

## Northeast Iowa

# Safe Routes to School

## Spring Travel Tally Report 2012



*A look into how students travel to and from school in Allamakee, Clayton, Chickasaw, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties in Northeast Iowa.*







This report was compiled by the Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission Safe Routes to School Liaison for the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative in July of 2012.

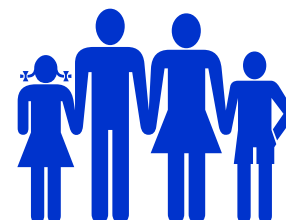
The information included in this report has been made possible for public distribution through the efforts of Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, Iowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit and Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development.

The cover photo is of Riceville Community School District's monthly Walking Wednesday event, located in Riceville, Iowa.



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# Safe Routes to School Background



Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a movement which started in Denmark in the 1970s to combat the number of students being killed while walking and bicycling to school (National Center for Safe Routes to School, 2012). Now an international movement to increase safety and accessibility of walking and bicycling to and from school, SRTS has gained momentum and support in the United States since the late 1990s.

SRTS programs are the result of parents, schools, communities and all levels of governments joining forces in an effort to enable and encourage students to safely walk and bicycle to and from school to ultimately improve the health and well-being of children. The SRTS program in Northeast Iowa involves collaboration from communities and schools in six counties (Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek, highlighted in Figure 1) and the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative (FFI).



FFI is a W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food and Community Partner which aims to promote healthy eating and active living and play in the Northeast Iowa region. Teamwork among Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Luther College and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission makes this work possible. Increasing physical activity among youth is a critical aspect for achieving the initiative's goals. FFI utilizes SRTS Travel Tallies (TT) in addition to compiling educational and encouragement events to track Northeast Iowa's progress toward creating safer routes to school and areas for active play.

The TT is conducted by classroom teachers on three consecutive days during the school year to determine the transportation mode students use to get to and from school: walk, bicycle, school bus, family vehicle, carpool or other such as a skateboard or scooter. The tallies are then entered into the National Center for Safe Routes to School Program Tracking System for processing and reporting. The TT and Tracking System can be located on the National Center for Safe Routes to School website at [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org).

Figure 1. Map Highlighting the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Region

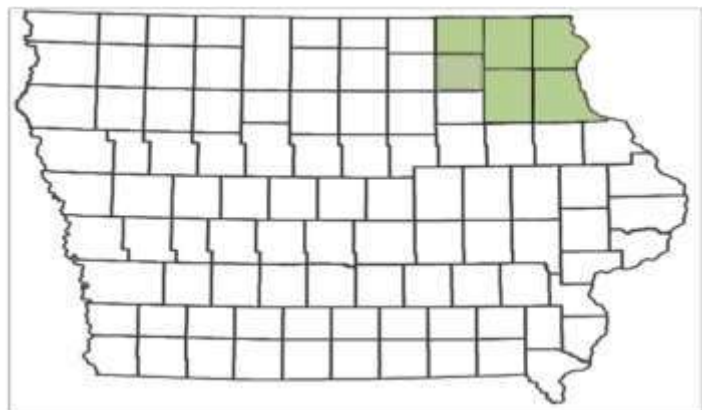


Figure 1. The Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative focuses on Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties in Iowa, located in the upper right-hand corner of the state.



# The Safe Routes to School Journey in Northeast Iowa

## 2008-2009

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) movement in Northeast Iowa took off in 2008 when Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) received funding from the Iowa Department of Transportation to complete a project, termed the *Northeast Iowa Regional Safe Routes to School: Initiative for Healthier Students*, during the 2008-2009 school year for five counties:

- 🚲 Allamakee
- 🚲 Clayton
- 🚲 Fayette
- 🚲 Howard
- 🚲 Winneshiek



Senator Mary Jo Wilhelm joins Riceville Community School District students on a walk to school.

RC&D was successful in producing Iowa's first regional SRTS plan. This plan includes baseline data collected from SRTS Travel Tallies (TT), SRTS Parent Surveys and geographic information system (GIS) mapping. The plan can be located on the RC&D website at [www.northeastiowarc.org](http://www.northeastiowarc.org).

## 2009-2010

During the 2009-2010 school year, the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative (FFI) was able to pilot SRTS programs in six schools within the region:



Valley Community School District students and their families participate together in active play.

- 🚲 Allamakee Community School District (CSD)
- 🚲 Central CSD
- 🚲 De Sales School
- 🚲 New Hampton CSD
- 🚲 South Winneshiek CSD
- 🚲 Valley CSD

Funding and workshops were provided to assist the schools with SRTS education and activities. Schools also completed the TT.

## 2010-2011

SRTS programs were reinforced in 11 schools, listed below, during the 2010-2011 school year by School Wellness Team efforts and the Iowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit (I-WALK):

- |                         |                        |                               |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 🚲 Central CSD           | 🚲 North Fayette CSD    | 🚲 St. Joseph Community School |
| 🚲 Decorah CSD           | 🚲 North Winneshiek CSD | 🚲 Valley CSD                  |
| 🚲 Howard-Winneshiek CSD | 🚲 Riceville CSD        | 🚲 West Central CSD            |
| 🚲 New Hampton CSD       | 🚲 Starmont CSD         |                               |



(2010-2011 continued)

FFI worked with 14 schools in the region to launch School Wellness Teams, which work to increase the health and safety of the school environment. The School Wellness Teams push for healthy eating and increased activity levels among students, leading to SRTS programming support. With the help of School Wellness Teams, nine schools were able to collect TT data.

I-WALK, a partnership between the Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, focuses on TT, SRTS Parent Surveys and community GIS mapping results to promote SRTS programs and infrastructure improvements within communities across Iowa. Of the 12 communities served by I-WALK in 2010-2011, two were selected from Northeast Iowa (Riceville and West Union). Detailed reports of the I-WALK results can be found on the I-WALK website at [www.i-walk.org](http://www.i-walk.org).



## 2011-2012

School Wellness Teams continued to support SRTS efforts in Northeast Iowa during the 2011-2012 school year. Furthering these efforts, the region was successful in hiring an Iowa Department of Transportation grant-funded SRTS Liaison to incorporate SRTS education, encouragement and engagement into the schools. With assistance provided by the SRTS Liaison and FFI Resource Contacts, AmeriCorps and FoodCorps service members working directly with School Wellness Teams, 20 schools completed TT; these schools represent the following community school districts and private schools:

- 🚲 Central CSD
- 🚲 Decorah CSD
- 🚲 Howard-Winneshiek CSD
- 🚲 MFL MarMac CSD
- 🚲 New Hampton CSD
- 🚲 Oelwein CSD
- 🚲 Postville CSD
- 🚲 Riceville CSD
- 🚲 South Winneshiek CSD
- 🚲 St. Joseph Community School
- 🚲 Valley CSD
- 🚲 West Central CSD



Central Community School District students walk to school.



(2011-2012 continued)

With assistance from the Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission SRTS Liaison and Luther College students, a detailed map of community infrastructure, such as signage, pathways, lights, crosswalks and curb cuts, was created using GIS technology for two communities represented in this year's TT report: Cresco (Howard-Winneshiek CSD) and New Hampton (New Hampton CSD and St. Joseph Community School). The map was then shared with community members and school representatives to discuss the results and brainstorm next steps.



North Winneshiek Community School District students sit on exercise balls during class.

The SRTS message was also incorporated into community planning efforts for a handful of Northeast Iowa communities through Iowa Smart Planning, comprehensive planning guidelines to assist communities in the state of Iowa with developing complete, thorough community plans. Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission aids communities within the region with Iowa Smart Planning. During the past school year, the SRTS Liaison attended community forums to discuss inclusion of SRTS planning into comprehensive planning efforts for communities located within CSD mentioned in this report: Howard-Winneshiek CSD, MFL MarMac CSD, North Fayette CSD, Oelwein CSD and South Winneshiek CSD.

The information covered in the following pages highlights the results of the TT conducted in the 20 participating Northeast Iowa schools during the 2011-2012 school year; results have also been compared to TT from previous years.



Postville Community School District students use song and dance to learn.

*In review of this report, with all self-reported data, results have the potential to be impacted by certain biases, most notably recall bias and social desirability bias. Additionally, the following figures, Figures 3, 4 and 5, exclude data from certain schools based on an isolated school location and very young age of students. Also note, due to rounding by the National Center for Safe Routes to School Program Tracking System, percentages may not total 100%. Moreover, due to the fact that responses were collected during one, consecutive three-day period during the school year, resulting figures may not be a representative sample of travel throughout the entire school year.*



# 2012 Regional Travel Tally Results

## Historical Comparisons

Figure 2 is a historical representation of the school districts which have participated in the Northeast Iowa Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Travel Tally (TT) since 2008.

Figure 2. School Districts Participating in the Northeast Iowa Safe Routes to School Travel Tally  
2008-2012

Community School District (CSD)	County	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
<u>Public Schools:</u>					
Allamakee CSD	Allamakee	X	X		
Central CSD*	Clayton	X	X	X	X
Clayton Ridge CSD	Clayton	X			
Decorah CSD*	Winneshiek	X		X	X
Eastern Allamakee CSD	Allamakee	X			
Howard-Winneshiek CSD*	Howard	X		X	X
MFL MarMac CSD*	Clayton	X			X
New Hampton CSD*	Chickasaw		X	X	X
North Fayette CSD*	Fayette	X		X	X
North Winneshiek CSD	Winneshiek			X	
Oelwein CSD*	Fayette	X			X
Postville CSD*	Allamakee				X
Riceville CSD*	Howard	X		X	X
South Winneshiek CSD*	Winneshiek	X	X		X
Starmont CSD	Fayette			X	
Turkey Valley CSD	Winneshiek				
Valley CSD*	Fayette	X	X	X	X
West Central CSD*	Fayette			X	X
<u>Private Schools:</u>					
CFS Catholic School	Winneshiek	X			
De Sales School	Winneshiek	X	X		
Notre Dame Catholic School	Howard	X			
Sacred Heart Elementary School	Fayette	X			
St. Benedict School	Winneshiek				
St. Joseph Community School*	Chickasaw			X	X
St. Mary's Catholic School	Clayton	X			
St. Patrick School	Allamakee	X			
Torah Educational Program (Yeshiva)	Allamakee	X			

Figure 2. This table represents public and private schools which have participated in the Northeast Iowa Safe Routes to School Travel Tally between 2008-2012.

\*= 2011-2012 schools.





*(Historical Comparisons continued)*

The next two figures, Figures 3 and 4, compare 2012 TT results with those from previous years. Figure 3 shows the percentage of walking and bicycling trips to and from school since 2008-2009, broken down by school year. Since Northeast Iowa's initial TT collection year, the percentage of walking and bicycling trips students make to and from school has increased from 15% to 22%, highlighting the successful SRTS efforts in the region. While a slight decrease of walkers and bicyclists did occur during the 2010-2011 school year (19% to 18%), keep in mind the nature of the TT sample: during this time period, the number of schools being targeted nearly doubled with the introduction of a regional SRTS program.

Figure 4 compares student walking and bicycling trips to trips taken by school bus as well as trips taken by family vehicle, carpool and public transit. As discussed previously, walking and bicycling trips for the region are on the rise. Also interesting to note is the decline of trips by school bus over the years (52% to 43%).

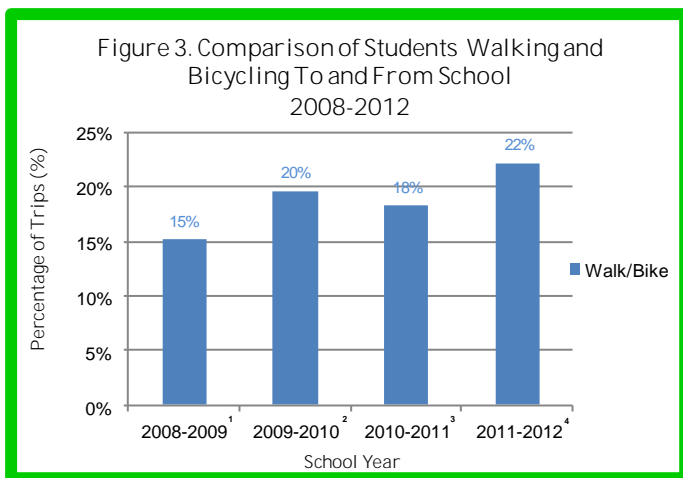


Figure 3. Northeast Iowa's student walking and bicycling results compared 2008 to present.

