85 percent of all groups of pedestrians waiting to cross a street will accept as adequate to cross the street, according to the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s “School Trip Safety Program Guidelines.”

If there is at least one safe gap per minute of crossing time, there may be no need for any special traffic controls. If, however, there is not at least one safe gap per minute, officials should consider using an adult crossing guard or traffic signal to create safe gaps.

In practice, this analysis is time-consuming to calculate and may discourage agencies from attempting such an evaluation. Traffic speed, width of the street and the age of the children are also important considerations in determining if a crossing location will benefit from an adult school crossing guard.

The local lead organization identifies locations for guards by establishing criteria and gathering information to help them determine the need. Adult school crossing guards should be assigned to school crossings only after the need is established. Consistently applied local criteria allow a community to provide guard service where schools need them the most. No set of guidelines, however, can cover all the unique conditions that may exist. There are times when traffic engineering judgment is needed to determine when and where an adult school crossing guard should be used.

Information to consider when identifying guard placement includes:

The age of the students who are crossing.

Generally, younger children need more assistance than older children because they have a more difficult time judging the speed and distance of approaching vehicles and may be tempted to cross during an unsafe gap.

The width of the street and the number of lanes of traffic students must cross.

Wide streets with multiple lanes of traffic typically require the use of two or more adult school crossing guards.

The sight distance at the crossing.

These conditions are measured from the student’s and driver’s perspectives and for actual vehicle operating speeds. Sight distance can be affected by temporary obstructions, such as parked vehicles and piled snow near the crossing.

Safe gaps in traffic.

Are the gaps long enough and frequent enough to allow safe crossing opportunities? The ITE “School Trip Safety Program Guidelines” (See Resources) states that on the average, at least one adequate gap should occur each minute to allow for children to cross without undue delay or risk. However, other factors, such as volume of child pedestrians or pedestrian groups should also be considered when determining the need for adult school crossing guards or

other traffic control. If traffic volumes during crossing hours do not correspond to enough safe gaps, some method to interrupt traffic should be considered, such as a crossing guard or traffic signal.

Presence of traffic control devices, including traffic signals, signs and pavement.

If present, are the traffic controls sufficient? For example, a signalized intersection at a school crossing location should have WALK/DON'T WALK signals, and a pedestrian push button may also be appropriate. Guards and students should be properly trained on traffic signals relative to safe street crossings.

The speed of vehicles at the crossing.

Vehicles that travel faster require greater stopping distances, and younger children have more difficulty than adults judging the speed of a fast-approaching vehicle.

Volumes of traffic and pedestrians.

Local transportation planning or engineering departments can provide or help collect these data. Vehicle counts may be readily available, but pedestrian counts will likely need to be made during this process. The number of students

California Criteria for the Placement of Adult School Crossing Guards

The State of California provides criteria for the placement of adult school crossing guards in the MUTCD 2003, California Supplement. Adult school crossing guards normally are assigned where at least 40 school pedestrians over the course of two hours each day cross a public highway on the way to or from school. Guards also should be considered when special situations make it necessary to assist elementary school pedestrians in crossing the street.

In some cases, a change in the school crossing location is underway, but prevailing conditions require crossing supervision until the change is completed, so a guard should be considered. Additional criteria are provided for specific situations, including uncontrolled crossings, stop sign-controlled crossings and traffic signal-controlled crossings. The criteria are based on vehicular traffic volume, vehicle speed and the number of vehicular turning movements.

Pedestrian Signal Heads

Pedestrian signal heads provide information to control pedestrian traffic. Chapter 4E of the MUTCD lists the meaning of pedestrian signal indicators. A steady WALK (walking person) signal means that a pedestrian facing the signal may start to cross the street. A flashing DON'T WALK (upraised hand) signal means that a pedestrian shall not start to cross the street, but that any pedestrian who has started to cross shall finish crossing. A steady DON'T WALK (upraised hand) signal means that a pedestrian shall not enter the street.

Arizona Requirements for the Placement of Adult School Crossing Guards

Arizona State Law (ARS Section 28-797-D) mandates an adult school crossing guard at a yellow 15 mph school crosswalk if the school crosswalk is not adjacent to the school site. These guards are employed by the school district. Adult school crossing guards are recommended, but not required, by state law at 15 mph school zone crossings that are adjacent to the school site. These guards may be either employed by the school district or be volunteers, who have been trained and approved by the school district. (Traffic Safety for School Areas Guidelines, ADOT)

The City of Phoenix requires adult school crossing guards for elementary school crossings on busy collector streets and arterial streets. In some cases, two guards may be recommended. At white-painted crosswalks and signalized crossings, guards can be recommended using a method based on observation and engineering judgment using specific criteria such as street classification and the age of students.

currently using pedestrian facilities as well as the projected pedestrian demand based on school demographics should be determined.

The attendance boundary and walk zone for each school.

The distances that walk zones extend from schools as well as policies regarding the provision of bus service differ among states and communities. Both can impact the number of children walking to school and the routes they take.

The distance the crossing is from a school and the type of adjacent land use.

A crossing in close proximity to a school within a residential neighborhood may attract more student pedestrians than, for example, a crossing located further from a school surrounded by non-residential land uses.

Crash history of the crossing.

The number, type and time of day that each crash occurs at a specific location should be recorded and analyzed.

Hiring and Training Adult School Crossing Guards

The hiring, training, supervising and funding of adult school crossing guards is typically the responsibility of local law enforcement agencies, traffic engineering departments, individual schools or school districts.

An adult school crossing guard can be a paid employee or a volunteer member of the community. Paid employees may be preferred because an employer has the ability to train, evaluate and discipline an employee. Every prospective guard should undergo a basic physical examination and criminal background check. A guard should have good vision, hearing and mobility, be able to stand for long periods of time outdoors and to communicate well with others.

It is critical that a guard can communicate clearly with the children he or she supervises at the crossing. If a guard cannot adequately read or understand English, training materials must be provided in a language in which the guard is proficient. Ideally, a guard should have good English language skills.

Adult school crossing guard training is an essential step to help insure that the guard is performing properly. Training should be extended to substitute guards as well as those who supervise the crossing guards. Training methods include both classroom instruction and field exercises and should address:

- The basic traffic laws of the community.
- School zone signage and pavement markings.

Training in Florida

The State of Florida's Department of Transportation has developed uniform training guidelines, and each local government in Florida that administers a school crossing guard program is required to provide training for its guards according to the guidelines. For more information visit http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/ped_bike/brochures/pdf/SCG%20Training%20Guidelines2009.pdf

Training in North Carolina

According to the office of the North Carolina Attorney General, school crossing guards may be considered traffic control officers when proper training is provided as specified in North Carolina GS 20-114.1, the law that addresses the training and appointment of traffic control officers. In 1998, The North Carolina Department of Transportation's Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation developed a program to train the local law enforcement officers who are responsible for training adult school crossing guards in their jurisdictions.

