



Project Goal:

1. To enhance Active School Travel within Timiskaming.

Partnership Purpose:

To promote coordinated partnership and action among stakeholders related to active school travel.

Active School Travel Steering Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: February 13, 2020
Time: 1:30pm- 3pm

Location: THU NL & KL Boardrooms
Format: Skype & teleconference

Teleconference info:

Dial-in Number: 1-866-269-6685
 Conference Code: 6401794032#

Participants: Mark Wilson GEMS, Doug Walsh- City of TS, Ashley Bilodeau- TKL, Linda Geno- CSDGR Transportation, Tricia Stefanic Weltz- NCDSB, Ryan Hartling- North East Tri Board, Mark Wilson-GEMS, Todd Fullerton- MTO Julie Rivard- CSDGR Transportation, Jo-Anne Plaunt- DSBONE, Debra Smith- North East Tri Board, Amanda Mongeon-THU, Crystal Gorman-THU (Minutes), Erika Aelterman- THU (chair)

Regrets: Adam Gauthier – KL OPP, Claire Mackey – CSCDGR, Simon Fecteau - CSPNE

Purpose of Meeting: To discuss progress of project to date, discuss next steps and begin planning for project sustainability.

Pre-Meeting Work: Please review Terms of Reference, and Walkabout summaries from Sacred Heart School, Central Public School, École catholique Assomption Earltion, and École catholique St-Michel (double-click icons)



Terms-of-Reference
_AST Steering Comm



CentralPublic_Walk
about_Report.docx



St-Michel_Walkabo
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Assomption_Walka
bout_Report.docx



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Agenda Items

Objectives:

Welcome & Adoption of
Agenda

Business arise from previous
minutes

New Business

Other?

Date of Next Meetings

Discuss and adopt Terms of Reference

Involved school update

Review & discuss results of assessments completed at four of five schools

Encouragement events coming up

Review potential action items arising from school walkabout reports

Action Planning

Discuss the development of a School Board Active & Sustainable School Transportation Charter

Schedule next meeting dates for April and June

Thank you for your time!

Purpose

The Active School Travel Steering Committee (the Committee) shall work with STP Facilitator(s) to develop and implement School Travel Plans at schools in the District of Timiskaming in an effort to: (1) increase the number of children using active modes of transportation to and from school; (2) decrease traffic congestion at schools; and (3) increase the proportion of 'bus zone' students who regularly ride the school bus.

Structure

1. The Committee shall consist of at least one representative from each of the following critically important groups:
 - all associated school boards;
 - student transportation services;
 - traffic engineering;
 - planning (transportation and land use);
 - public health; and
 - police/by-law services.

Additional interested parties that may want to become members of the committee:

- elected officials, e.g., municipal councillors, mayor, school board trustees; and local delivery partners, e.g., local not-for-profit organizations, parks & recreation services, crossing guard providers.

Depending on the subjects being discussed at each meeting, additional representatives (typically members of School STP Committees) will be invited to attend; however, these individuals will attend as guests, not members. Meetings may also be opened up, as appropriate, to other guests such as parents, community residents or business owners who have an interest but do not want to be permanent members.

2. Each meeting will be organized and chaired by an AST Facilitator.
3. Minutes will be taken by a designated minute-taker and distributed promptly after each meeting.
4. The Committee shall meet on a regular basis, typically 3-4 times per year. The members shall receive reasonable notice of meetings.
5. The Committee shall attempt to make decisions based on 100% consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, each representative will be entitled to one vote and decisions will be based on how the majority of members vote.

6. Current project funding is available until June 2020. Sustainability of the project will be discussed throughout the project duration. Terms of reference and partner commitment will be reviewed as project end nears.

Duties of the committee

1. The Committee shall be a collaborative regional/municipal-level steering committee and will support the School STP Committees as they develop strategies, programs and activities to promote active and sustainable modes of transportation to and from schools.
2. The Committee shall assist in all six phases of the School Travel Planning process (i.e., set-up, assess conditions, develop action plan, implement action plan, reassess conditions and keep it going) by providing expert advice and guidance, suggesting funding sources for needed infrastructure and other activities, and recommending policy changes in support of active school transportation.
3. Members shall send a representative if they are not able to attend a meeting.

Main Tasks	Who's Responsible
Participate in all AST Steering Committee meetings as well as select School STP Committee meetings.	All committee members
Recommend schools to participate in the STP program.	All committee members
Participate in relevant aspects of data collection. In particular, the Walkabout.	All committee members
Provide relevant data, e.g., traffic volume and speed in the school zone, crash and injury statistics, reports of suspicious strangers in neighbourhood, crime statistics, areas of concern, location of crossing guards, major arterial road statistics.	Municipal/regional staff, e.g., traffic engineers, transportation and land use planners and/or police/by-law services
Provide information on relevant municipal/regional and provincial/territorial policies for consideration in Action Plans.	Municipal/regional staff, e.g., transportation engineers, transportation and land use planners
Assist in developing Action Plan.	Each stakeholder to provide advice on areas relevant to their expertise
Help implement action items.	Each stakeholder responsible for implementing actions that fall within their role