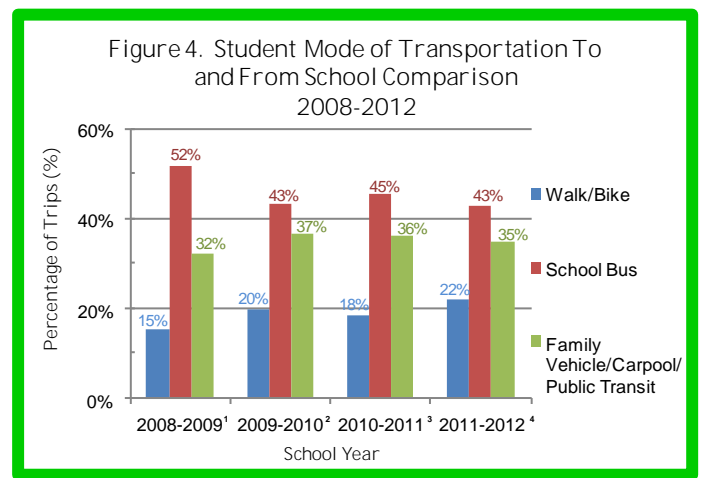


Figure 4. Northeast Iowa's comparison of student walking and bicycling trips to student motor vehicle trips from 2008 to present.

<sup>1</sup> 2008-2009 schools INCLUDED in comparison: Allamakee CSD (Allamakee Junior High School), Central CSD (Central Community School), Clayton Ridge CSD (Clayton Ridge Elementary School), Decorah CSD (Carrie Lee Elementary School, Decorah Middle School and John Cline Elementary School), Eastern Allamakee CSD (Lansing Middle School), Howard Winneshiek CSD (Crestwood Elementary School, Elma Elementary School and Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School), MFL MarMac CSD (MFL MarMac Elementary School and MFL MarMac McGregor Center), Oelwein CSD (Wings Park Elementary School), Riceville CSD (Riceville Community School), South Winneshiek CSD (South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle Schools) and Private Schools (CFS Catholic School, De Sales School, Notre Dame Catholic School, Sacred Heart Elementary School, St. Mary's Catholic School, St. Patrick School, Torah Educational Program).

2008-2009 schools EXCLUDED from comparison data due to isolated school profile: Valley CSD (Valley Community School).

<sup>2</sup> 2009-2010 schools INCLUDED in comparison: Allamakee CSD (Waukon East and West Elementary Schools), Central CSD (Central Community School), New Hampton CSD (New Hampton Elementary School), South Winneshiek CSD (South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle School) and Private Schools (De Sales School).

2009-2010 schools EXCLUDED from comparison data due to isolated school profile: Valley CSD (Valley Community School).

<sup>3</sup> 2010-2011 schools INCLUDED in comparison: Central CSD (Central Community School), Decorah CSD (John Cline Elementary School), Howard-Winneshiek CSD (Elma Elementary School), New Hampton CSD (New Hampton Elementary School), North Fayette CSD (West Union Elementary School), Riceville CSD (Riceville Community School), and Private Schools (St. Joseph Community School).

2010-2011 schools EXCLUDED from comparison data due to isolated school profile: North Winneshiek CSD (North Winneshiek Community School), Starmont CSD (Starmont Community School) and Valley CSD (Valley Community School).

<sup>4</sup> 2011-2012 schools INCLUDED in comparison: Central CSD (Central Community School), Decorah CSD (Carrie Lee Elementary School, Decorah Middle School and John Cline Elementary School), Howard-Winneshiek CSD (Crestwood Elementary School, Elma Elementary School and Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School), MFL MarMac CSD (MFL MarMac Elementary School), New Hampton CSD (New Hampton Elementary School and New Hampton Middle School), North Fayette CSD (Hawkeye Elementary School and West Union Elementary School), Oelwein CSD (Wings Park Elementary School), Postville CSD (Cora B. Darling Elementary and Middle School), South Winneshiek CSD (South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle School), West Central CSD (West Central Community School) and Private Schools (St. Joseph Community School).

2011-2012 schools EXCLUDED from comparison due to isolated school profile or age of students: Oelwein CSD (Little Husky Learning Center- Pre-K through K) and Valley CSD (Valley Community School- isolated).

CSD= Community School District



## 2012 Information

Data comparison specific to the 2012 Travel Tally (TT) is presented below. Figure 5 summarizes the percentage of trips per travel mode for all schools (walk, bike, school bus, family vehicle, carpool, public transit and other). Overall, the school bus is the main form of transportation to and from school for the region. Trips by family vehicle are the second most used travel mode, and walking trips follow as the third most used travel mode. Interestingly, family vehicle trips decrease for after-school travel, and walking trips increase for after-school travel. This means some parents are giving their children the opportunity to be physically active for at least part of the round trip, which is definitely a positive. Keep in mind, though, that if a child is allowed to walk from school, the option for walking to school most likely also exists.

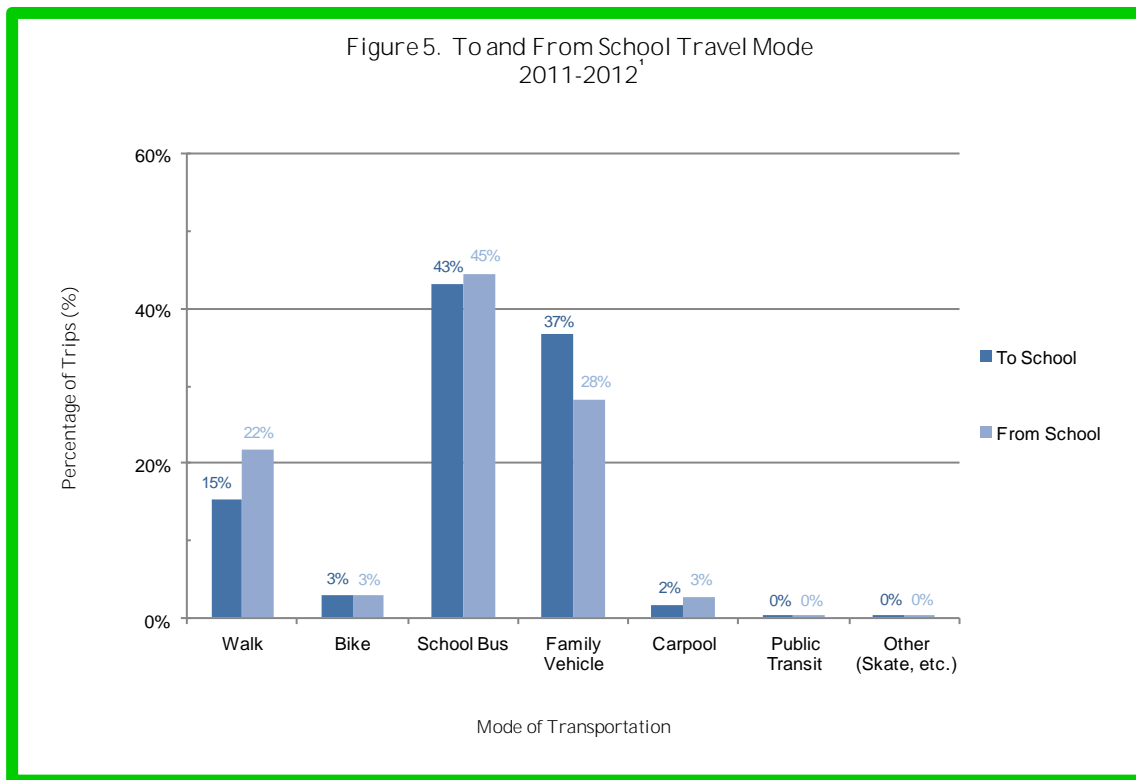


Figure 5. This graph denotes the percentage of trips per mode of transportation for all schools combined.

Figure 6, located on the next page, is a comparison of combined walking and bicycling trips to and from school compared to those by school bus and family vehicle, carpool and public transit.

<sup>1</sup> 2011-2012 schools INCLUDED in comparison: [Central CSD](#) (Central Community School), [Decorah CSD](#) (Carrie Lee Elementary School, Decorah Middle School and John Cline Elementary School), [Howard-Winneshiek CSD](#) (Crestwood Elementary School, Elma Elementary School and Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School), [MFL MarMac CSD](#) (MFL MarMac Elementary School), [New Hampton CSD](#) (New Hampton Elementary School and New Hampton Middle School), [North Fayette CSD](#) (Hawkeye Elementary School and West Union Elementary School), [Oelwein CSD](#) (Wings Park Elementary School), [Postville CSD](#) (Cora B. Darling Elementary and Middle School), [South Winneshiek CSD](#) (South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle School), [West Central CSD](#) (West Central Community School) and [Private Schools](#) (St. Joseph Community School).

2011-2012 schools EXCLUDED from comparison due to isolated school profile or age of students: [Oelwein CSD](#) (Little Husky Learning Center- Pre-K) and [Valley CSD](#) (Valley Community School- isolated)

CSD= Community School District



(2012 Information continued)

Figure 6. 2011-2012 Travel Mode Comparison of Participating Schools

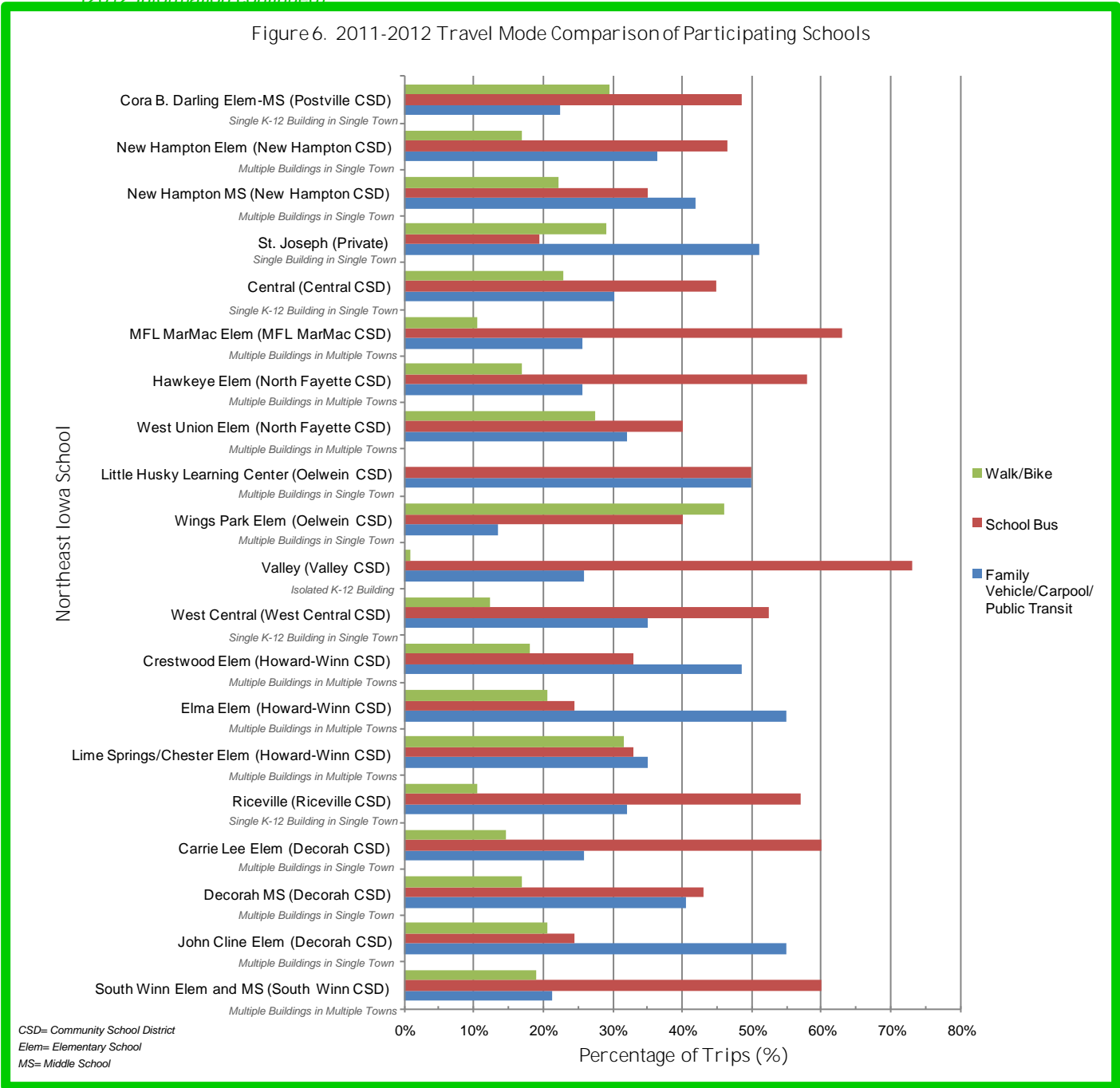


Figure 6. This bar graph compares, among the Northeast Iowa schools which participated in the 2011-2012 TT, the percentage of trips students took via walking/bicycling, school bus and family vehicle/carpool/public transit.