- Proper use and purpose of traffic signs and signals.
- Methods of signaling drivers and taking advantage of traffic gaps.
- Crossing procedures and ways to teach them to children.
- Site-specific traffic factors and potential traffic hazards.
- Professional work responsibilities, including agency rules and regulations, who the guard's supervisor is, the proper chain of command and legal aspects of the job.
- Proper attire and behavior to remain safe and to project a positive public image. For example, while on the job, a guard should not wear clothing that is in poor taste or that promotes alcohol, tobacco or similar products. Also, a guard should not carry or use tobacco products or use foul language. Adult school crossing guards project a positive public image and serve as a role model for children. (For more information see Uniforms and Equipment)
- Proper use of safety equipment.
- The safety issues and limitations of children as pedestrians.
- Procedures for crashes involving adult school crossing guards and children on their way to or from school.
- Emergency procedures. (For specific information see When an emergency situation arises under Crossing procedures)
- Protecting the health and welfare of the guard while working, including topics such as proper attire to increase visibility, the need for hydration, sun protection, bee sting treatment and how to respond to threats from loose dogs.

Uniforms and Equipment for Adult School Crossing Guards

An adult school crossing guard wears a uniform and uses equipment that is highly visible and easily identifiable by the general public. This enhanced visibility allows motorists and pedestrians to see the guard and the signal the guard presents more clearly.

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) recommends that an adult school crossing guard be uniformed so that street users and pedestrians can recognize the guard and respond to the guards' signals. The guard uniform should be distinctively different from those worn by regular law enforcement officers. Adult school crossing guards should wear retro-reflective traffic vests. The MUTCD provides guidelines for such high-visibility retro-reflective safety apparel to be worn by guards.

The MUTCD recommends that a guard use a STOP paddle as the primary hand-signaling device. States and local governments address hand-signaling devices in a variety of ways. Some jurisdictions require the use of a STOP paddle, others recommend its use, and yet others recommend its use in conjunction with hand-signals. If a STOP paddle is used, the MUTCD sets guidelines on the shape, size and design

National Stop Paddle Requirements

The MUTCD only recommends the use of a STOP paddle. If a paddle is used, the following standard applies.

The MUTCD states: "The STOP paddle shall be an octagonal shape. The background of the STOP face shall be red with at least 150 mm (6 in) capital white letters and border. The paddle shall be at least 450 mm (18 in) in size and have the word message STOP on both sides. The paddle shall be retro-reflectorized or illuminated when used during hours of darkness." Finally, the MUTCD provides options for modifications to the STOP paddle, including the addition of flashing lights, to improve its visibility.

of the paddle. Other potential pieces of guard equipment include gloves, a hat and a whistle. Wearing a hat gives a guard a more official appearance and can enhance his or her visibility, as well as protect the guard from the sun, cold, and rain. Whistles may help a guard gain the attention of children at noisy intersections.

If a guard is equipped with two-way radios or cell phones, they must be used only in emergencies. A guard should never answer the phone or radio while crossing children. In fact, some agencies prohibit cell phones to avoid distractions.

As the local committee identifies what type of equipment to use, it should also decide on guidelines that will explain when equipment is considered unsuitable for use. For example, a guard should not use old, defaced or worn out STOP paddles or safety vests that are no longer reflective or that have faded.

Funding the Adult School Crossing Guard Program

Stable and sufficient funding is important to the effective operation of any adult school crossing guard program. Across the nation, a variety of sources have been used. Communities have obtained financial resources through taxes, local school boards, sheriff, police, public works and traffic engineering departments, and through surcharges on parking fines. Public and private organizations as well as Parent-Teacher Associations or Organizations also have contributed funding for guard programs.

State Variations on Stop Paddle Requirements and Uniforms

The MUTCD 2003 California Supplement requires the STOP paddle to be the primary hand-signaling device and allows for the use of a larger paddle where speeds are 30 mph or more and guards need greater visibility.

The State of Florida requires an adult school crossing guard to wear a high-visibility, retroreflective outer garment (vest, shirt, or rainwear) that is labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 risk exposure. The apparel background material shall be either fluorescent yellow green or fluorescent orange-red. A guard shall be equipped with a whistle, as well as a STOP Paddle that is MUTCD compliant and/or orange or yellow-green gloves that include retroreflective material. (If both gloves and stop paddle are used, the gloves need not include retroreflective material.)

The State of North Carolina strongly recommends the use of hand-held signs or STOP paddles, but allows the local governing agency to decide whether a guard uses either a STOP paddle or an orange-gloved hand, or both.



Estes Hills Elementary School, Chapel Hill, NC

Crossing Procedures for a Variety of Situations

Recommended procedures are described below for an adult school crossing guard to follow when crossing children in a variety of traffic situations. The information was compiled from the Arizona Handbook for Adult School Crossing Guards, the Florida School Crossing Guard Training Guidelines and the North Carolina School Crossing Guard Program: Training Manual (See Resources at end of this document for further information.)

Procedures are described for guards in situations at unsignalized crosswalks and signalized crosswalks, when two or more adult school crossing guards are needed, and when an emergency arises. Some intersection configurations, including T-intersections, roundabouts or free-flow right turn lanes, require that the local committee consider these unique situations when establishing the procedure for crossing children.

In every situation, a guard uses the proper search pattern for crossing a street and encourages student pedestrians to follow these safety steps. This pattern is:

1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
2. Look left, right, then left again for traffic.
3. Look over the shoulder for possible turning vehicles if the pedestrian is standing at an intersection.
4. Walk directly across the street at a consistent pace and continue scanning the street while crossing the street.

For stopping motorists, the MUTCD recommends that an adult school crossing guard use a STOP paddle as the primary hand-signaling device. However, many jurisdictions around the country allow guards to use clearly delivered hand signals, alone or in conjunction with the STOP paddle, to alert traffic to activity at school crossings. The proper hand signal for a guard to alert and stop traffic requires a guard to raise his or her arm forward and toward traffic, and parallel to the ground with the palm and fingers flexed upward. The use of hand signals requires a higher level of training than the use of STOP paddles, and guards using hand signals will benefit from wearing white or bright orange gloves to attract drivers' attention.



