



NJDOT NEWS



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NJDOT marks National Walk and Bike to School Month by highlighting New Jersey Safe Routes to School program Initiative encourages walking and biking as healthy alternative

(Trenton) – New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, along with Pemberton local elected officials and school leaders today marked National Walk and Bike to School Month by highlighting New Jersey’s Safe Routes to School program at Samuel T. Busansky Elementary School in Pemberton, Burlington County.

The Safe Routes to School program (SRTS) is a nationwide initiative supported by NJDOT and DOTs across the country that empowers schools and communities through projects, programs, and events to create safer environments for people to walk, bike, or travel by other wheeled devices.

Pemberton was awarded two grants to improve pedestrian and bike access from local roads to the Howard L. Emmons and Samuel T. Busansky Elementary Schools, the first for \$585,355 and the second for \$256,000. Federal funds were authorized for the first grant in September, which allows work to begin on sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA-compliant ramps, bicycle markings, and other improvements.

Communities that participate in SRTS programs often benefit from less traffic congestion, better air quality, fewer traffic conflicts near schools, and most importantly, safer, healthier and more active children, according to the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center.

“The more towns throughout New Jersey that commit to providing Safe Routes to School, the better chance we have of seeing the resurgence of walking and biking among our students, and all the benefits that come with that,” Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti said. “We are moving in the right direction to make an impact, with 295 grants awarded in the program’s most recent year.”

“Thank you to NJDOT for its efforts to guide Pemberton Township through the grant application process, provide funding for design engineering and working with us to get this project to fruition to give our kids and their parents the opportunity to safely walk and bike to our neighborhood schools,” Pemberton Mayor Jack Tompkins said.

“Thanks to the support from NJDOT, Cross County Connection has been working with local South Jersey elementary and middle schools for more than 10 years now in administering the Safe Routes to School Program,” Cross County Connection TMA Executive Director Ronda Urkowitz said.

“In the past three years alone, we’ve worked with over 100 schools, held 135 bicycle and pedestrian safety events, have reached nearly 12,000 students, and have distributed nearly 2,000 bicycle helmets to those in need. Pedestrian and bicyclist safety is a priority, and we applaud Pemberton Township and the School District for their efforts.”

To learn more about NJDOT's Safe Routes to School program, find your TMA SRTS Coordinator, and discover how your school or municipality can make your community more walkable and bikeable, please visit www.saferoutesnj.org.

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