In review of Figure 6, keep in mind the varying school profiles, a description of the number of school buildings and towns represented in each community school district. For certain schools, those with an isolated school profile, the safest way for students to get to and from school is by motor vehicle. Though SRTS efforts work to promote walking and bicycling, safety of the students always comes first and foremost.



(2012 Information continued)

In the following pages, individual results for each of the 20 schools which participated in the 2012 TT are shared; schools are organized per county. Information shared for each participating school includes school name, school grades served within school, location of school, name of community school district (CSD), CSD student enrollment and CSD school profile. Results specific to this year's TT are denoted both in narrative format and graphically. When applicable, results from the 2012 TT are compared with results from previous years. Additionally, SRTS and other active living events are also highlighted for each school.



St. Joseph Community School students race on mini-bicycles during the school's Bike Rodeo.



Northeast Iowa students participating in a Bike Rodeo.



North Winneshiek Community School District students practice yoga during the school day.



Decorah Community School District students play basketball during a classroom break.

# 2012 Individual School Summaries

## Allamakee County

One School

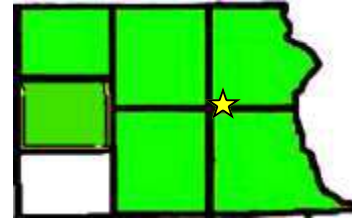
*Cora B. Darling Elementary-Middle School*    *Grades PK-8*

*Postville, Iowa*

*Postville Community School District (CSD)*

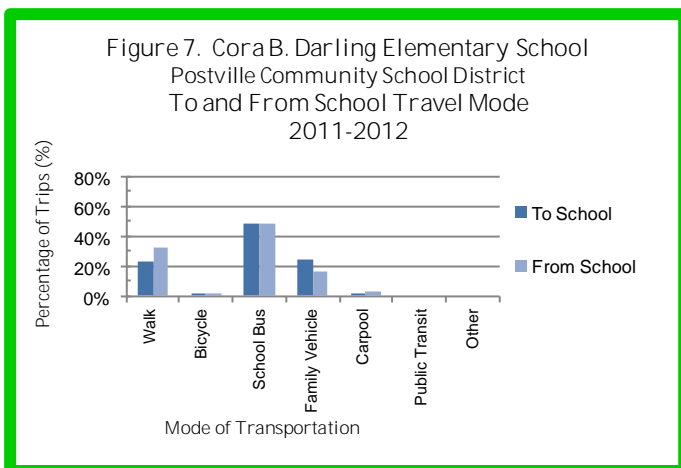
*Student Enrollment: 534* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

*School Profile: Single K-12 Building in Single Town*



Cora B. Darling Elementary School participated in its first Teacher Tally (TT) this spring. As noted in Figure 7, 2011-2012 TT results indicate 25% students attending the elementary school walk and bicycle to school, and almost 35% of students walk and bicycle from school. Other results include the following (% to, % from): school bus (49%, 48%); family vehicle (24%, 16%); carpool (2%, 3%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Postville CSD is also engaging students in physical activity in many ways:

- 🚲 FFI 4-H Youth Team organizes active living events such as annual Tour de Allamakee bike ride and Park It, an active transportation and play event
- 🚲 20 minutes of physical activity before school starts
- 🚲 Wellness Workshop with a main focus of Walking School Buses
- 🚲 Animal yoga and Stories in Motion in the classroom
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge



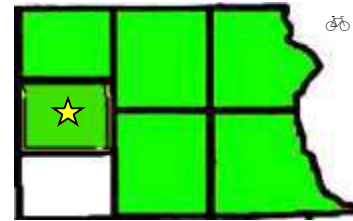
Postville Community School District students work to help build trellises for their school garden.



# Chickasaw County

# Three Schools

*New Hampton Elementary School*      *Grades PK-4*  
*New Hampton, Iowa*  
*New Hampton Community School District (CSD)*  
*Student Enrollment: 1029* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)  
*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town*



Community GIS  
 Map Recipient

The New Hampton CSD took part in the TT for the third consecutive year. 2011-2012 TT results noted over 10% New Hampton Elementary School students walk and bicycle to school; 20% of students walk and bicycle from school. Additional TT results include the following (% to, % from): school bus (45%, 48%); family vehicle (37%, 25%); carpool (4%, 5%); transit (1%, 1%); other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Figure 8a visually represents this data.

The elementary school supports active living in different ways:

- 🚲 Two Walking School Buses
- 🚲 Wellness Walks
- 🚲 Bicycle and pedestrian safety trainings
- 🚲 Brain Gym: 1-2 minute active brain break activities



New Hampton Community School District students have fun acting out a Story in Motion with a Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Resource Contact who is also an AmeriCorps service member.

As noted in Figure 8b, the percentage of trips by walking and bicycling to and from school during the 2011-2012 school year is New Hampton Elementary School's lowest percentage since taking part in the TT. The percentage increased during the 2010-2011 school year, but has since decreased.

Figure 8a. New Hampton Elementary School  
 New Hampton Community School District  
 Student Travel To and From School  
 2011-2012

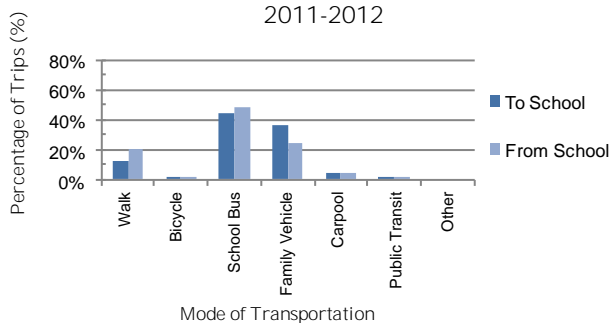
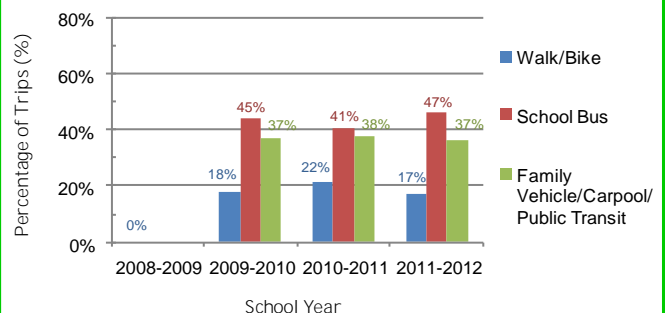


Figure 8b. New Hampton Elementary School  
 New Hampton Community School District  
 2008-2012 Comparison of Student Travel To  
 and From School



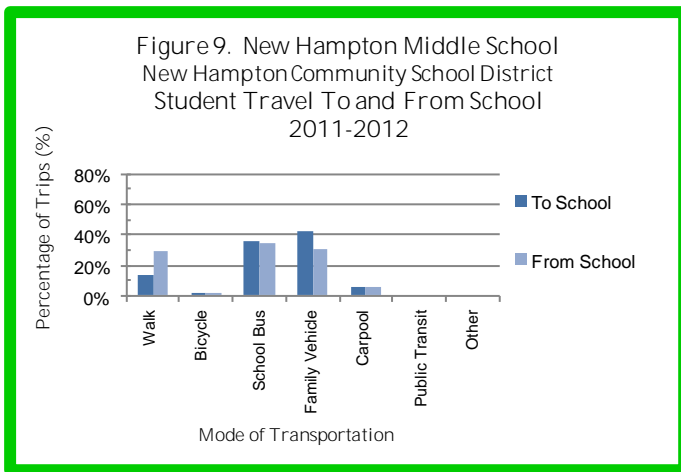
*New Hampton Middle School*      *Grades 5-8*  
*New Hampton, Iowa*  
*New Hampton Community School District (CSD)*

*Student Enrollment: 1029* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)  
*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town*



Another school within the New Hampton CSD, New Hampton Middle School, also participated in this year's TT. The 2011-2012 results, below in Figure 9, indicate 15% New Hampton Middle School students walk and bicycle to school, and almost 30% of students walk and bicycle from school. The results also report the following figures (% to, % from): school bus (36%, 34%); family vehicle (43%, 30%); carpool (6%, 5%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). The New Hampton Middle School promotes active living and SRTS in many ways:

- 🚲 Walking Wednesdays, held weekly throughout the school year during advisory times
- 🚲 Wellness Walks
- 🚲 Organized sport and recreation games after lunch



New Hampton Community School District students walk during the Start Somewhere Walk.



*St. Joseph Community School*      *Grades PK-8*  
*New Hampton, Iowa*  
*Private School*

*Student Enrollment: 161* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012b)  
*School Profile: Single K-12 Building in Single Town*



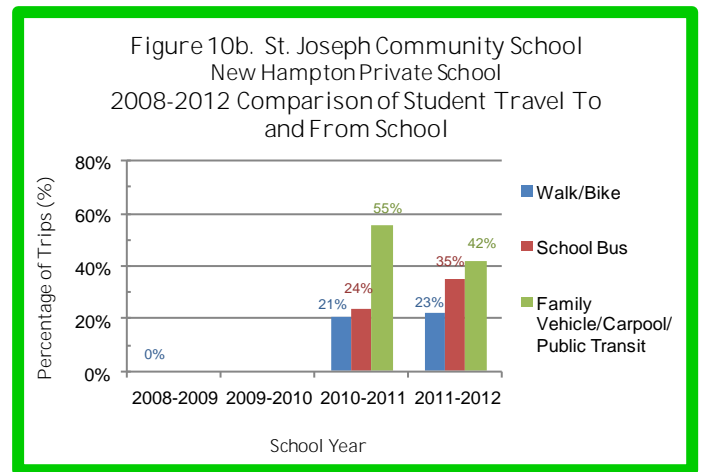
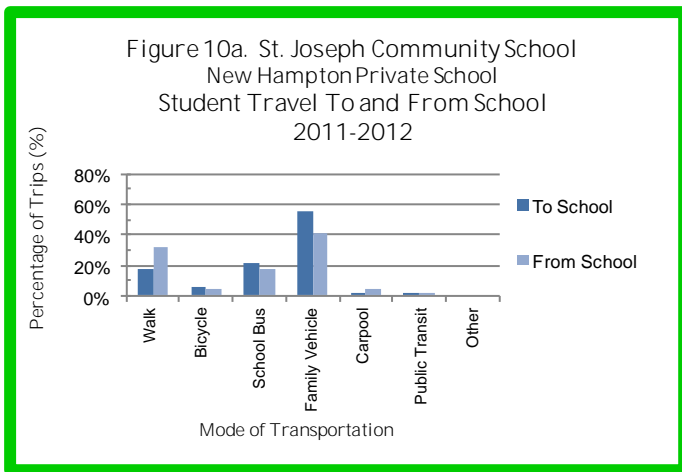
St. Joseph Community School participated in its second consecutive year of collecting travel mode of students via TT. Results, found in Figure 10a, indicate over 20% of St. Joseph Community School students walk and bicycle to school, and over 35% of students walk and bicycle from school. The rest of the results are listed as follows (% to, % from): school bus (21%, 18%); family vehicle (55%, 41%); carpool (1%, 4%); transit (1%, 1%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). St. Joseph Community School encourages active living numerous ways during the school year:

- 🚲 Monthly school-wide wellness activity led by FFI 4-H Youth Team; also have after-school activities
- 🚲 Walk Across Iowa walking club where students walk laps around a nearby park
- 🚲 Police Department teaches pedestrian safety to students
- 🚲 Bike Rodeo
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge



St. Joseph Community School students play a game of Tug-o-War.

In comparison to St. Joseph Community School's previous TT results in 2010-2011, shown in Figure 10b, the percentage of walking and bicycling trips has increased slightly (from 21% to 23%). Trips by school bus have also increased while trips taken by other motor vehicle means have decreased substantially.