State Street School, Windsor, VT

An Unsignalized Crosswalk

At unsignalized crosswalks, it is the responsibility of the crossing guard to determine when children cross based on gaps in traffic flow. A guard who is assigned to an unsignalized crosswalk on an undivided street should:

- Stand near the curb or edge of the street, on the side from which children are approaching.
- Stop children a safe distance back from the curb or edge of the street, or behind a “stand-back” line (see bottom photo). Instruct children to cross only on the guard’s signal.
- Teach children who approach a crossing on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and push the bicycle or scooter or carry the skateboard across the street as a pedestrian.
- A guard enters the street in the following sequence:
 1. Wait for a gap in traffic on the guard’s side of the street.
 2. Face the closest oncoming traffic and make eye contact with the approaching drivers.
 3. Walk to the center of street with the STOP paddle held high. If not using a STOP paddle, walk to the center of the street with an arm raised toward traffic and parallel to the ground with the palm and fingers extended upward.
 4. Where there are more than two lanes, enter the street and alert the traffic one lane at a time.
 5. Face opposite approaching traffic and make eye contact with those drivers.
 6. Stand on the crosswalk line close to the center of the street and make sure that all traffic has stopped, including any turning vehicles.
 7. Face the intersection.
 8. Verbally instruct the children to cross and tell them to look left-right-left while crossing and proceed across the street within the marked crosswalk.
 9. Do not allow any cars to cross the crosswalk until all the students have crossed.
 10. Remain in the center of the street until the last child reaches the opposite side of the street.
 11. Walk to the curb or edge of the street with the STOP paddle and/or stop-arm held high the entire way. When back at the curb or edge of the street, lower hand(s) and allow traffic to flow again.
 12. Remain near the curb or edge of the street for the next group of children to assemble.



A Signalized Crosswalk

A variety of traffic and pedestrian signals are found at signalized crosswalks including traffic signals with standard pedestrian signal heads and, in some locations, traffic signals with pedestrian countdown signals which show pedestrians how much crossing time remains. Signalized crosswalks may also have pedestrian pushbuttons which are electronic buttons used by pedestrians to change the traffic signal timing. An adult school crossing guard should be trained in the proper use of the signal at the crossing where he or she will work.

In general, a guard stands in the center of the street while students cross the crosswalk. If the signal's timing is too short to allow this approach, however, the local committee should take steps to remedy the situation. For example, more guards could be assigned to the crosswalk, more time could be added to the signal or the guard could escort the students across the entire street and return to his or her original starting position on the next signal cycle. If a guard escorts students across the entire street, the guard must instruct the other children to wait until he or she returns before crossing.



A guard who is assigned to signalized crosswalks has this sequence to follow:

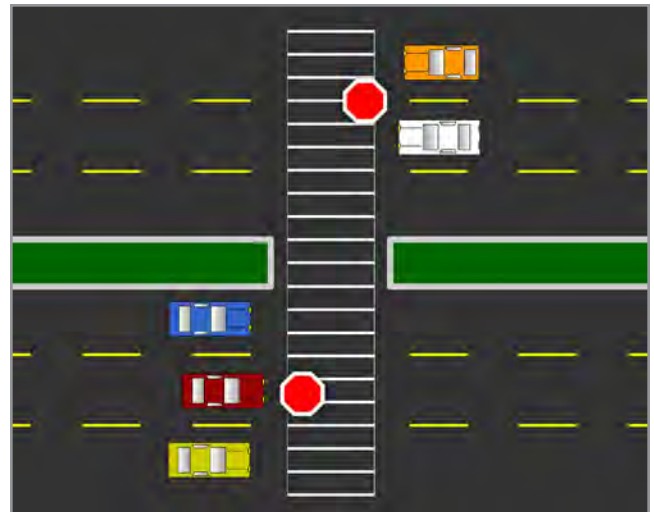
- Stand on the side of the street from which children are approaching. If there is a pedestrian push button, push the button for a WALK signal.
- Group children a safe distance from the curb or edge of the street or behind the “stand-back” line. Instruct children to cross only at the guard’s signal.
- Teach children who approach a crossing on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and push the bicycle or scooter or carry the skateboard across the street as a pedestrian.
- Enter the street in this sequence:
 1. Enter the street only with a WALK signal, and the STOP paddle or stop-arm held high. Stand on the crosswalk line closest to the intersection.
 2. Face oncoming traffic and make eye contact with drivers who are attempting to turn.
 3. Verbally instruct the students to begin their search (left, right, left and over their shoulders, for turning traffic) and cross when safe.
 4. Tell the students to continue walking if the signal changes to flashing “DON’T WALK”, but do not allow children to start crossing at this time. Help students learn that a flashing “DON’T WALK” signal means Don’t Start.
 5. Wait for children to reach the opposite side of the street.
 6. Return to the curb or edge of the street with your STOP paddle or stop-arm held high. After reaching the curb or edge of the street, a guard can lower his or her hand(s) and allow traffic to flow again.

When Two or More Adult School Crossing Guards are Needed

For signalized or unsignalized crossings with four or more lanes, experts recommend using two adult school crossing guards working in unison, with one guard positioned on each side of the street. Each guard stands on the crosswalk line closest to the approaching traffic for his or her half of the street and between the approaching traffic and the students.

A team of two or more guards should be assigned to school crossings at divided streets to help children cross safely. One guard stops one stream of traffic while the other guard stops traffic in the opposite lanes. In order to coordinate signaling, the guard on the side of the street from which children are approaching makes the decisions, with the second guard taking his or her cues from the first guard. Guards should not cross students during the protected left turn signal when the DON'T WALK signal flashes and ensure that all right-turning vehicles yield while students are crossing.

More than two guards may also be needed at an intersection of two major arterial streets where children must cross two or more legs of the intersection.



Red octagons represent adult school crossing guard location on a multi-lane road.

When an Emergency Situation Arises

During a guard's duty, emergency situations, such as a sudden illness or an injury due to a crash, may occur near the school crossing. In the case of an emergency, a guard must stay at his or her post, keep control of the situation, and use the following basic procedure to ensure the children's safety:

1. Stop crossing the children.
2. Group the children away from the street to maintain control.
3. Remain at the assigned post with the children.
4. Ask several people to call 911.
5. Do not move the victim, unless the victim is in serious and immediate danger of being struck by another vehicle.
6. Use a vehicle to block the crash victim from traffic, if necessary. The vehicle should be positioned a distance away from the victim to provide protection from other vehicles but, if struck would not endanger the victim or rescue workers.
7. Always notify the supervisor as soon as possible of any emergency that occurred.



When fire trucks, ambulances or other emergency vehicles approach the crossing with emergency lights and sirens in use, the guard keeps children out of the street and a safe distance away from the crossing until the emergency vehicles have passed.

Ideally, a guard should take a first aid short course and a CPR class offered by the Red Cross or the local Fire Department to learn the best way to respond to an emergency situation.

