

# Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee

## Meeting held online

### February 19, 2021 Minutes

#### STSC Attendees

- X Richard Staudt (SPS)
- X Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
- X Jennie Meulenberg (SDOT, corridors and Ped transportation planner)
- X Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- X Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- X Charlie Simpson (bicycle advocate)
- X Hunter Maltais (SPS Transportation Manager)
- X Peaches Thomas (safe streets advocate)
- X Richard Best
- X Ashley Whitesides

#### Other Presenters/Public

- X Clara Cantor (Seattle Neighborhood Greenways)
- X Lisa Rivera-Smith (Director of District 2 on School Board)

#### Public Comment

No comment.

#### Last Month's Minutes

Approved.

SPS is facing budget cuts again this year. Richard says he's been through 4 cycles of major budget cuts in 16 years at the district. The last one was when McCleary 'fix' went into effect and cut SPS's levy money. Asked whether he's ever seen expansion in funding he said that about 2 years ago after that budget cut there was a pay increase for staff after a 7 year pay freeze, but this wasn't the result of an increase in funding from OSPI. In Richard's 16 years at SPS his group has been cut from 6 to 3 staff working on risk management.

#### Pre-K through 1 returning to in-person instruction March 1 (Jennie Meulenberg)

Update on return to in-person instruction: board recommendations will come out next week.

**ACTION:** Hunter will provide Jennie with a list of schools that plan to reopen so that SDOT can program flashing beacons near schools.

#### Crosswalk Rule Change Status (Jennie Meulenberg)

The policy is moving forward, particularly the piece of the policy related to schools. There is still a lot of discussion and uncertainty around the other non-school-related components of the policy.

**ACTION:** Jennie will ask Brian to provide the STSC with more information as to why this policy is getting held up.

### **Annual Report**

**ACTION:** Jennie is going to get a slot for the Annual Report to be included in an upcoming City Council meeting. Margaret is going to add a few things, in the meantime, (such as the crosswalk warrant) into the Annual Report.

### **Best Practices for School Site Design update (Mary Ellen)**

Richard Best says that everyone at SPS has had enough time to review and so the STSC can move forward to a final final draft. Margaret presented Best Practices Guide to Iowa conference.

### **Tacoma using as template (Margaret)**

Margaret and Mary Ellen met with Tacoma SRTS coordinator. Tacoma is going to take our School Site Design Guidelines and adapt it for Tacoma.

### **Busing and Walk Boundaries: considerations for potential changes to transportation service standards (Mary Ellen & Director Lisa Rivera-Smith)**

A committee will be starting in April to look at revising the transportation service standards. The committee is going to be a long-term process with full transparency and stakeholders in the community groups to make sure that whatever standards are developed align with district's policies. Service standards review will start in April, make recommendations starting in December. STSC member will be included. Also SDOT and city council if they are interested. Transportation service standards will likely not be updated prior to 21-22 school year.

Lisa does not know how this timeline will affect the decision to cut busing routes. Zachary DeWolf would be the person to contact to learn more about this impact. The final vote is July 7th on the budget for SPS. Lisa will share decision dates leading up to July 7th. On a related note, the Active Transportation Coordinator is set to be hired by June.

If changes are made to the walk boundary before 2021-2022 school year there would be time to revamp walk maps, but the Walk Boundary Subcommittee would need lead time to get it done.

Hunter says that SPS is planning a change this year to an opt-in bus system to make routes more efficient, but it will take a couple of years to dial in on how the changes impact funding. It would be wait and see how many students opt in, and where, and then build the routes and see whether they could be more efficient or not depending on locations of students. SPS is looking at possibly changing bell times at some schools to allow combine buses between schools. They are going to move ahead with opt-in system so that they know who is riding.

Director Rivera-Smith says that she's not sure how potential changes to bus service this year can be reconciled with changes to transportation service standards not being done yet. Transportation work session will be later this month. No decisions are made there, just information presented by SPS in response to director questions.

Budget gets finalized in July. There are March and April dates when decisions are made. Richard Staudt said that if a union employee is impacted then they need to be notified in May, and that it likely why the timeline is set for decision points in April.

Richard Staudt doesn't know whether there is legal issue to cutting bus service in contradiction to the transportation service standards.

SPS owns the First student buses, but First student maintains and insures them.

### **Seattle Ped Advisory Board Joint Meeting (Jennie)**

The Seattle Ped Advisory Board is interested in having a joint meeting with the STSC this summer. Details to come.

### **SPS experiencing SDOT inspectors changing requirements mid-construction (Richard Best)**

Richard Best has meetings set up in March with City to talk about issue with SDOT inspectors changing the rules partway through. SPS has not gone back and quantified data. Could even do for just 2 projects: Magnolia Elementary and Queen Anne. Christina Ghan is one of the folks in the meeting.

**ACTION:** Richard will check on whether they are ok including STSC in meeting.

### **Developing Standard Bike Shelters for SPS (Mary Ellen)**

The University of Washington has created a standard bike shelter. SPS would like to develop the same standard, likely with an off-the-shelf item. Richard Best is in conversation with UW. Richard Best will include the STSC to gather input with the development of the bike shelter design. Integrus has been selected as the consultant for this work.

Richard Staudt would like to be involved with this effort, and suggests that Gretchen DeDecker would be a good person to include if she's willing (she just retired). New self-help person is Colleen Weinstein, Richard will send info to Jennie.

**ACTION:** Richard Best will ask consultant to get input on standard bike shelter design from STSC.

### **Statewide Safe Routes to School Coalition (Charlie)**

Charlie's co-worker Kaylin Finley leads a bunch of SRTS work at Alta planning and design. She was inspired by state-wide SRTS coalitions that Oregon and other states have. Carrie Wilson and Kaylin Finley started reaching out to people across the state to build coalition. Currently they are working on building a website to create state-wide advocacy coalition. As of now only public information can be sometimes found through Feet First newsletter.

**ACTION:** Charlie will check in with this effort as it gets rolling and look for opportunities for STSC to connect with state-wide advocates.

### **Future Topics**

- Walk Boundary Subcommittee
- Seattle's climate change planning for transportation (when in-person meetings resume)
- Mode choice survey schedule (When in-person school is starting)

- Annual calendar lookahead
- Bus Stop Paddle Funds 2019-2020
- Crossing Guard Application Process
- crossing guard application process; waiving background check fee, making link to application easier to find, making paper versions available.

**Next Meeting date: March 19th**