# Clayton County

Two Schools

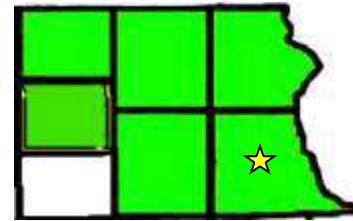
Central Community School Grades PK-12

Elkader, Iowa

Central Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 471 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Single K-12 Building in Single Town



Central CSD is in its fourth year of participating in the TT. Results for the 2011-2012 TT show 20% of students walk and bicycle to school, and 25% of students walk and bicycle from school. Other results from the tally follow (% to, % from): school bus (49%, 41%); family vehicle (29%, 30%); carpool (0%, 1%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (1%, 1%).

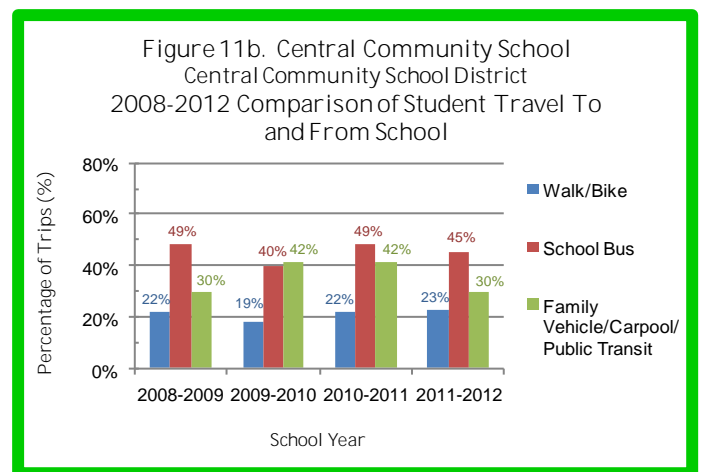
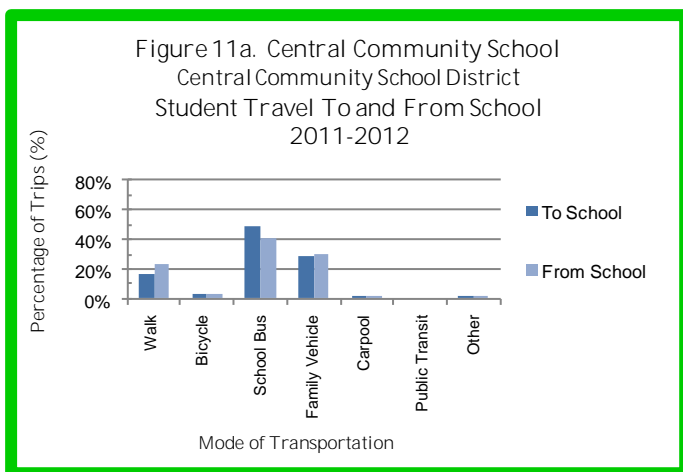
Figure 11a highlights this data. Central CSD is energizing its students to be physically active in several ways:

- 🚲 Bike safety taught to elementary students in PE
- 🚲 Bikes available to students at recess
- 🚲 Bike Rodeo
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge
- 🚲 Annual 5K Fun Run hosted by FFI 4-H Youth Team
- 🚲 Teachers Pre-K through 6th grade informed about active living in the classroom



Central Community School District students enjoy the walk to school.

As seen in Figure 11b, roughly 20% of Central Community School student trips to and from school have been completed by walking and bicycling during each year the school has participated in the TT. This year, Central Community School has its highest percentage to date at 23%.



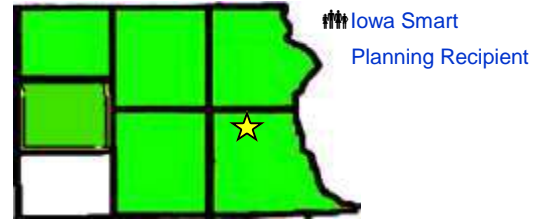
MFL MarMac Elementary School Grades PK-3

Monona, Iowa

MFL MarMac Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 803 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns



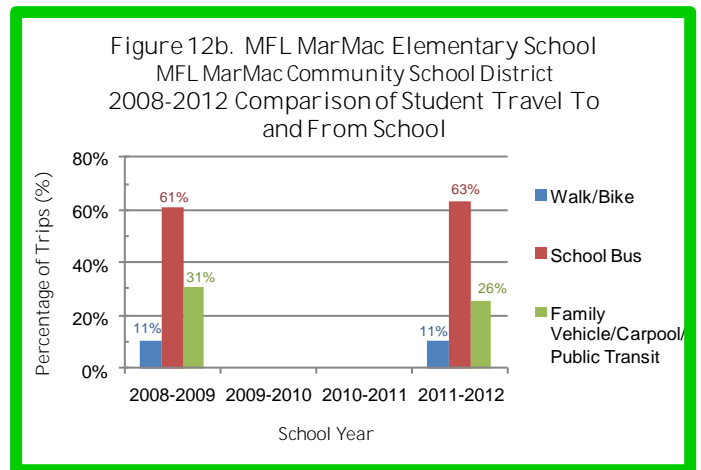
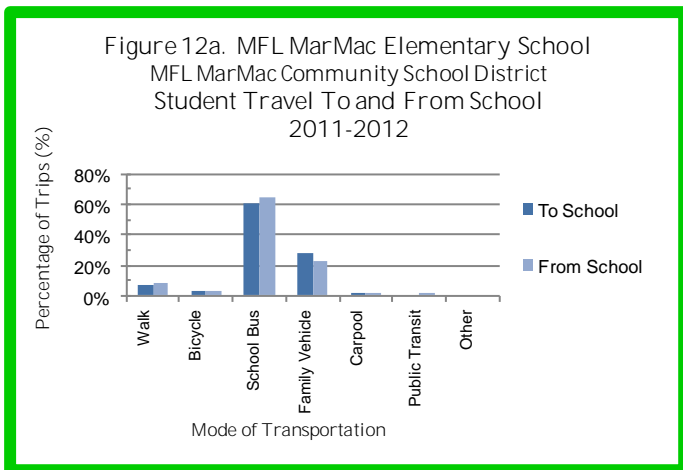
The Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative (FFI) is excited to welcome MFL MarMac CSD to the initiative. In its first year, MFL MarMac Elementary School participated in the TT. According to the 2011-2012 TT results, as documented in Figure 12a, 10% of students walk and bicycle to and from school. Other results include (% to, % from): school bus (61%, 65%); family vehicle (28%, 23%); carpool (0%, 0%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). MFL MarMac Elementary is also working to incorporate physical activity throughout the school:

- 🚲 Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 Plans to create a Mileage Club for students; the MFL MarMac McGregor campus currently has a successful club

MFL MarMac Elementary School participated in its second TT. As shown in Figure 12b, the percentage of walking and bicycling trips has remained consistent since its first TT in 2008-2009 (11%).



MFL MarMac Community School District students enjoy a fitness activity in the gym.

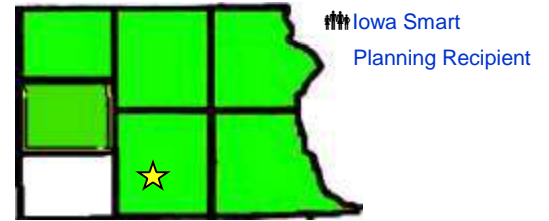


# Fayette County

# Six Schools

Hawkeye Elementary Grades PK, 1-2  
 Hawkeye, Iowa  
 North Fayette Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 798 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)  
 School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns

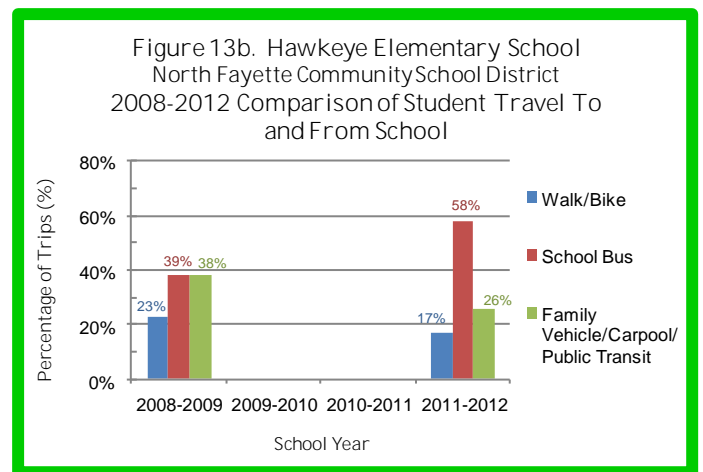
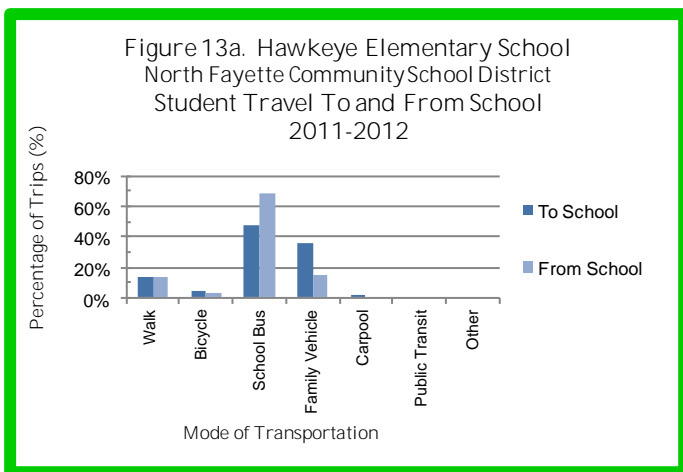


North Fayette CSD completed its third year of TT. Hawkeye Elementary School is one of two schools from the North Fayette CSD which participated this year. Results from 2011-2012 indicate almost 20% of students walk and bicycle to school, and over 15% of students walk and bicycle from school. Additional results are as follows (% to, % from): school bus (47%, 69%); family vehicle (36%, 15%); carpool (0%, 0%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). A visual summary of the results can be seen in Figure 13a. The North Fayette CSD has a community walking club, which takes place 45 minutes before the morning school bell to incorporate physical activity into the school day.

Hawkeye Elementary School participated in the 2008-2009 TT in addition to this year. Represented in Figure 13b, the percentage of trips by walking and bicycling has decreased since its first year (from 23% to 17%), and the percentage of trips by school bus has increased (from 39% to 58%).



North Fayette Community School District students take part in the community walking club.



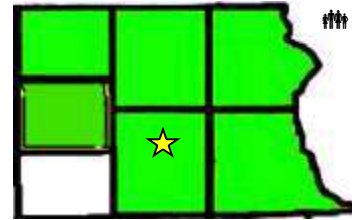
West Union Elementary School Grades PK-K, 3-6

West Union, Iowa

North Fayette Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 798 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns



Iowa Smart Planning Recipient

North Fayette CSD completed its third TT. West Union Elementary School is the second school which participated this year from North Fayette CSD. 2011-2012 TT results, highlighted in Figure 14a, show 20% of West Union Elementary School students walk and bicycle to school; 35% of students walk and bicycle from school. Also listed in the results for this year include (% to, % from): school bus (41%, 39%); family vehicle (38%, 23%); carpool (1%, 2%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). West Union Elementary School is encouraging students to be physically active in several ways:

- 🚲 School and community walking club, which takes place 45 minutes before the morning school bell
- 🚲 Spring Fling/Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 Bike Rack Challenge
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge



North Fayette Community School District students participate in International Walk to School Day.

West Union Elementary School has participated in the TT during the 2008-2009, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, noted in Figure 14b. The school's percentage of trips by walking and bicycling has increased since its initial year (from 23% to 28%) and has remained consistent the past two years.