Resources

- AAA video for sale *Between the Lines: Adult School Crossing Guard Training*. <http://www.aaafoundation.org/products/index.cfm?button=item-detail&ID=404&storeid=1> [Accessed: 08/14/06]
- *Arizona Handbook for Adult School Crossing Guards*, City of Phoenix (1-602-262-4659) and AAA Arizona (602-241-2933 or 1-800-352-5382 ext. 2933).
- *Florida School Crossing Guard Training Guidelines*, Florida Department of Transportation, Safety Office and the Florida School Crossing Guard Task Force, 1998. http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/ped_bike/brochures/pdf/SCG%20Training%20Guidelines2009.pdf [Accessed: 09/21/09]
- *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, Part 7 Traffic Controls for School Areas*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 2003. <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2003r1/Ch7.pdf> [Accessed: 03/07/06]
- *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2003: California Supplement*, State of California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, Department of Transportation, 2004. <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/sign-tech/mutcdsupp/pdf/MUTCD2003CASupp.pdf> [Accessed: 03/07/06]
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APPENDIX B. AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION: SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL OPERATIONS MANUAL



AAA SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL
**OPERATIONS
MANUAL**



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Proud AAA tradition

AAA School Safety Patrols play an important role in helping young pedestrians learn and fulfill responsibilities regarding traffic safety.

Millions of U.S. boys and girls have honorably served their classmates since the AAA School Safety Patrol program was started in the early 1920s. Interest in the program has spread around the world. At least 30 other countries, including New Zealand, the Netherlands, England, Germany and France, have emulated the AAA School Safety Patrol program. The experience is the same — a reduction in traffic death rates.

Boys and girls who contribute their time as AAA School Safety Patrols deserve special thanks for their efforts. AAA recognizes the AAA School Safety Patrol program as an outstanding school safety activity. We commend school personnel who administer the programs and law enforcement officials who contribute to the success of programs in their communities.

For more than 75 years, AAA clubs have proudly sponsored, promoted and aided AAA School Safety Patrol programs as a community service in the interest of safety for all schoolchildren. AAA clubs have been the leading non-school civic agencies active in patrol work in most communities. During its long and distinguished history, the AAA School Safety Patrol program has provided a safer pedestrian environment and a wide spectrum of educational opportunities for millions of children. AAA has provided the means for the patrol to succeed.

This manual will serve as a resource to community organizations, school administrators and supervisors who are coordinating AAA School Safety Patrol programs. The policies and practices presented in this manual are the result of the combined efforts of several national educational, law enforcement and safety organizations. It represents the cumulative experience of AAA School Safety Patrol operations in every corner of the United States.

Consistent, uniform operating procedures across the country are essential for the motorist and pedestrian to know what to expect. For this reason, uniform AAA School Safety Patrol identification and operating procedures are highly recommended.

Robert L. Darbelnet,
AAA President and CEO



Role of the School Safety Patrol

AAA School Safety Patrols are school-sponsored student volunteers from upper elementary, middle, and junior high schools.

Patrols direct children, not traffic. As school-age leaders in traffic safety, patrol members teach other students about traffic safety on a peer-to-peer basis. They also serve as role models for younger children who look up to them.

School Safety Patrol members:

- Complete training in traffic safety
- Protect students from the hazards of crossing roads and highways on their way to and from school
- Assist bus drivers in safely transporting students to and from school
- Teach fellow students about traffic safety.
- Serve other leadership functions under the direction of school officials

Typically, teachers and principals appoint Patrol members, who participate with parental approval. A teacher usually serves as patrol supervisor.



History

As members of AAA School Safety Patrols, students have protected their classmates since 1916.

In the 1930s, three national organizations: the American Automobile Association, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Safety Council — collaborated on Standard Rules for the Operation of School Boy Patrols. These guidelines have been updated over the years to become the operating standards for AAA School Safety Patrols.

Today, more than 50,000 schools sponsor patrols, protecting pedestrians and school bus riders in all 50 states.

School safety patrol members have grown up to be U.S. presidents, governors, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, astronauts, and Olympic medalists, as well as educators, executives, and community leaders throughout the country.

As the value of the program has gained recognition, two national awards have been introduced. Lifesaving Awards debuted in 1945. The Patroller of the Year award was first bestowed in 2002. *For more information, please refer to pages 30-31.*



Benefits

AAA School Safety Patrols benefit students, schools, and communities.

Students gain:

- Safety awareness
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Pride
- Citizenship
- Respect for law enforcement

Schools benefit from opportunities to promote:

- Traffic safety awareness
- Peer-to-peer education
- Character-building opportunities
- A constructive outlet for students' energy
- A positive relationship with parents, law enforcement, and the overall community

Communities benefit from:

- Safer environments for pedestrians and motorists
- A spirit of volunteerism and civic-mindedness
- A positive collaboration between students, parents, schools, and law enforcement



Partnerships

The most effective patrol programs come from a strong partnership between AAA, schools, Parent Teacher Associations, law enforcement, and the community.

The role of AAA:

- Sponsorship
- Traffic Safety Education and awareness presentations
- Public outreach and recognition
- Source for resources, such as equipment
- Source of patrol guidelines

The role of the school:

- Supervisors are responsible for implementation of school safety patrols in elementary schools within their school system.
- Principals appoint teachers to serve as patrol supervisors
- Area patrol supervisors meet to exchange best practices

The role of the Parent Teacher Association (where applicable):

- Support of the school's patrol program, including recognition programs
- Sponsors equipment and training
- Liaison between the school and the community

The role of law enforcement:

- Advisor to the program
- Advocate on behalf of the patrol to motorists and the community
- Contribute to training and development of patrols

The role of the community:

- Civic organizations may provide recognition and community awareness programs
- These organizations could include
 - Police auxiliary
 - Women's clubs
 - School booster clubs
 - American Legion posts
 - Other safety or civic groups



Concerns

Safety of Patrols

The safety of Patrols should be achieved through training on traffic safety, operation, and the responsibilities of each post; dedicated adult supervision; and regular inspections help protect safety patrols.

To remain safe on duty, patrol members must remain at their assigned posts and always properly display their belts and badges.

