

# Build Your Own School District Policy to Advance Safe Routes to School



Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
March 20th, 2014





## About the National Partnership

We are a nonprofit organization that improves the quality of life for kids and communities by promoting active, healthy lifestyles and safe infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking.

We advance policy change; catalyze support for safe, active, and healthy communities with a network of more than 650 partner organizations; and we share our deep expertise at national, state, and local levels with those who are helping propel our mission forward.

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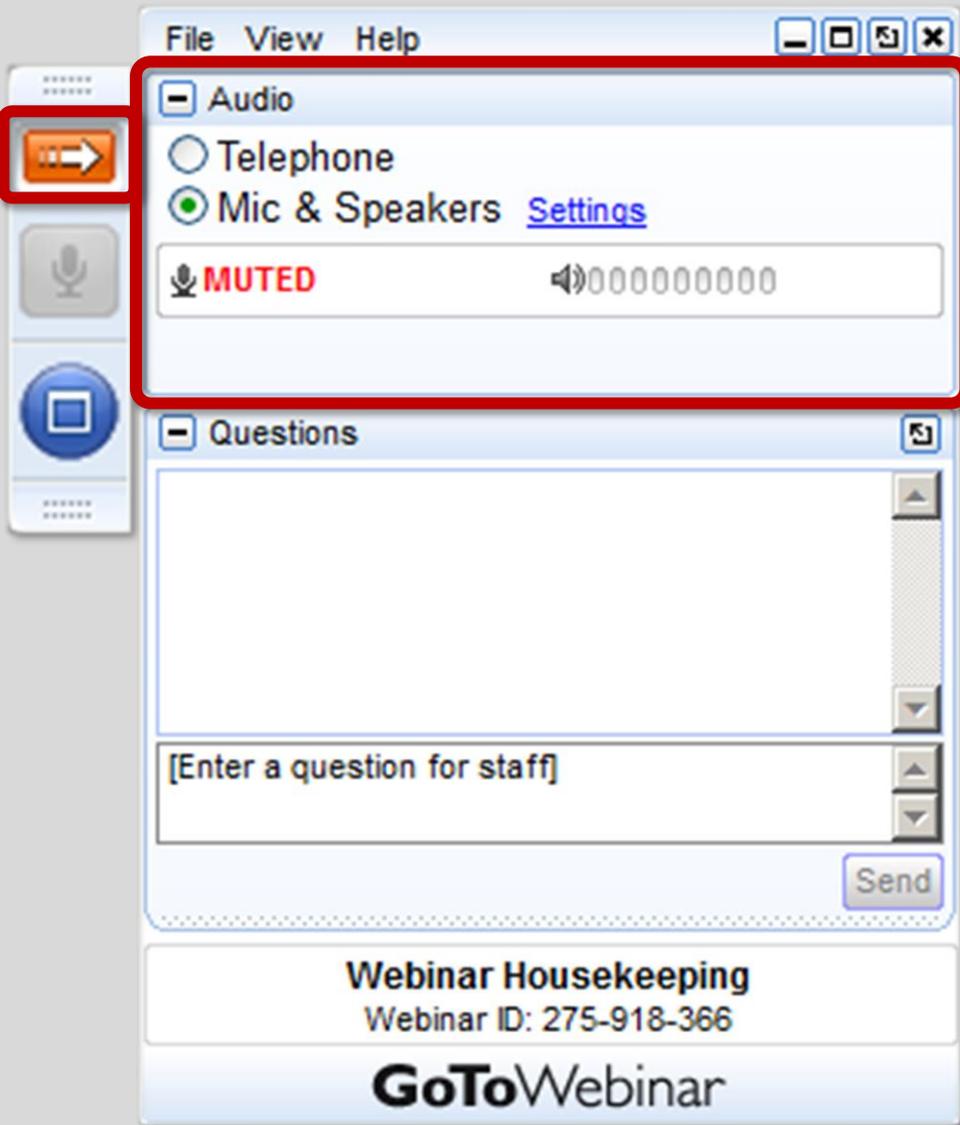
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- Choose "Telephone" and dial-in using numbers on screen
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The screenshot displays a software window with a menu bar containing 'File', 'View', and 'Help'. On the left side, there is a vertical toolbar with icons for audio, microphone, and video. The main content area is divided into two panels. The top panel, titled 'Audio', includes radio buttons for 'Telephone' and 'Mic & Speakers' (which is selected), a 'MUTED' indicator with a microphone icon, and a volume slider. The bottom panel, titled 'Questions', is highlighted with a red border and contains a large text input area with a placeholder '[Enter a question for staff]' and a 'Send' button. At the bottom of the window, the text 'Webinar Housekeeping' and 'Webinar ID: 275-918-366' is displayed above the 'GoToWebinar' logo.

## QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Submit your text questions and comments using the Questions Panel



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## National Partnership Webinars

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Thursday, February 7, 2013 @ 2pm Eastern - [Register here](#)

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**Sara Zimmerman, technical assistance director**  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership



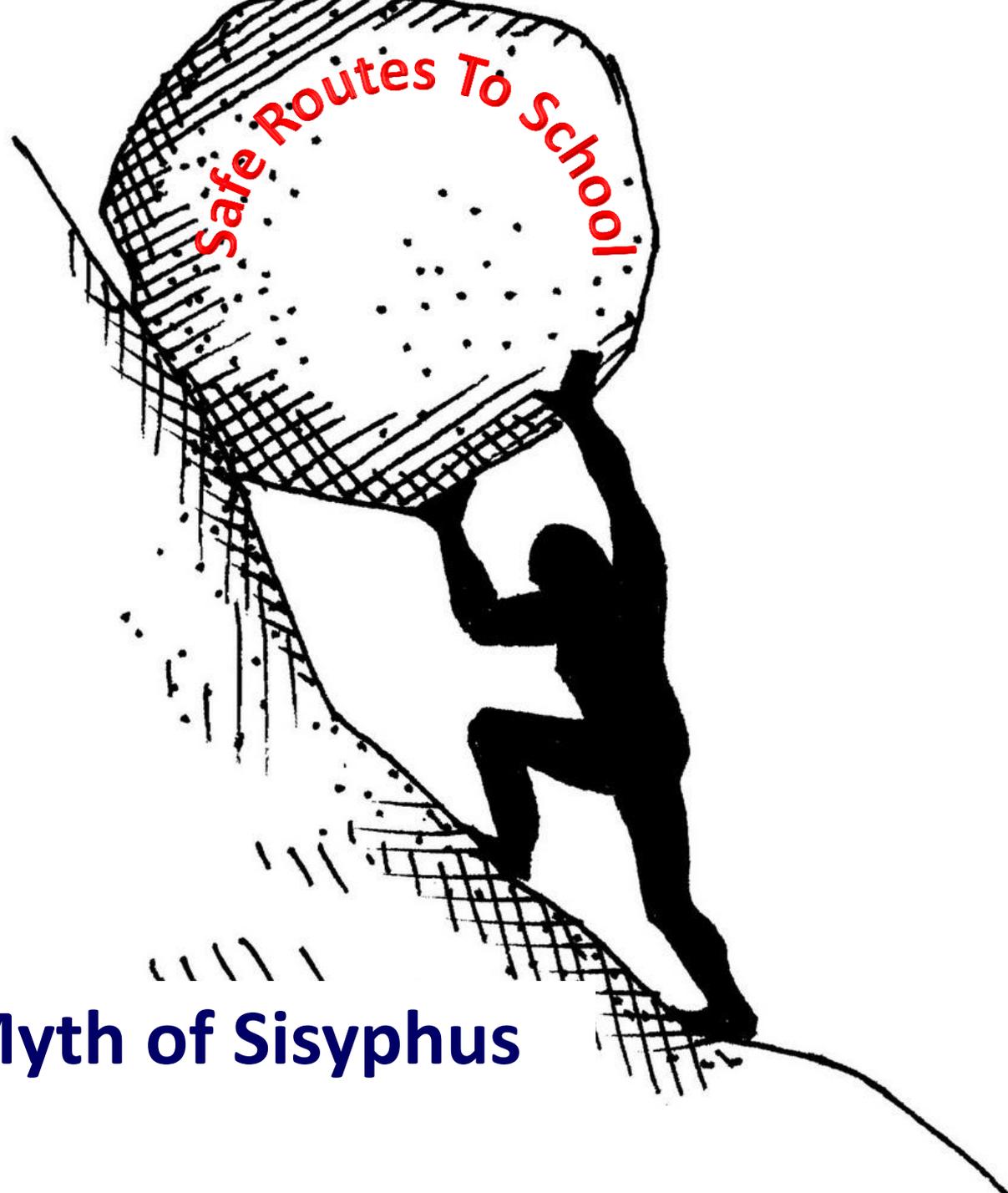
**Ben Winig, senior staff attorney and program director**  
Changelab Solutions