Figure 14a. West Union Elementary School North Fayette Community School District Student Travel To and From School 2011-2012

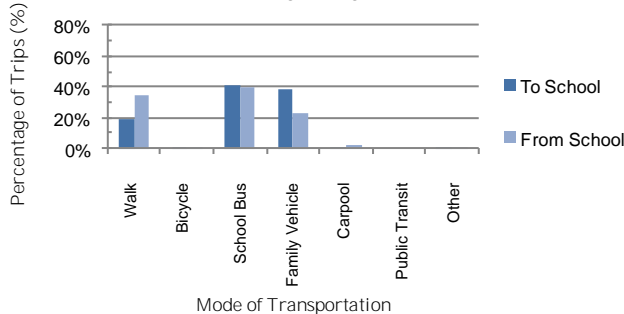
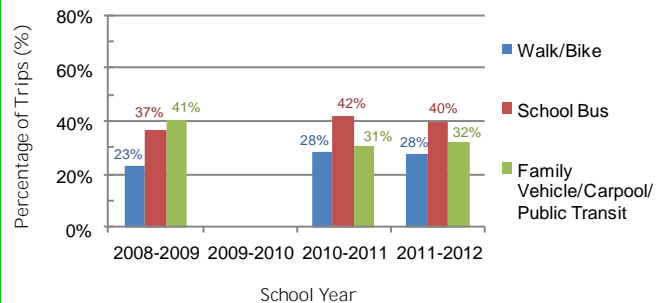


Figure 14b. West Union Elementary School North Fayette Community School District 2008-2012 Comparison of Student Travel To and From School



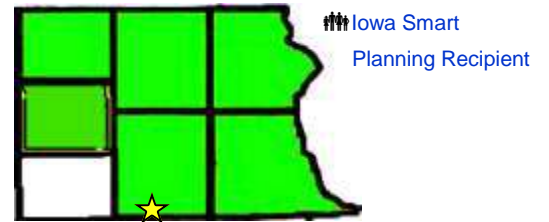
Little Husky Learning Center Grades PK-K

Oelwein, Iowa

Oelwein Community School District (CSD)

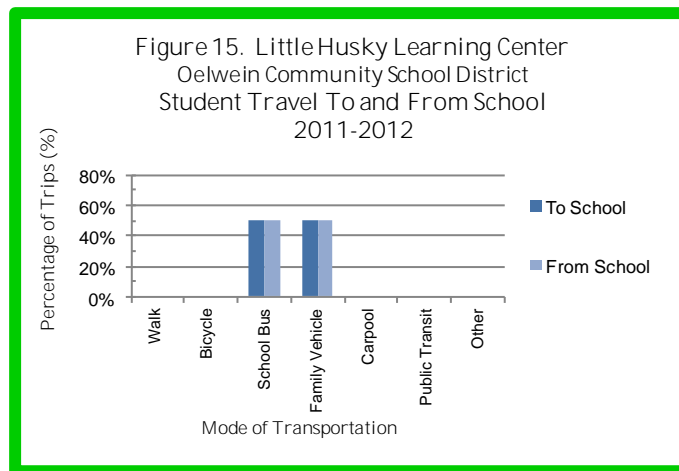
Student Enrollment: 1257 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town



In its second year of completing the TT, Oelwein CSD had two schools participate. Little Husky Learning Center's 2011-2012 TT results, shown in Figure 15, indicate no students walk or bicycle to and from school due to age of students. 50% of children take the school bus to and from school, while the other 50% ride in a family vehicle to and from school. To increase physical activity among students, Little Husky Learning Center hosts fun events during school:

- 🚲 Fitness Fridays
- 🚲 Track and Field Day



Little Husky Learning Center students participate in Fitness Fridays.



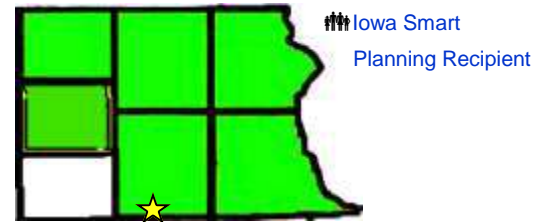
**Wings Park Elementary School**      *Grades 2-5*

*Oelwein, Iowa*

*Oelwein Community School District (CSD)*

*Student Enrollment: 1257* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town*



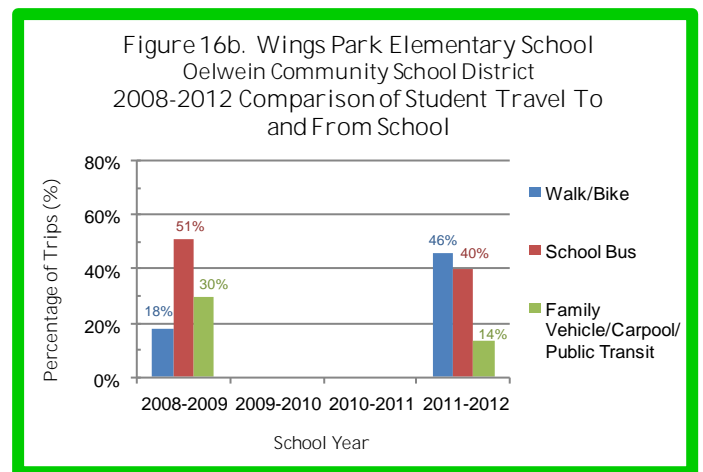
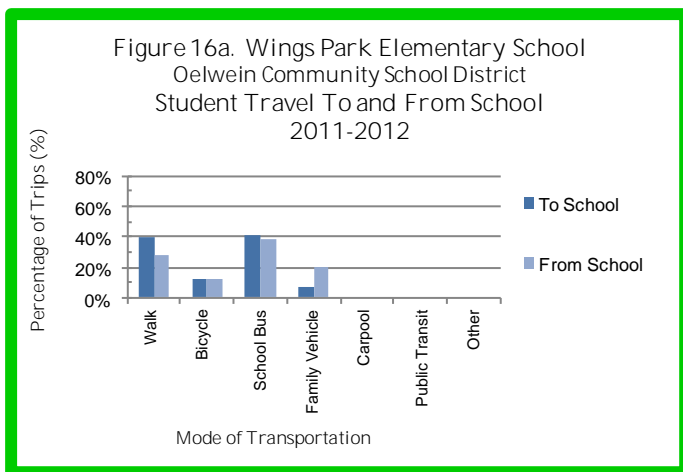
As mentioned previously, Oelwein CSD has collected TT for two years. Wings Park Elementary School is the second Oelwein CSD school to collect this year. 2011-2012 TT results from Wings Park Elementary School show over 50% of students walk and bicycle to school, and 40% of students walk and bicycle from school. The TT also showcased the following results (% to, % from): school bus (41%, 39%); family vehicle (7%, 20%); carpool (0%, 0%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). 2012 TT data is visually highlighted in Figure 16a. Wings Park Elementary School strives to increase the health of students through physical activity:

- 🚲 Students can arrive early to school and perform circuit activities
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge



Oelwein Community School District students enjoy dancing and play during a classroom break.

Wings Park Elementary Schools also participated in the 2008-2009 TT. Since the 2008-2009 school year, the percentage of walking and bicycling trips has more than doubled (from 18% to 46%), as denoted in Figure 16b. Wings Park Elementary School currently has the highest percentage of walking and bicycling trips in the region at 46%.



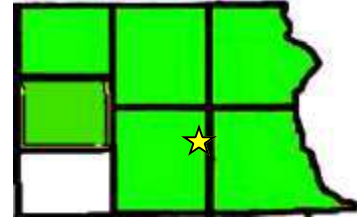
Valley Community School Grades PK-12

Elgin, Iowa

Valley Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 440 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Isolated Single K-12 Building



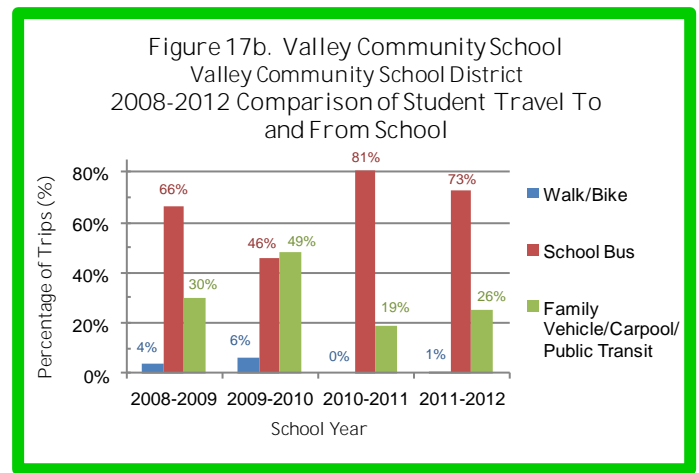
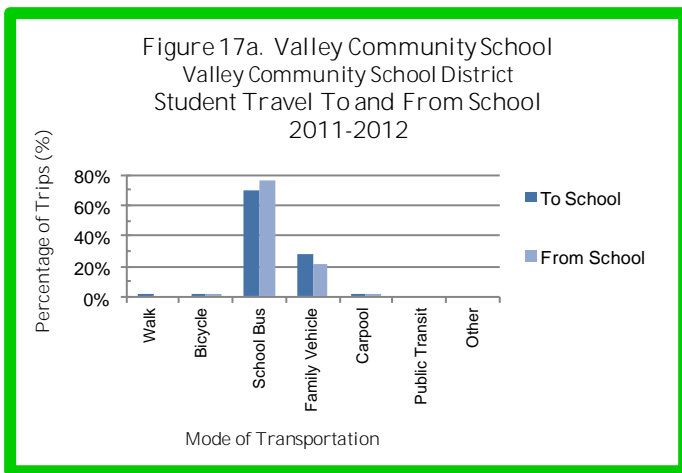
Valley CSD is in its fourth consecutive year of completing TT. For the 2011-2012 school year, results show 1% of students walk and bicycle to and from school. Additional TT results include the following (% to, % from): school bus (70%, 76%); family vehicle (28%, 22%); carpool (1%, 1%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Results are noted in Figure 17b. Valley CSD is finding ways to incorporate physical activity into the school day:

- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge
- 🚲 Students learn bicycle and pedestrian education
- 🚲 Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 Tiger Run/Walk Mileage Club
- 🚲 Trail built near school



Valley Community School District students walk during the "Start Somewhere Walk", a statewide event.

Figure 17b shows historic TT results for Valley Community School, an isolated Northeast Iowa school. Though walking and bicycling trips are virtually non-existent for the school, Valley Community School has found other successful ways to promote physical activity among students, as noted above.



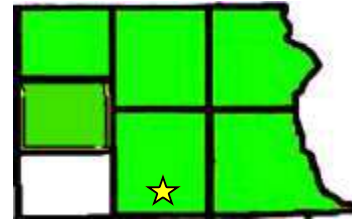
West Central Community School Grades K-12

Maynard, Iowa

West Central Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 266 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Single K-12 Building in Single Town



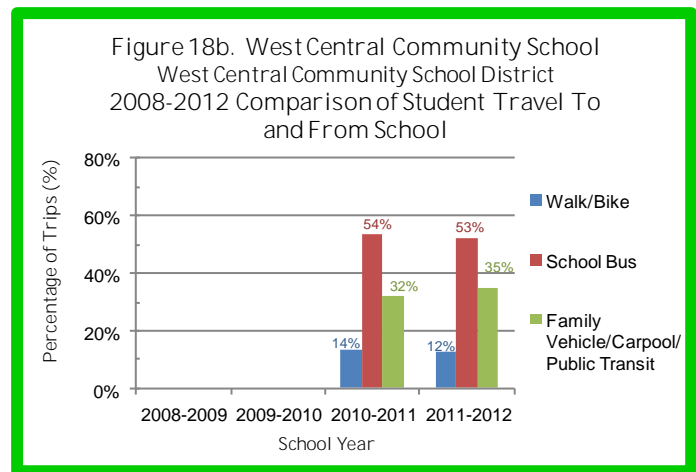
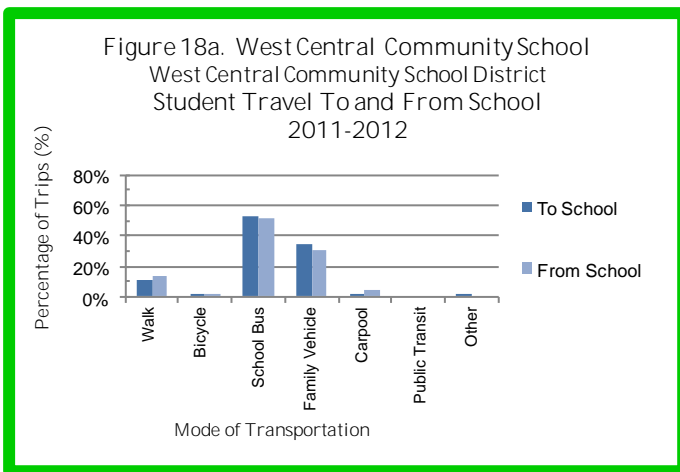
West Central CSD has participated in collecting TT for two years. Its results from the 2011-2012 TT, as seen in Figure 18a, indicate over 10% of students walk and bicycle to school, and almost 15% of students walk and bicycle from school. Also included in the TT results were the following figures (% to, % from): school bus (53%, 52%); family vehicle (34%, 31%); carpool (1%, 4%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Actions the school is taking to increase active play and learning among students are listed below:

- 🚲 Monthly Recreation Nights for families hosted by School Wellness Team
- 🚲 Live Healthy Iowa 100-Day Wellness Challenge
- 🚲 FFI 4-H Youth Team makes daily fitness and food announcements over intercom
- 🚲 Very successful turn-out for the Start Somewhere Walk
- 🚲 Starting a monthly Walking Wednesdays program



West Central Community School District students enjoy a game of Dodge Ball.