Patrollers are trained to seek adult help in the following examples of specific traffic situations:

- Parked cars blocking the view of an intersection
- Parked cars blocking school bus stop or student loading or unloading zone
- Failure of motorists to obey traffic control device
- Suspicious activity by adult or older students
- Vehicles turning at T-intersections
- Wrong-way traffic on one-way streets
- Emergencies and injuries
- Electrical wires down near the patrol post
- Domestic or wild animal threats
- Student fights
- Emergency vehicle response near the post.
- Any situation beyond the realm of the daily operation of duties at a patrol post



Concerns (continued)

“Stranger Danger”

Patrol members are trained to report problems with strangers to the patrol supervisor, teachers, parents, and/or law enforcement. These “Stranger Danger” precautions are part of patrol training:

Patrol members should be trained to never:

- Approach cars or allow other students to approach unknown motorists
- Accept candy or presents from strangers
- Help strangers with directions or search for a lost pet
- Allow their photos to be taken
- Divulge their name, address, phone number, or other family information

Patrol members are trained to seek immediate help if:

- They encounter someone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- They become suspicious of the behavior of older students or adults
- They are followed

Patrol members learn that if they are grabbed by a stranger, they should make as much noise as possible.



Securing Official School Authorization

Before school principals institute the AAA School Safety Patrol program, they must obtain approval from the school superintendent or school board.

The approval process will vary according to community and school system requirements. In some cases, principals may seek support for the program from community organizations.

Although most superintendents are familiar with patrols in general, they may not understand the details of operation.

To gain support in the community and in the school system, a principal introducing a patrol should be prepared to:

- Identify community needs
- Present the patrol's objectives
- Explain operational requirements
- Outline available resources that will support the program

Limiting Liability

- Create a statement of purpose that outlines the objectives of a school safety patrol program
- Grant authority to principals or supervisors of safety education or transportation to maintain safety patrols and establish rules and regulations for their supervision
- Limit the age group from which patrols may be selected and determine any exclusions from participation, such as health concerns
- Extend the same protection to the school safety patrol, supervisors, and those involved in the program that applies to other student volunteer programs
- Provide guidelines to ensure consistency between patrol programs so students benefit equally from participation
- Each school should develop a policy regarding times when school safety patrollers should not be on post due to inclement weather



Determining Patrol Size

Schools should work with the traffic engineering agency in their area to make the proper determinations regarding the number of patrols that should be assigned at various intersections. A traffic specialist can provide traffic data, conduct traffic studies, evaluate information about the school and help to implement safety procedures for students walking to and from school. The analysis can be used to plan school safety patrol posts where they can operate satisfactorily, keeping in mind the age and developmental nature of Patrol membership. Busy crossings require more than one Patrol member. Occasionally it will be found best NOT to use the same crossing place to-school pupil traffic as is used for from-school traffic, because of changes in traffic volumes and direction at different times of day.

Selecting the Patrol Supervisor

The School Safety Patrol Supervisor is a responsible adult, typically a teacher, appointed by the school principal to oversee the patrol. More than any other individual, the School Safety Patrol Supervisor determines the success of the program.

The ideal supervisor demonstrates:

- A strong belief in the value of the program
- Knowledge of traffic safety
- Leadership
- Organizational skills
- People skills, including the ability to share praise and constructive criticism
- Ability to inspire confidence and respect
- Dependability
- Ability to establish rapport with students, school leaders, the community, and law enforcement

Supervisor duties include:

- Serving as the source of information on all aspects of the program
- Selecting patrol members and assigning duties
- Training all patrol members, including officers
- Supervising all patrol operations
- Conducting training sessions, reviews, and administrative meetings
- Advising all adult sponsoring committees on the patrol's activities



Selecting Patrol Members

AAA encourages the formation of a patrol force that is just large enough to fulfill the needs of the school. Coordination is much easier with a smaller group. After determining the optimum size of the patrol a school needs, choose members based on demonstrated:

- Leadership
- Maturity
- Reliability
- Ability to follow rules
- Punctuality
- Health (or ability to perform duties)
- Interest in traffic safety
- Sound judgment
- Good attendance record
- Courtesy
- Respect for classmates and others
- Desire to help others

Select reserve patrol members to ensure trained patrol members are available at all times.



Selection of Intersections

In selecting intersections for posts, gather recommendations from:

- School personnel
- Law enforcement
- Bus drivers
- Area businesses
- PTA officials

Review coverage annually. New roads or subdivisions and changes in bus or walking patterns may change patrol needs.

Assign patrol posts based on:

- Intersections near the school
- The side of the street from which students approach
- Traffic direction and density
- Nearness of the post to patrol member's home

Parental Permission

Students must have permission from parents or guardians to participate in the patrol program.

When they understand the educational value, service, and character-building aspects of the program, most parents are proud to give their permission for participation.

AAA can provide a special consent form which explains the aims, objectives, and operation of the AAA School Safety Patrol. This standard form also contains the membership application and pledge taken by patrol members.



Training

Thorough training is an absolute requirement. Training may take place in school or special summer camps.

Trainers can be the Patrol Supervisor, a AAA representative, or a law enforcement officer.

When possible, train new patrol members for the upcoming year before the end of the prior year. Schedule refresher training for both new and veteran members should be provided before the school year begins.

Information to cover in your training:

- Fundamentals of traffic safety
- Duties of each patrol post
- Identifying sufficient gaps in traffic to allow safe crossing
- Special hazards
- Dealing with pedestrians
- School bus safety procedures
- Safety procedures on school grounds
- Maintaining records (for officers)

School training may be conducted as:

- Classes
- On-the-job personal direction
- Written guidelines and oral or written quizzes
- Joint clinics held in cooperation with other schools and involving new and veteran members
- Viewing of training videos from the local AAA club or AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety followed by discussion
- Diagramming a duty corner and highlighting hazards and a patrol plan for the specific crossing
- School bus drills

Training methods can be used individually or in combination.

Because officers take on more responsibility and have more complex duties, most schools provide additional training for incoming officers.

Some communities schedule a Patrol Member Training Camp over summer vacation. This camp may be open to all patrol members or officers.



Organization, Training and Operation

Training (continued)

Camps are ideally scheduled just before school reopens so the training is fresh in the minds of patrol members on the first day of school.

Camps combine traffic safety education with fun activities. Classes may be taught by law enforcement, safety experts, and representatives from your local AAA club. Veteran patrol members also may lead discussion sessions or conduct role-playing exercises.

Most camps end with an exam and “graduation” ceremony in which successful trainees receive certificates, pins, and a training camp T-shirt.

Civic organizations and PTAs may cover fees for training camps.



Installation

A formal installation ceremony instills pride and reinforces the importance of your patrol's service to the school and community.

Many schools make the installation part of a school assembly or PTA meeting. Some schools broadcast their installation ceremony on educational or public Television. Your school district's information officer may help you promote your ceremony.

Consider inviting the mayor, city official, school officer, a representative from law enforcement or AAA. Your visiting dignitary may be invited to lead the pledge and present badges.

Reciting the AAA School Safety Patrol Pledge (see appendix), or creating your own school-specific pledge, is an easy but powerful way to create a spirit of shared responsibility and teamwork.