**Marie Pickney, health education specialist**  
California Department of Public Health



**Dave Cowan, program manager**  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership



# The Greek Myth of Sisyphus

(sis-e-fuss)



# Safe Routes to School Local Policy Guide



June 2011

# Safe Routes to School District Policy Workbook



# Policy Workbook Background

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- Technical Assistance
  - Communities
  - School Boards and Advocates
  - Model Policies
  - Diversity of Safe Routes to School
  - Crafting policies for every district to meet individualized needs and commitment
  - Needed a solution!!





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## Safe Routes to School District Policy Workbook

Welcome to the interactive [Safe Routes to School](#) Policy Workbook! It is designed to help school board members, administrators, families of students, and community members create and implement policies that support active transportation [1] and Safe Routes to School programs. The workbook will walk you through a series of policy options to help you build your own customized Safe Routes to School policy, which you can download and use in your community.

### Introduction

Safe Routes to School is a burgeoning movement that encourages students to walk, ride bicycles, or use other forms of active transportation to and from school. Active transportation improves health, increase the livability of a community, and helps to protect the environment. Making it easy for students to walk or bicycle to school requires action from many community stakeholders, including schools, students and their families, municipalities, neighborhood businesses, planners, transportation engineers, and community groups. This Safe Routes to School Policy Workbook helps schools make lasting change in their communities.

>> [Learn more about the role of district policies in supporting Safe Routes to School](#)

>> [Build your Safe Routes to School Policy Now!](#)

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## ct Policy Workbook

Workbook! It is designed to help school  
community members create and implement  
Routes to School programs. The workbook will  
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community.

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## Policy Workbook

Policy Workbook! It is designed to help school and community members create and implement Safe Routes to School programs. The workbook will help you build your own customized Safe Routes to School Policy Workbook.

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## Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains

**Explanation:** By encouraging groups of students to walk or bicycle to school together, Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains effectively address a variety of parental concerns about safety. These programs can be part of an organized school-wide effort, with trained safety leaders and multiple groups walking or bicycling from different neighborhoods to the school. Or informal groups of children can meet up to walk, skateboard, scooter, or ride together. Younger students can be accompanied by an adult volunteer or older student. Walking School Buses and Bike Trains are effective tools for reducing traffic safety risk and improving personal safety.<sup>[44]</sup> They reduce the risk of bullying and other personal harm by bringing more eyes and ears to the street, a known crime reduction technique. They also build social cohesion and can even reduce tardiness.

**Click an option box below that contains the element to include in your policy. In some cases, there will be only one option.**

**Option 1:** District supports the creation of Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train programs at each school.

Rating: ★★☆☆ ⓘ

**Option 2:** District encourages individual schools to promote and organize Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train programs. If requested by an individual school, District shall work with such school to organize a Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train program.

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**Star Ratings**

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Rating: ★★☆☆ 

**Option 3:** District requires that individual schools establish and promote regular Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train programs. Such programs shall occur on a regular basis, at least [one per week].

Rating: ★★★☆ 

Do not include this element in my policy.

**Legal Notes!** 

**Legal Note on Liability and Walking School Buses:** School districts are often concerned about their potential exposure to liability if a child were to be injured while participating in a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train program. Although liability rules vary from state to state, districts are generally entirely immune from liability for decisions to simply sponsor or endorse a program such as a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train program.<sup>[45]</sup> Sponsoring a program can involve allowing it to take place, informing families about it, or providing funding or other support.

In some states, districts are also protected from liability for running or implementing programs like a Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train program.<sup>[46]</sup> In other states they are not.<sup>[47]</sup> This means that running a program may involve more risk of liability. However, districts can still implement Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains, and they can limit their liability risk by taking commonsense steps. For example, they should develop safety rules for the programs, anticipate possible hazards to participants, and, where possible, implement reasonable precautions to avoid such hazards.