Figure 18b shows TT results for West Central Community School for the past two school years. Percentages for trips by walking and bicycling decline slightly, from 13.5% in 2010-2011 to 12% in 2011-2012. Trips by motor vehicles have remained fairly consistent.





# Howard County

# Four Schools

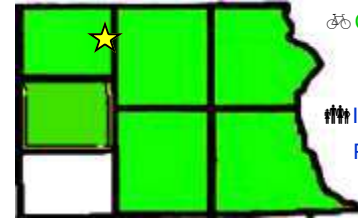
Crestwood Elementary School Grades K-5

Cresco, Iowa

Howard-Winneshiek Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 1266 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns



Community GIS  
Map Recipient  
Iowa Smart  
Planning Recipient

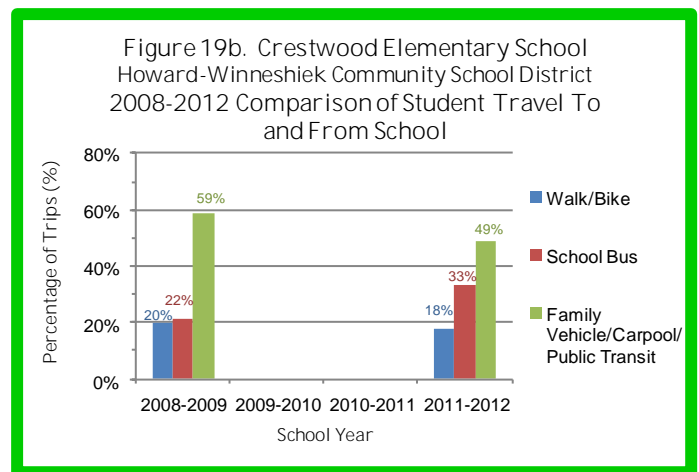
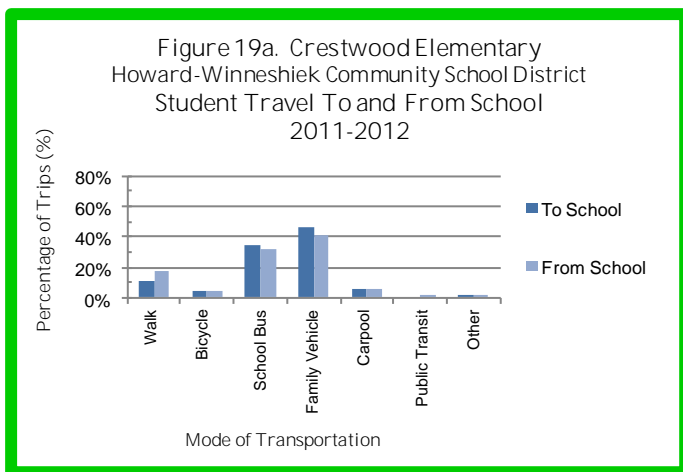
Howard-Winneshiek CSD has completed three years of TT. During the 2011-2012 TT, three schools from the school district participated. Results from Crestwood Elementary School's TT showed 15% of students are walking and bicycling to school, and over 20% of students walk and bicycle from school. Other data is as follows (% to, % from): school bus (34%, 32%); family vehicle (46%, 41%); carpool (5%, 5%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). This data is represented in Figure 19a. The school is involved with promoting physical activity among students:

- 🚲 School-wide Dodge Ball Tournament
- 🚲 Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 School Wellness Team working to incorporate regular physical activity breaks and fitness drills during school day
- 🚲 Hosting regional Wisdom and Wellness Program for K-8 students
- 🚲 FIT Running Club



Howard Winneshiek Community School District students enjoy running around outdoors.

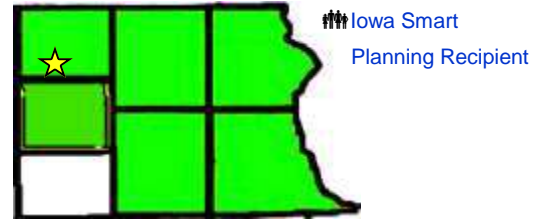
Crestwood Elementary School's percentage of trips by walking and bicycling has slightly decreased since 2008-2009 (20% to 18%), shown below in Figure 19b.



*Elma Elementary School*      *Grades PK-5*  
*Elma, Iowa*  
*Howard-Winneshiek Community School District (CSD)*

*Student Enrollment: 1266* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns*



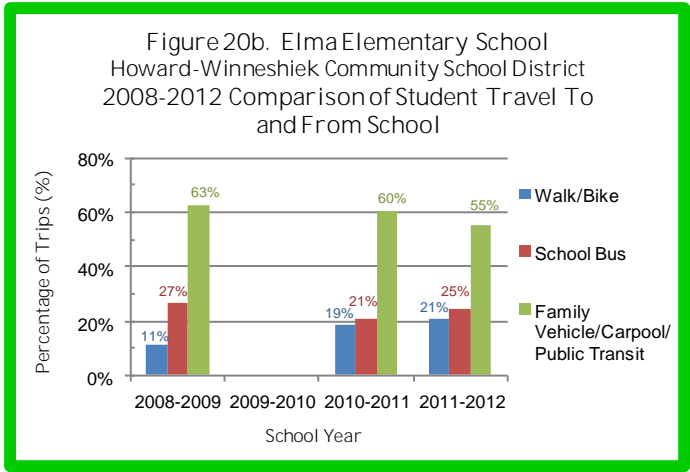
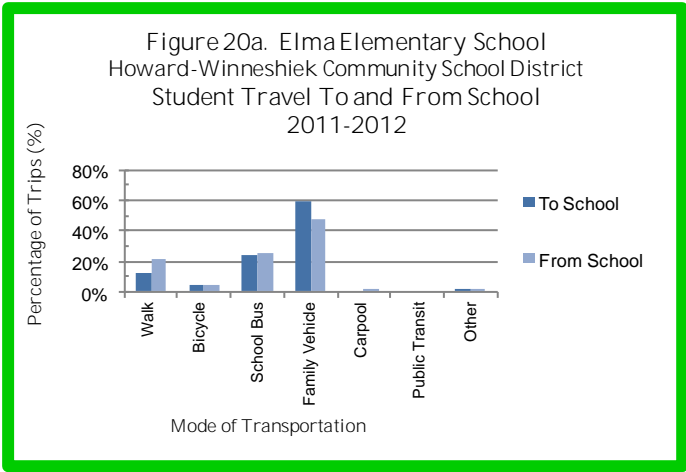
Elma Elementary School is one of three schools which completed the TT from Howard-Winneshiek CSD during the 2011-2012 school year. Results, found in Figure 20a, show that 15% of Elma Elementary School students walk and bicycle to school, and 25% of students walk and bicycle from school. Other results from the tally follow (% to, % from): school bus (24%, 25%); family vehicle (60%, 48%); carpool (0%, 2%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (1%, 1%). Similar to other Howard-Winneshiek CSD schools, Elma Elementary School is also working to increase physical activity among students:

- 🚲 School-wide Dodge Ball Tournament
- 🚲 Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 School Wellness Team working to incorporate regular physical activity breaks and fitness drills during school day
- 🚲 Hosting regional Wisdom and Wellness Program for K-8 students



Howard Winneshiek Community School District students enjoying physical activity during the school day.

Elma Elementary School has seen close to a 50% increase in the percentage of trips by walking and bicycling since 2008-2009, as noted in Figure 20b (from 11% to 21%). This increase highlights an example of the Northeast Iowa SRTS Program's success in reaching out to the smaller communities within the region.



*Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School*

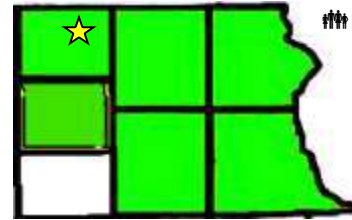
Grades PK-5

*Lime Springs, Iowa*

*Howard-Winneshiek Community School District (CSD)*

*Student Enrollment: 1266* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns*



Iowa Smart  
Planning Recipient

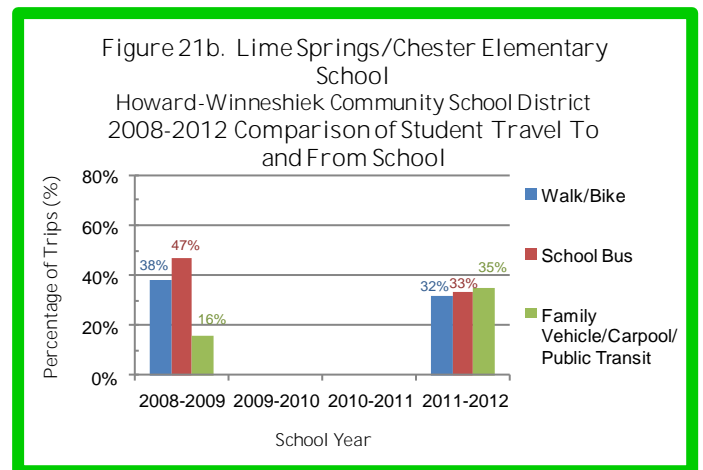
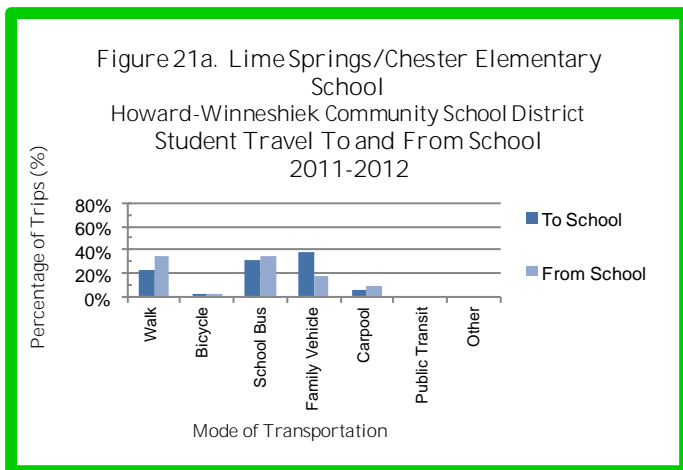
Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School completed TT for the 2011-2012 school year, one of three schools from Howard-Winneshiek CSD which did so. As reported in the TT results represented in Figure 21a, 25% of students walk and bicycle to school, and almost 40% of students walk and bicycle from school. The results also report the following information (% to, % from): school bus (31%, 35%); family vehicle (38%, 17%); carpool (6%, 9%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Similar to the other two schools from Howard-Winneshiek CSD, Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School is working to increase physical activity among students:

- 🚲 School-wide Dodge Ball Tournament
- 🚲 Go the Distance Day
- 🚲 School Wellness Team working to incorporate regular physical activity breaks and fitness drills during school day
- 🚲 Hosting regional Wisdom and Wellness Program for K-8 students
- 🚲 Mileage Club



Howard Winneshiek Community School District students learning how to be physically active.

Figure 21b shows the percentage of trips by walking and bicycling for Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School, which has fluctuated since 2008-2009. More specifically, the percentage of trips has gone down while the percentage of trips by family vehicle, carpool and public transit has gone up. It is important to note that walking and bicycling trips are still over 30% for the school.