AAA can provide a safety patrol ID card (see appendix) that includes the standard pledge. These cards can be presented at installation, along with badges, belts and other equipment.



Officer Selection

The Patrol Supervisor selects officers. The supervisor may do this individually or by supervising an election by patrol members. Officers generally serve for one semester.

Typically, a patrol has a captain, lieutenant, and a sergeant. The size of the patrol unit determines the number of officers needed. Patrol officers take on additional responsibility and help lead activities. Officers also must be trained to substitute for any post. One of the lieutenants becomes acting captain when the captain is not available for duty.

Encourage officers to rely upon respect and cooperation, rather than authority. Specific officer duties are outlined later in the manual.

Officer Duties

Captains are responsible for:

- Preparing reports for the Patrol Supervisor
- Proposing the agenda for patrol meetings
- Assigning posts
- Monitoring patrol performance
- Presenting safety talks to younger classes
- Enforcing all patrol rules
- Ensuring patrol members maintain and wear belts and badges
- Arranging for substitutes as needed
- Maintaining the Captain's Record Book

Lieutenants are responsible for:

- Acting for the captain, as assigned
- Assisting the captain in checking posts and buses
- Contributing to operational reports
- Filling in for absent patrol members

The Sergeant is responsible for:

- Acting as unit secretary
- Maintaining the patrol bulletin board
- Inventorying equipment and recommending repairs, replacements, and acquisitions



Organization, Training and Operation

Length of Service

AAA recommends that schools appoint a set number of patrols to serve all year with a selection of alternates to fill in when regular members are absent. Assign only the necessary number of patrols to a single post.

Being a school safety patrol should be considered “special”. Do not make everyone in the class a patrol. This dilutes the special feeling of being selected a patrol and seriously limits resources.



Equipment

The two identifying pieces of equipment for safety patrol members are:

- Official patrol belts
- Badges pinned to the shoulder strap of the belt at chest level

Schools also may provide additional equipment, such as ponchos, caps, and flags.

Assigned equipment should be documented. Officers must maintain a roster with each patrol member's name and a notation of equipment provided to them.

Please contact your local AAA club for specific ordering information.

Equipment: Care

Each patrol member must wear a belt and badge when on duty. Assign a sergeant to see that patrol members are accountable for the care of equipment assigned to them. It is the sergeant's responsibility to keep a daily record of the condition of this school property.

Equipment includes:

- Belts
- Badges
- Flags
- Caps
- Ponchos

The sergeant responsible for equipment works with the captain and patrol sponsor to order replacement equipment. Equipment which is lost or misplaced must be replaced. Worn out equipment should be destroyed.

Encourage students to refer to the Patrol Member Handbook for proper wear and care of Patrol equipment.

Note: AAA has studied roadside visibility issues and is researching ways to improve existing equipment to increase the visibility of AAA School Safety Patrols to approaching motorists.



Daily Operations

Schools should distribute the list of patrollers to staff and train patrol members to leave their classes quietly and report to an assigned patrol assembly point.

The patrol captain or lieutenant:

- Takes attendance
- Ensures that all members are wearing their belts and badges
- Verifies that all posts are covered.
- Reminds patrol members to walk quietly and carefully to their posts

Mechanics of the Street Patrol

“Mechanics” are defined as the process, moves, and maneuvers of a patroller on duty. The basic mechanics are:

- Arrive at your post early
- Determine how to judge a safe gap for your posted position
- Take a position at least one step back from the curb (or edge of the street), arms down at a 45 degree angle, palms facing back
- Check all directions for traffic
- Keep students a safe distance from traffic
- Keep arms and palms positioned to hold all students from traffic until there is a safe gap
- Never allow students to walk in front of a car that stops to allow them to cross
- Step aside and motion students across the street
- Continue to monitor traffic, when the safe gap ends, cut the flow of students

A patrol member should only step into the street far enough to see around an obstruction.



Determining the Gap

The first important duty of patrol members is to determine a safe gap in traffic. The patrol captain or supervisor will assist patrol members in determining when there is a break in traffic that will allow students to safely cross the street.

To determine a safe gap, patrol members judge:

- Speed of vehicles
- Traffic volume
- Road and weather conditions
- Number of lanes of traffic
- Time required for small children to cross the street

To establish a safe gap:

- Walk across the street at normal speed when there is no traffic
- Count the seconds to cross safely and add five seconds to allow for students who start across later than the lead student
- Pick a fixed point - such as a mailbox or signpost - about 1000 feet from the student crossing point
- When a vehicle passes this point, count the seconds until the vehicle reaches the crossing

Patrol members must pay attention to parked cars that may enter traffic, and vehicles that may come from driveways or alleys.

To determine gaps at intersections with signals:

- On average, it takes 10 seconds for a child to cross
- If the signal remains green for 30 seconds, count 20 seconds, then stop students from crossing until the next green light

Record Keeping

AAA provides two resources that help captains standardize recordkeeping: the Captain's Record Book and the Monthly Patrol Record Form.

The Captain maintains the Captain's Record Book. Patrol records should cover:

- Daily attendance
- Number of times a patrol member is late
- Number of times a patrol member fails to wear proper equipment



Organization, Training and Operation

Meetings

Procedures

Schedule meetings twice a month. At least once a month, the school safety officer should attend. It also may be appropriate to invite the principal, police, adult crossing guards and bus drivers.

When conducting a meeting, follow parliamentary procedure, which is a set of widely accepted rules that give meetings structure and order. Procedure books such as the popular, *Robert's Rules of Order* can be found in local public libraries.

The Patrol Captain presides at all meetings. The Lieutenant presides in the Captain's absence.

Patrol members wear belts and badges to meetings.

Agenda

Patrol officers should plan an agenda focused on both old and new patrol business.

Below is a sample agenda, incorporating parliamentary procedure:

- Call to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll call and inspection
- Secretary reads minutes of previous meeting
- Captain corrects or approves minutes
- Old business from previous meeting completed
- New business discussed
- Contributions from guests
- Training
- Captain requests motion to adjourn
- Captain asks for motion to be seconded
- Captain states the motion and asks for "ayes" and "nays"
- Captain officially adjourns the meeting (and may announce time and date of next meeting)



Meetings (continued)

Minutes

The secretary records meetings in a consistent format. A completed set of minutes is signed by the secretary and becomes part of the official record of the patrol.

Elements which must be in the minutes:

- School name
- Date and time of meeting
- Attendance
- Results of inspection
- Summary of old business
- Summary of new business
- Additional comments/contributions from guests
(such as police officers, principals)
- Additional information (for example, training or recognition)
- Time meeting was dismissed

The secretary signs meeting minutes before turning them in to the captain.