**Legal Note on Criminal Background Checks:** As school districts increasingly require volunteers to undergo criminal background checks, adults supervising Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train programs may be subject to these same rules.

State laws regarding criminal background checks of school volunteers vary greatly in breadth and scope. Background checks are required in some states<sup>[48]</sup> and are optional in others;<sup>[49]</sup> in those

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School district volunteer policies will spell out the exact mechanisms of any criminal background check requirement (presumably in compliance in state law where applicable). Individual districts may have discretion as to whether to treat adult participants as school volunteers and subject them to any district policy requiring criminal background checks.

**Educational  
resources related  
to policy**

**Resources:**

[Start a Walking School Bus: The Basics](#)

[The Walking School Bus: A Primer and First Steps](#)

[Organizing Successful Bike Trains](#)

[Safe Routes to School: Minimizing Your Liability Risk](#)

[Volunteers and Liability: The Federal Volunteer Protection Act](#)

["Impact of a Pilot Walking School Bus Intervention on Children's Pedestrian Safety Behaviors: A Pilot Study" \(2012\)](#)

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## Your policy has some great language, and will put your district ahead of the game.

Your final policy is below. If you'd like to make it even more effective, you may want to consider adding one or more of the following provisions:

- [Support for Active Transportation](#)
- [Support for Safe Routes to School](#)
- [Limiting Restrictions on Active Transportation](#)
- [Student Arrival and Dismissal](#)
- [School Travel Plan: Moving Beyond the Bus](#)
- [School Siting](#)

If you'd like to revise your policy, you may click any section in the menu on the left and adjust your choices. Then click "Finish" at the bottom of the list to return here and see your updated score.

When you're satisfied with your choices you may download your entire policy in RTF format. This format will enable you to modify and further personalize your policy in Microsoft Word, Apple iWork, or any other word processor.

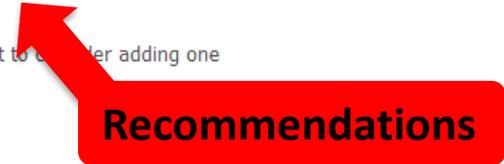
Now that you have your tailored Safe Routes to School policy, you'll want to double check a few things.

First, does it accurately reflect the distribution of authority between the state, school board, and local government in your state? Your school attorney or other district personnel should be able to easily assess this. Modify the language in the policy if need be.

Second, does the policy appear in the format that is used by your district? If you don't want to pass it as a board policy, tailor it to the format of a resolution or set of administrative regulations.

Please enter your district zipcode: \*

Which of these best describes your role in school policy? \*



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- Instructions
- Getting Started
- The Policies
  - Beginner
  - Intermediate
  - Advanced
- [Finish Up Your Policy](#)
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If you'd like to stay informed with news and updates, please enter your email address here:

Receive our news and updates?  Yes

Can we follow up with you in the future?  Yes



[Policy Only](#) / [Policy with explanation and footnotes](#)

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# Thank You!

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Dave Cowan

Program Manager

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Safe Routes to School National Partnership

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-----| **Sara Zimmerman, technical assistance director**  
| Safe Routes to School National Partnership



-----| **Ben Winig, senior staff attorney and program**  
| **director**  
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-----| **Marie Pickney, health education specialist**  
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# Survey

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] Liability 201: Addressing Liability Concerns Related to Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, Remote Drop Off and More!! Survey - Google Chrome

SurveyMonkey, Inc [US] https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW\_MODE=DO\_NOT\_USE\_THIS\_LINK\_FOR\_COLLECTION&sm=jE9Z1JDppa5l3vX617isBUSxmzIc%2b44GmdBe9Bi7pY%3d

Exit this survey



## Liability 201: Addressing Liability Concerns Related to Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, Remote Drop Off and More!!

### 1. Liability 201



Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey.  
If you wish to respond anonymously, please skip to the next section.

#### 1. Optional: please tell us who you are:

First Name	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>
Contact Info (your choice: email or phone)	<input type="text"/>

Next

**THANK YOU!**



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