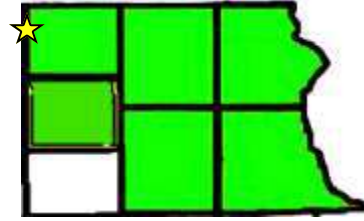
Riceville Community School Grades K-12

Riceville, Iowa

Riceville Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 287 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Single K-12 Building in Single Town



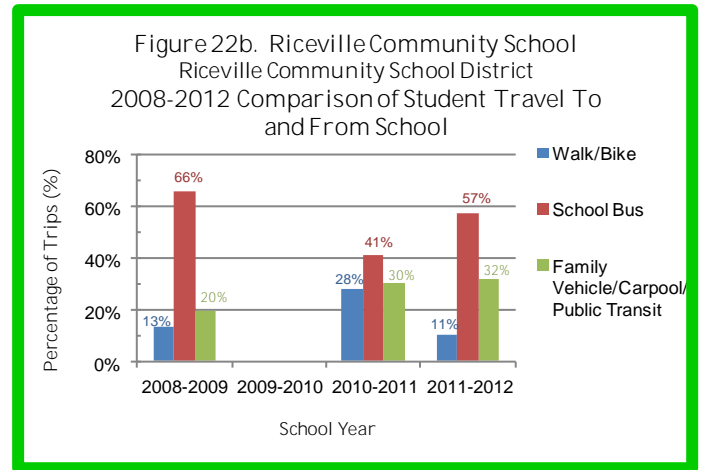
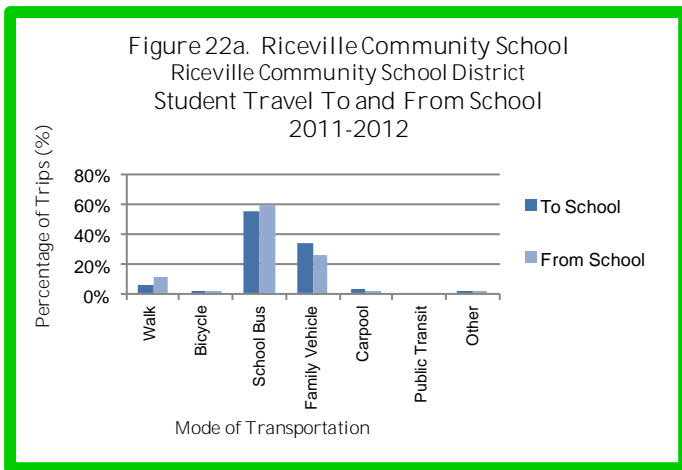
This is Riceville CSD's third year participating in the TT. 2011-2012 TT results, presented in Figure 22a, show almost 10% of students walk and bicycle to school, and close to 15% of students walk and bicycle from school. Results also reported the following information (% to, % from): school bus (55%, 59%); family vehicle (34%, 26%); carpool (3%, 1%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Riceville CSD is dedicated to making physical activity and active play accessible for all of its students:

- 🚲 Wildcat Trail constructed around school
- 🚲 Healthy Kids Club for students to track mileage
- 🚲 "Walking Wednesdays"- monthly walk to school day where students need parent permission to *opt out* of participating
- 🚲 Installing Frisbee Golf Nets
- 🚲 Fitness integrated into classrooms by FFI 4-H Youth Team
- 🚲 Incorporates physical activity into annual May Day Community Service Day projects
- 🚲 Field Fun Day



Riceville Community School District students off to school on a Walking School Bus.

Riceville Community School also participated in the TT during the 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 school years, as indicated in Figure 22b. Great variation in the percentage of trips by walking and bicycling has occurred for the school since its first TT. The 2010-2011 school's percentage nearly hit the 30% mark (28%), but this current year shows a sharp decline (11%).



# Winneshiek County

# Four Schools

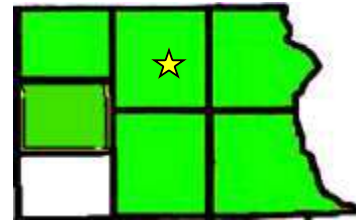
Carrie Lee Elementary School Grades 3-4

Decorah, Iowa

Decorah Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 1614 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town



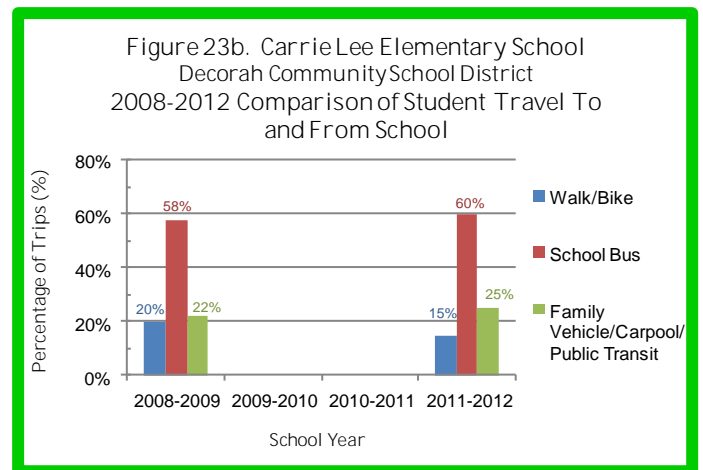
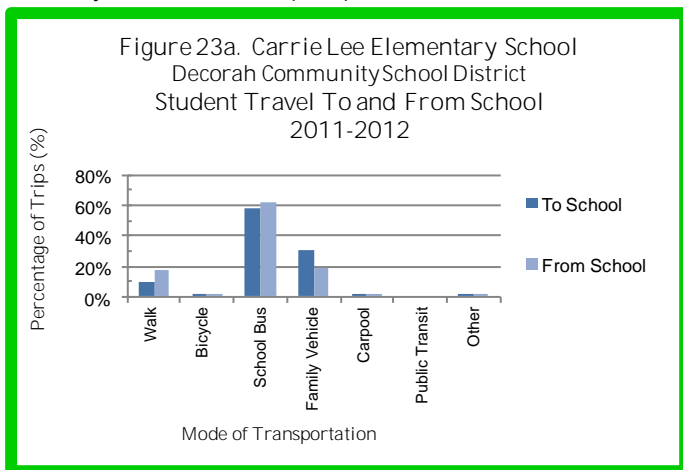
The Decorah CSD is in its third year of completing TT, and three schools from the school district participated during the 2011-2012 school year. As can be seen in Figure 23a, results from Carrie Lee Elementary School indicate 10% of students walk and bicycle to school while almost 20% walk and bicycle from school. Also reported in the results were the following (% to, % from): school bus (58%, 62%); family vehicle (31%, 19%); carpool (1%, 1%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). The Decorah CSD has taken the initiative to increase physical activity among students in many ways:

- 🚲 Governor's Walk
- 🚲 International Walk to School Day
- 🚲 Mileage Club for students
- 🚲 Bike Rack Challenge
- 🚲 Multiple Walking School Buses
- 🚲 Several School Wellness Team workshops
- 🚲 Co-hosted Wellness Fair with 5K
- 🚲 Weekly Nutrition and Fitness Club— high school students teach elementary students about wellness



A Decorah Community School District family snowshoes together during a School Wellness Team workshop.

Carrie Lee Elementary School has had a 25% decrease in the percentage of walking and bicycling trips since the 2008-2009 school year, from 20% to 15%, shown in Figure 23b. Interestingly, even though Decorah is the most urban community in the region, Carrie Lee Elementary School has one of the highest busing percentages of this year's TT schools (60%).



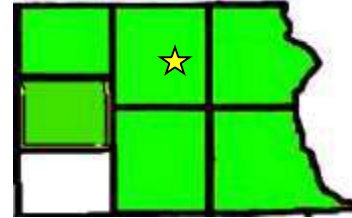
Decorah Middle School Grades 5-8

Decorah, Iowa

Decorah Community School District (CSD)

Student Enrollment: 1614 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town



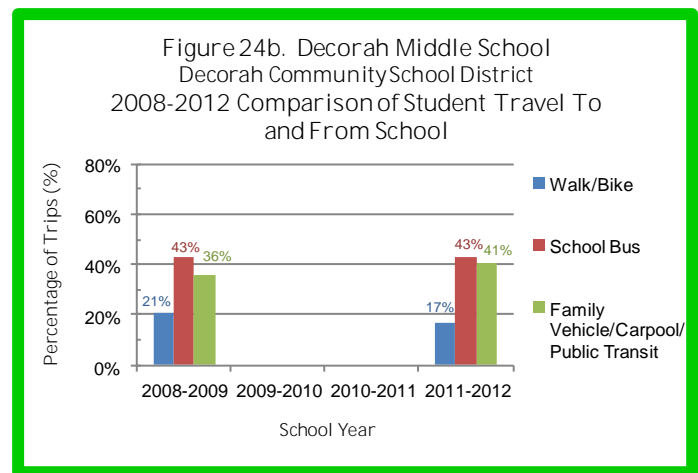
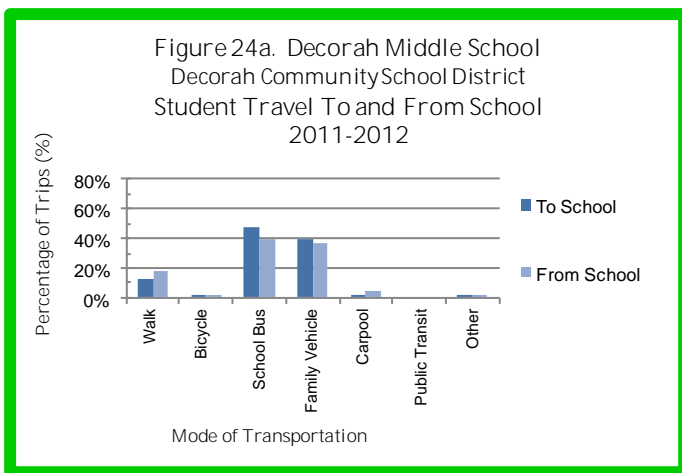
Decorah Middle School is one of three schools from the Decorah CSD which completed the TT for the 2011-2012 school year. Results from Decorah Middle School, represented in Figure 24a, show nearly 15% of students walk and bicycle to school, and 20% of students walk and bicycle from school. Also included in the results was the following information (% to, from %): school bus (47%, 39%); family vehicle (39%, 37%); carpool (1%, 4%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). As mentioned with Carrie Lee Elementary School, the Decorah CSD has worked to increase physical activity among students through various activities:

- 🚲 Governor's Walk
- 🚲 International Walk to School Day
- 🚲 Mileage Club for students
- 🚲 Bike Rack Challenge
- 🚲 Wellness Center at middle school
- 🚲 Multiple Walking School Buses
- 🚲 Move to Beat the Winter Blues and Go for the Gold– active living workshops hosted by School Wellness Team
- 🚲 Co-hosted Wellness Fair with 5K



Decorah Community School District students and families participate in a School Wellness Team workshop.

Figure 24b shares information about Decorah Middle School. The percentage of walking and bicycling trips for the school has declined since 2008-2009 (from 21% to 17%); trips by family vehicle, carpool and public transit have modestly increased (from 36% to 41%).



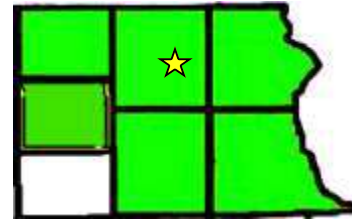
*John Cline Elementary School*      *Grades K-2*

*Decorah, Iowa*

*Decorah Community School District (CSD)*

*Student Enrollment: 1614* (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

*School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Single Town*



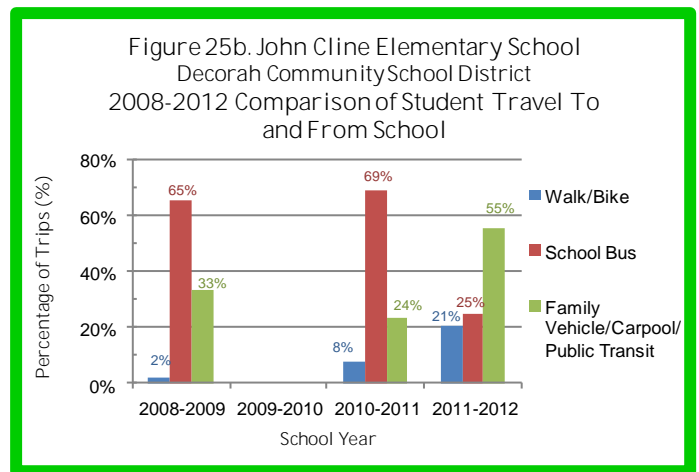
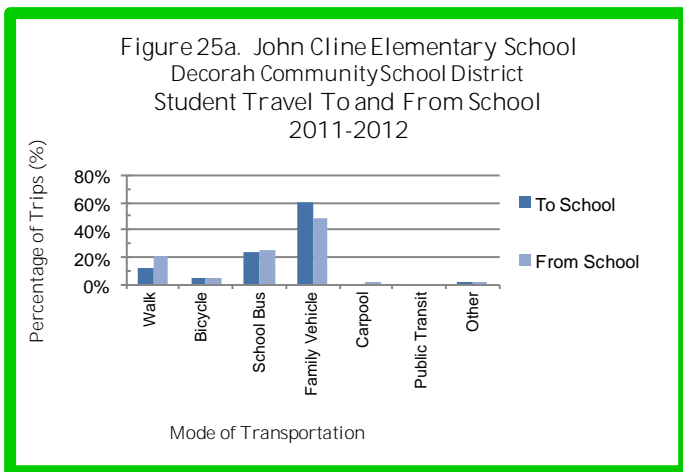
John Cline Elementary is another school from the Decorah CSD school which submitted TT for the 2011-2012 school year. The school's results, denoted below in Figure 25a, show over 15% of students walk and bicycle to school, and 25% of students walk and bicycle from school. Additionally, travel to and from school also occurs in the following ways (% to, from %): school bus (24%, 25%); family vehicle (60%, 48%); carpool (0%, 2%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (1%, 1%). As listed with the other two Decorah CSD schools, the CSD keeps its students active through several ways:

- 🚲 Governor's Walk
- 🚲 International Walk to School Day
- 🚲 Mileage Club for students
- 🚲 Bike Rack Challenge
- 🚲 Multiple Walking School Buses
- 🚲 Several School Wellness Team Workshops
- 🚲 Co-hosted Wellness Fair with 5K
- 🚲 Weekly Nutrition and Fitness Club— high school students teach elementary students about wellness



A Decorah Community School District Walking School Bus takes a moment to pose for a picture.