Supervision

Overall responsibility for the patrol rests with the Patrol Supervisor.

On a daily basis, the Captain assigns posts, enforces rules, arranges for substitutes, and maintains discipline.

The Captain is assisted by Lieutenants and a Sergeant.



Role of Patrol at Signalized Intersections

Only police officers or adult crossing guards can stop vehicles. Patrol members have specific duties based on their posts.

Duties of patrol members:

- Stand on the sidewalk, at least one step back from the curb and midway between crosswalk lines
- Watch traffic flow and children approaching
- At red lights, signal students not to enter the intersection by holding arms down at 45-degree angle to the body
- At green lights, determine all approaching traffic has stopped before allowing students to cross
- Check traffic in all directions for a suitable gap and then permit children to cross
- Before the light changes back to red, return to the outstretched arms position to prevent children from being caught in the middle of the intersection

Bus Loading and Unloading

Bus stop patrol is an important duty. Students often arrive at bus stops early and may not pay attention to traffic while waiting.

School officials should encourage students to arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The school also should designate a waiting area away from the road.

The bus stop patrol:

- Keeps students out of the street and away from traffic
- Lines students up for boarding when the bus arrives
- Assists small students in boarding the bus
- Checks the bus stop to ensure no belongings are left behind
- If a school bus must be evacuated, safety patrols may assist bus drivers. If a bus driver is incapacitated, the patrol may direct the evacuation.



On the Bus

Assign one to three patrol members to a bus. They remain seated when the bus is moving.

Front patrol members sit in the right front seat of the bus and:

- Disembark at all regular stops to assist students entering and leaving the bus
- Assist the driver in keeping objects out of the aisles
- Remind students to keep heads and arms inside the bus
- Reaffirm the track is clear at railroad crossings

Middle patrol members sit in the middle of the bus and:

- Monitor student noise and behavior
- Keep students seated and aisles clear
- Remind students to keep arms and heads inside the bus
- Assist loading and unloading

Rear patrol members sit near the back emergency door and:

- Check the bus for articles left behind by students
- Operate the rear emergency door in case of emergency

Note: Bus Patrol members are typically students from the first bus stops in the morning and the last bus stops in the evening that provide assistance to the bus driver for the entire route.

Carpools

Some schools place patrols at pick-up and drop-off spots in front of the school to protect carpoolers.

Patrol members assigned to these positions:

- Help students enter and exit vehicles safely
- Assist small children and students whose arms are full
- Monitor students and keep them on the sidewalk until traffic has stopped
- Direct students to proceed in an orderly fashion from the parking lot to the school



Reporting Dangerous Practices

Part of the pledge school patrollers take is a promise to “report dangerous student practices.” Just what are those practices? A dangerous practice endangers students.

When a patrol member observes a dangerous practice they should:

- Politely explain the risk to the offender (if it is another student)
- Seek an adult if the behavior continues
- Only touch another student in an emergency
- Report dangerous situations to a patrol officer or Patrol Supervisor for follow-up

If another patrol member is involved in a dangerous practice, this should be reported to the Patrol Supervisor. Individual school system guidelines should be in place to handle such disciplinary actions, including probation, suspension and dismissal.

Role of Police

In many communities, law enforcement officers work directly with patrols. They serve as safety patrol coordinators who contribute to operations, training, and development.

Law enforcement can make an important contribution to the success of your patrol program, including:

- Promoting motorist awareness of patrols
- Promoting community respect for patrols
- Contributing to patrol training

Only police officers and adult crossing guards can stop vehicles.



Role of Adult Crossing Guards

Adult crossing guards may be assigned to high-traffic areas. They can help create safe gaps in traffic, control turning traffic, and assist large groups of children crossing busy intersections. They are typically community employees supervised by law enforcement.

Adult crossing guards are typically assigned to:

- High-traffic streets with safe gaps more than a minute apart
- Signalized intersections where turning automobiles are a hazard
- Crossings near schools with a high volume of walking students
- Locations where 85 percent of the traffic speed exceeds the speed limit
- Areas of reduced visibility
- School districts with inadequate school route plans
- Locations beyond the capability of student patrols

Patrols can be deployed to assist an Adult Crossing Guard. This is particularly useful at wide crossings or locations with heavy pedestrian volumes. The adult crossing guard and the police will establish procedures consistent with guidelines for patrol deployment described in this manual.



Supporting Your Patrol Program

School Support

The more importance and visibility the school gives to the AAA School Safety Patrol, the more the potential benefit. The program deserves recognition as:

- A safety measure
- A character-building program
- As a leadership development program
- Citizenship and volunteerism in action
- A real-world “lab” that teaches life skills such as teamwork, responsibility, problem-solving, and effective communication
- Means to enhance rapport between students and authority figures (school officers, law enforcement)
- A program that creates positive role models for younger students
- An opportunity for students to learn about traffic safety and the rules of interfacing with traffic

Schools should encourage teachers to participate, involve the PTA and community groups, and make the recognition of the contribution made by the AAA School Safety Patrol a priority.

Fundraising

Schools across the country have raised funds for their school safety patrols by:

- Hosting a movie for students and selling popcorn
- Holding a bake sale
- Contacting fundraising companies that provide sale items
- Creating buttons or stickers for a small cost
- Offering a gift-wrapping service at the holidays
- Car washes
- Collecting recyclables
- Setting up a compost heap “fed” by classrooms and the cafeteria each day. Sell bags of fertilizer in the spring
- Obtaining plants or seedlings from the parks department and selling them to the community
- Setting up a booth at a town street fair or similar community celebration and providing face-painting or simple goods or services
- Holding a safety fair and inviting AAA, the Red Cross and other safety organizations to participate
- Challenging students to a walk-a-thon, bike-a-thon (with helmets!) or bowl-a-thon and asking sponsors to pledge contributions



Discipline

Patrol members must understand there are serious consequences for breaking rules. Most patrols maintain discipline with a merit/demerit system. Parents should be advised prior to any disciplinary action.

Merit points are awarded for:

- Work in addition to regular duty
- Conducting safety talks to classes
- Making constructive suggestions
- Additional contributions to teamwork

Demerit points are awarded for:

- Attempting to direct traffic
- Leaving the sidewalk
- Allowing children to cross without ensuring the way is clear
- Leaving their post without permission
- Being tardy or absent without an acceptable reason
- Behavior unbecoming a patroller
- Arriving for duty without badge or belt
- Breaking safety rules
- Disobedience

By accumulating merit points, a patrol member may earn more important assignments. Accumulating demerits may result in suspension or dismissal from the patrol.



Morale Building

A key duty of the Patrol Supervisor is to maintain enthusiasm and commitment to the program. Attention by the school and ownership by students keep morale high.

It is important for schools to recognize the educational value and service of the entire school patrol.

Many schools recognize this service with certificates of appreciation, merit pins, and thank-yous to the school patrol in school newsletters and Web sites.

Schools also may ask area businesses for small contributions, such as gift certificates or coupons for patrol members. Examples of gifts may include inexpensive raincoats or watches, or catering for a recognition luncheon or dinner.

Activities that may be introduced to build Safety Patrol pride and morale include:

- Reserving a section of the school newsletter or school web site for safety patrol news
- Assigning a display or bulletin board to the patrol
- Writing personalized notes of appreciation to parents
- Introducing and thanking the patrol at assembly
- Involving the student council in recognition activities
- Creating a safety patrol honor guard
- Hosting an annual patrol luncheon or dinner
- Proclaiming AAA School Safety Patrol Day or Patrol Appreciation Day at a local attraction
- Promoting a friendly sporting competition between neighboring patrols
- Establishing a special weekly play period for patrol members
- Offering refreshments such as hot chocolate or ice cream to patrol members
- Hosting special events such as pizza parties, movie outings, sporting events, or end-of-year picnics



Recognition Programs

AAA makes available award certificates and a pin that can be presented at school assemblies or celebrations. Contact your local AAA Club for details.

Certificates of Merit are available for students who satisfactorily complete service as a patrol member.

Service Pin in silver is available for outstanding service while a patrol member.

There are two national awards programs to recognize the efforts of AAA School Safety Patrollers: The Lifesaving Award Medal and the National Patroller of the Year.

Lifesaving Award Medal

In 1949, AAA held the first Lifesaving Medal Awards to recognize those Safety Patrollers who while on duty saved a life or prevented the injury of a fellow student. As we approach 2005, over 380 students have been presented with prestigious honor.

The Lifesaving Medal is awarded by an independent review board to a member of any authorized School Safety Patrol when there is conclusive proof that:

1. The life of the person saved was in imminent danger;
2. The act was performed while the patrol member was on duty, going to or from a duty post, or while on duty as a bus patrol member;
3. No negligence on the part of the patrol member caused or contributed to the person rescued being in danger.

The AAA Lifesaving Medal has been presented by U.S. Presidents Ford, Johnson, Kennedy and Eisenhower; Vice Presidents Mondale, Humphrey, Nixon and Barkley; First Lady Mamie Eisenhower; justices of the U.S. Supreme Court; cabinet officials; and other dignitaries.



Recognition Programs (continued)

National Patroller of the Year

In 2002, AAA introduced the National Patroller of the Year Award to recognize the patroller that best exemplifies leadership qualities and performs their duties effectively and responsibly, without incident. The National Patroller of the Year is selected from the field of Club Patrollers of the Year that our nominated by local AAA clubs.

School Safety Patrol advisers may nominate one current-year patrol member with the following qualifications. The candidate must:

- Be enrolled in the highest participating grade level of the School Safety Patrol
- Demonstrate leadership qualities, safety skills, school involvement, and citizenship/volunteerism
- Value the patrol experience

Contact your local AAA Club for details



Resources

School's Open Drive Safely

For more than 50 years, AAA has sponsored the School's Open – Drive Safely campaign.

The goal of this awareness campaign is to reduce the number of traffic crashes involving school-age pedestrians and school bus riders by reminding drivers to be extra-cautious.

Participating schools may obtain colorful posters for display and other "School's Open" items. Contact your local AAA Club for details.

Best Route to School

Safety experts at AAA have developed 10 rules that help parents and children determine the Best Route to School. Use the following tips to aid AAA School Safety Patrols in the promotion of safe walking practices to fellow students:

- *Walk on sidewalks:* Watch out for cars pulling into, and backing out of driveways
- *Walk on the left facing traffic if there are no sidewalks:* Staying to the left allows you to watch oncoming traffic and get out of the way if necessary
- *Cross only at corners:* Avoid the dangerous practice of "jaywalking." Cross at an intersection controlled by a traffic light wherever possible
- *Stop and look all ways before crossing:* If there's no traffic light, wait until oncoming cars are at least a block away before crossing
- *Watch For Turning Cars:* Children sometimes forget to look and unintentionally walk into the side of a turning vehicle
- *Continue to look left, right and left again as you cross:* It's easy to miss an oncoming car
- *Never cross between parked cars:* It's almost impossible for drivers to see youngsters who enter the roadway from between parked cars
- *Play away from traffic:* Playgrounds, schoolyards and your own backyard are the safest places to play
- *Be especially alert in bad weather:* Rain, snow, fog and even umbrellas can obstruct vision. Also, drivers may be unable to stop quickly. Children should wear brightly colored and retro-reflective clothing
- *Obey police officers, adult crossing guards, AAA Safety Patrol members, and traffic signals:* These "safety guardians" can greatly enhance a child's safety when going to and from school



Related Programs and Resources

Resources (continued)

Check with your local AAA club for safety patrol equipment, materials, and awards to support your AAA School Safety Patrol Program. Available materials may include:

Printed Materials, Guides and Forms

- Handbooks
- Brochures
- Manuals
- Captain's Record Book
- Policies and Practices

Recognition Awards

- Certificates
- Patches
- Pins

Patrol Equipment

- Belts
- Badges
- Patrol Hats
- Ponchos
- Flags



Top Tips

- Solicit contributions and expertise from Parent Teacher Associations or Parent Teacher Organizations, bus drivers, teachers, traffic and safety experts, and law enforcement
- Dedicate a section of the school newsletter or Web site to school safety patrol news and highlight a patrol member each month
- Encourage communication between patrols by arranging get-togethers, such as shared training or recognition events
- Reward patrol members with ice cream, hot chocolate, or a meal hosted by Parent Teacher Associations or Parent Teacher Organizations
- Dedicate an exhibit case or bulletin board to school safety patrol information; including a map with posts identified. Add a photo of the patrol member assigned to each post
- Write a thank-you note to the members of your school safety patrol and their parents



How to begin a AAA School Safety Patrol

Quick Reference Checklist

- ☐ Contact your local AAA Club
- ☐ Develop partnerships with the School, AAA, PTA, Law enforcement, and the community
- ☐ Secure official school authorization
- ☐ Establish policies and procedures
- ☐ Select Patrol Supervisor
- ☐ Select Patrol Members and obtain parental permission
- ☐ Select posts and intersections for duty
- ☐ Train Patrol Members on equipment care, procedures and standards
- ☐ Select officers
- ☐ Assign duties and posts
- ☐ School announcements
- ☐ Installation of Patrol



Traffic Safety Programs