John Cline Elementary School, the other elementary school in the Decorah CSD, has made great progress in regards to trips by walking and bicycling since 2008-2009, shown in Figure 25b; a ten-fold increase in these types of trips has occurred (from 2% to 21%). Additionally, trips by school bus have dropped substantially from 65% to under 25%, a significant difference from Carrie Lee Elementary School's percentages. However, John Cline has the highest percentage of trips by family vehicle, carpool and public transit in the region at 55% alongside Elma Elementary School within the Howard-Winneshiek CSD.



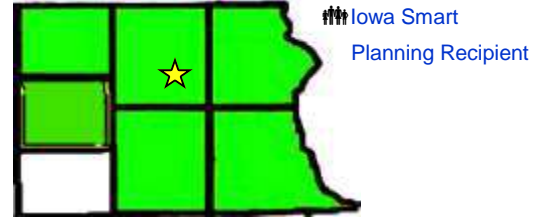
**South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle Schools** Grades PK-8

Ossian, Iowa

**South Winneshiek Community School District (CSD)**

Student Enrollment: 553 (Iowa Department of Education, 2012a)

School Profile: Multiple Buildings in Multiple Towns



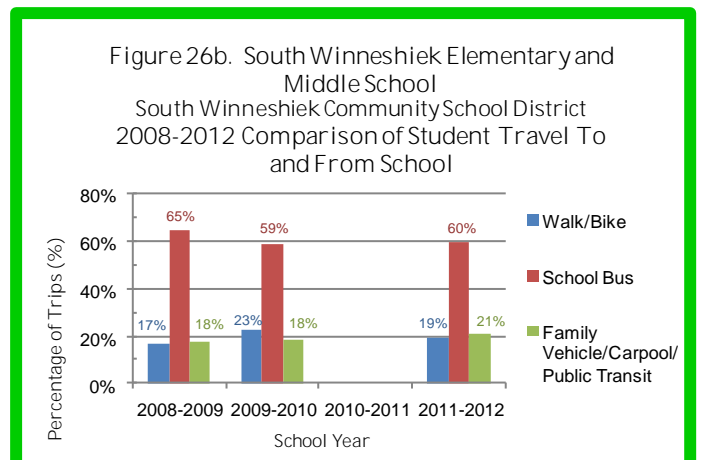
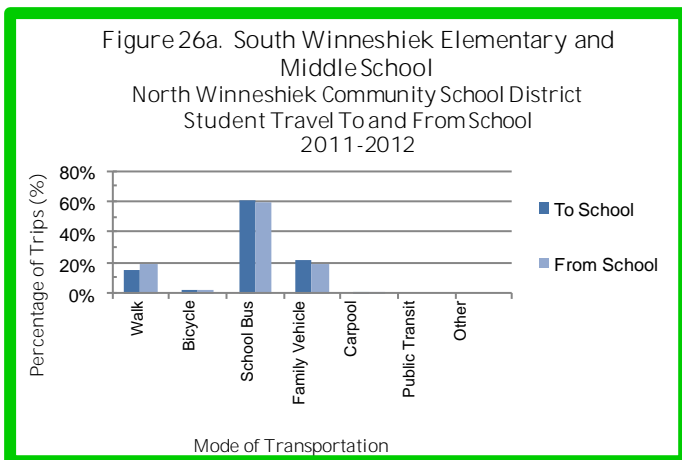
South Winneshiek CSD's participation in collecting TT for 2011-2012 marks its third year of involvement. During the 2011-2012 school year, South Winneshiek CSD was represented by its elementary and middle schools. TT results for the schools indicate over 15% of students walk and bicycle to school, and over 20% of students walk and bicycle from school. Other results include (% to, from %): school bus (61%, 59%); family vehicle (22%, 19%); carpool (1%, 1%); transit (0%, 0%); and other e.g., skateboard or scooter (0%, 0%). Figure 26a below visually represents this information. South Winneshiek CSD keeps its students active with the following activities:

- 🚲 High School Mileage Club
- 🚲 5k hosted by FFI 4-H Youth Team
- 🚲 International Walk to School Day
- 🚲 Sleds available for students to use during winter recesses
- 🚲 Has "non-athlete" fitness room for students not in sports



South Winneshiek Community School District students jump and jive with a Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Resource Contact who is also a FoodCorps service member.

Figure 26b shows South Winneshiek Elementary and Middle School's TT progression since 2008-2009. The percentage of trips by walking and bicycling is up from its initial TT results, but down slightly from last year's percentage (from 23% to 19%).





# A Look into Northeast Iowa's Future

## Summary

In review of the 2012 Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Travel Tally (TT) data, it is important to first recognize the successful progress of the Northeast Iowa SRTS program; most notably, the number of walkers and bicyclers to and from school has increased since the region's first TT during the 2008-2009 school year (from 15% to 22%). Beyond this figure, schools in the region are promoting lifelong healthful habits among children through daily integration of SRTS and active living efforts. Examples of current programs each school is doing was listed in the previous section, 2012 Individual School Summaries. While these triumphs are evidence of positive change in Northeast Iowa, critically examining SRTS obstacles is equally important for continuing this growth.



Students from South Winneshiek Community School District advocate walking to school.

Rural settings, such as that of Northeast Iowa, face unique SRTS challenges. Safety, a major concern for all geographical locations, is also on the top of the list for Northeast Iowa. In many instances, it is just not safe for children to walk and bicycle to school. Distance between home and school is a primary concern, as rural students could easily live 10 or more miles away.

Location of the school is another safety concern. The majority of school districts in Northeast Iowa serve multiple towns. Many of these schools are located on major highways and even a handful are located in the middle of the country, miles away from the nearest town. These set-ups make walking and bicycling nearly impossible and not advised. These challenges, in addition to any number of other concerns which may deter students from using active



Students from Starmont Community School District take part in the ground breaking ceremony for the school's new fitness trail.

transportation, also bring about unique opportunities for those working within rural settings to be creative in approaching SRTS programming.

Historically, SRTS efforts have been designed for the urban setting. While much of our population is now living in or near metropolitan areas, it would be remiss to overlook our rural populations. Children in rural settings face the same general health issues of obesity and inactivity as do their urban counterparts. The lack of access to resources in rural areas may even heighten the intensity of these issues.



(Summary continued)



Northeast Iowa students get ready for a bike ride around school.

The Northeast Iowa SRTS program is paving the way for developing a rural, regional SRTS model to bring the benefits of SRTS to serve the wider population by breaking through this geographical barrier. With the development of such a model, the SRTS message will begin to reach more sectors of our population, ultimately increasing the health of our youth now and for years to come.

## What's on the Safe Routes to School Horizon

While our work in Northeast Iowa has made great advancements since 2008, in order to achieve our goal of a rural, regional SRTS model, efforts must continue forward into the future. One of the main focuses for our work is to expand our SRTS reach. Our past work has helped



New Hampton Community School District students and staff walk during the school's weekly Walking Wednesday event held during advisory times.

to build SRTS support within schools and among school staff. Now, it is time to really spread the message into our communities because it is within our communities where the walking and bicycling to and from school actually take place. We will work to strengthen our connections and relationships with community leaders, organizations and residents to find those key SRTS stakeholders and community champions.

Specifically within our communities, we aim to increase the number of Walking School Buses, Bicycle Trains and Remote Drop-off Locations. A Walking School Bus is a group of students walking to and/or from school with one or more responsible supervisors, such as a parent or volunteer neighbor. A Bicycle Train is a variation of a Walking School Bus; the only difference is the group is bicycling rather than walking. A Remote Drop-off Location is yet another variation: students who live a far distance from the school, typical of Northeast Iowa, can be dropped off at a defined location to join a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train for the remaining trip to school. These can be as simple as one or two families or as extensive as several neighborhoods.



A Decorah Community School District Walking School Bus on its way to school.



*(What's on the Safe Routes to School Horizon continued)*

Currently, Northeast Iowa has nine regularly scheduled Walking School Buses and variations:

- 🚲 Decorah Community School District has five Walking School Buses (three go to and from school and two go to after-school activities)
- 🚲 New Hampton Community School District has two Walking School Buses and a weekly Walking Wednesday event for middle school students
- 🚲 Riceville Community School District has a monthly school-wide Remote Drop-off Location



Students from Riceville Community School District participate in Riceville's monthly Walking Wednesday event.

In the coming years, we plan to increase participation in the current programs while also assisting additional communities with organizing Walking School Buses, Bicycle Trains and Remote Drop-off Locations. Remote Drop-off Locations will especially be key for greater inclusion of students living too far away for walking and bicycling the entire distance to school, such as those living in the country. Since Walking School Buses and their variations are community-specific and community-driven, efforts must come from within a community for long-term sustainability.



Students from North Winneshiek Community School District at their Bike Rodeo.

Also, through partnerships with county conservation, the Department of Natural Resources and local parks and recreation, we will develop messaging campaigns and programs to draw families and individuals out into our existing natural and built environments. Exceptional natural and built environments for active transportation and other forms of physical activity already exist throughout the region. Now, it is time to increase use of these resources. Engaging people to actively use our resources will achieve a brighter, healthier Northeast Iowa.

Another exciting addition to our SRTS work will come this fall when Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission will begin to assist schools and communities throughout the region with creating a written comprehensive SRTS plan. These plans will discuss community-specific ways to make the environment around schools safer for walking and bicycling, which benefits the community as a whole. These plans will help schools and communities prioritize action steps to make the area surrounding the school more conducive to active transportation and living for students, and really all residents, of all ages and abilities.



*(What's on the Safe Routes to School Horizon continued)*

Tying into the upcoming written comprehensive SRTS planning, the lowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit (I-WALK), will also be creating detailed SRTS reports for two communities in the region, which will be determined in the coming months. I-WALK, as mentioned previously in this report, is a partnership between the Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach which focuses on TT, SRTS Parent Surveys and community mapping results to promote SRTs programs and infrastructure improvements within communities across Iowa.

Other plans for SRTS in Northeast Iowa include furthering evaluation efforts, developing rural examples of how to create safer routes to school and continuing work within schools. Evaluation is an integral part of any program to ensure work is aligning with goals and progress is being made. Currently, the TT is our main evaluation source. Though the TT is a useful tool in determining the number of kids walking and bicycling to and from school on a given three-day time period, more ways to collect data do exist. We first aim to collect additional walking and bicycling data using pedestrian and bicyclist counters. Second, we plan to create survey tools specific to capturing pertinent information within rural settings. Another focus will be to create real-life examples for developing, enhancing and/or monitoring a safe environment which encourages active transportation to and from school in the rural setting; current examples typically only encompass urban settings.

We will also continue to assist schools with fostering lifelong health-promoting habits among children through safety education and daily physical activity integration. While our focus is broadening, we realize schools are very much a fundamental, imperative component in establishing safer routes to school in Northeast Iowa. We are very excited for what the SRTS future holds in Northeast Iowa as we strive to create a healthier, happier region.



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