AST Steering Committee Terms of Reference

<p>Communicate Action Plan items to relevant decision makers to ensure the items are included in plans and budgets. Keep decision makers informed about implementation progress and STP successes.</p>	<p>Each stakeholder responsible for areas relevant to their expertise</p>
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Background

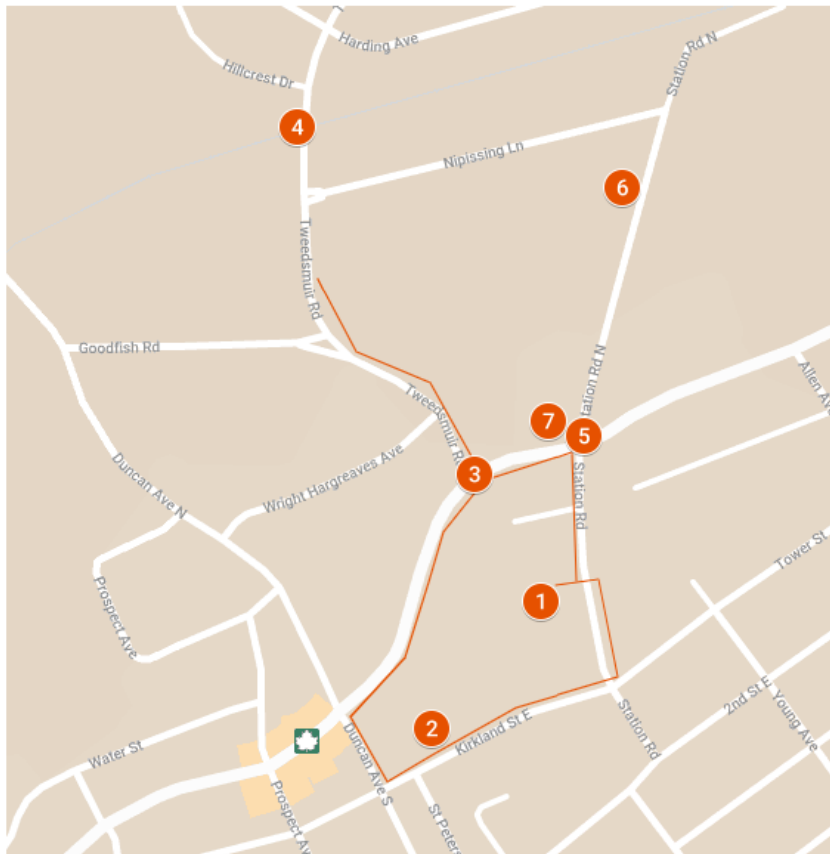
Date: Friday January 31, 2020, 12:00-2:00

Weather: high of -7C, low of -17C

To start off the school travel planning process, stakeholders at Central Public School participated in a walkabout to identify challenges and opportunities for active school travel. While walking, the key issues noted by stakeholders were vehicle congestion in the school parking lot during pick-up and drop-off, the unmaintained desire line connecting Station Road to the school yard entrance, and student walkers crossing perceived hazard lines, among others.

After walking around the neighbourhood, participants discussed their observations, priorities in the school community, and existing programs, initiatives, and efforts that could help address these challenges. The walkabout will be used to guide the development of an action plan to promote active school travel at Central Public School.

The Walk



Checkpoints

1. School parking lot
2. Library – after school program
3. Tweedsmuir Rd/Government Rd
4. Train tracks
5. Station Rd/Government Rd
6. Timiskaming Health Unit – potential walk a block location
7. Dollar Store – potential walk a block location

Observations

1. School parking lot

- Sidewalk leading from Station Road to schoolyard is not currently maintained in the winter months. Snow buildup is approximately 2 feet high. As noted in the traffic observation, this is the route most pedestrians use to access the school and should be the preferred entrance point to minimize potential pedestrian/vehicle interaction. On warmer days, the snow build-up breaks easily on the edges into the line of traffic within the loop (see Figure 1).
- There is currently no bike rack on school property. Students lock bikes and scooters on the fence lining the sidewalk to schoolyard (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Sidewalk to school yard

- Parking lot and loop area can be chaotic during pick up and drop off times, and there seems to be driver uncertainty on proper drop-off “Kiss n Ride” procedure. Safety patroller and traffic observation participants have witnessed near misses, and potential for vehicle/pedestrian interactions (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Parking lot during pick-up period

- Note that Kiss and Rides increase convenience for families to drive students to school, which may lead to an increase in students catching a ride for the school journey, instead of using active transport.
- “Parking at back/no movement during pick up and drop off” sign is confusing and contradicts where the school actually wants to direct traffic (Figure 2). This is an informational sign owned by the school board. It is located to the left of the parking loop entrance. The sign directs parents and school visitors to park at the back, which is designated for staff and buses only (Figure 3- next page). It was noted at the walkabout that if vehicles followed the signs direction, it would cause chaos in the bussing area. No movement sign suggests that parents are prohibited from entering the front parking lot/loop during the specified times. The signs direction is not heeded by drivers.

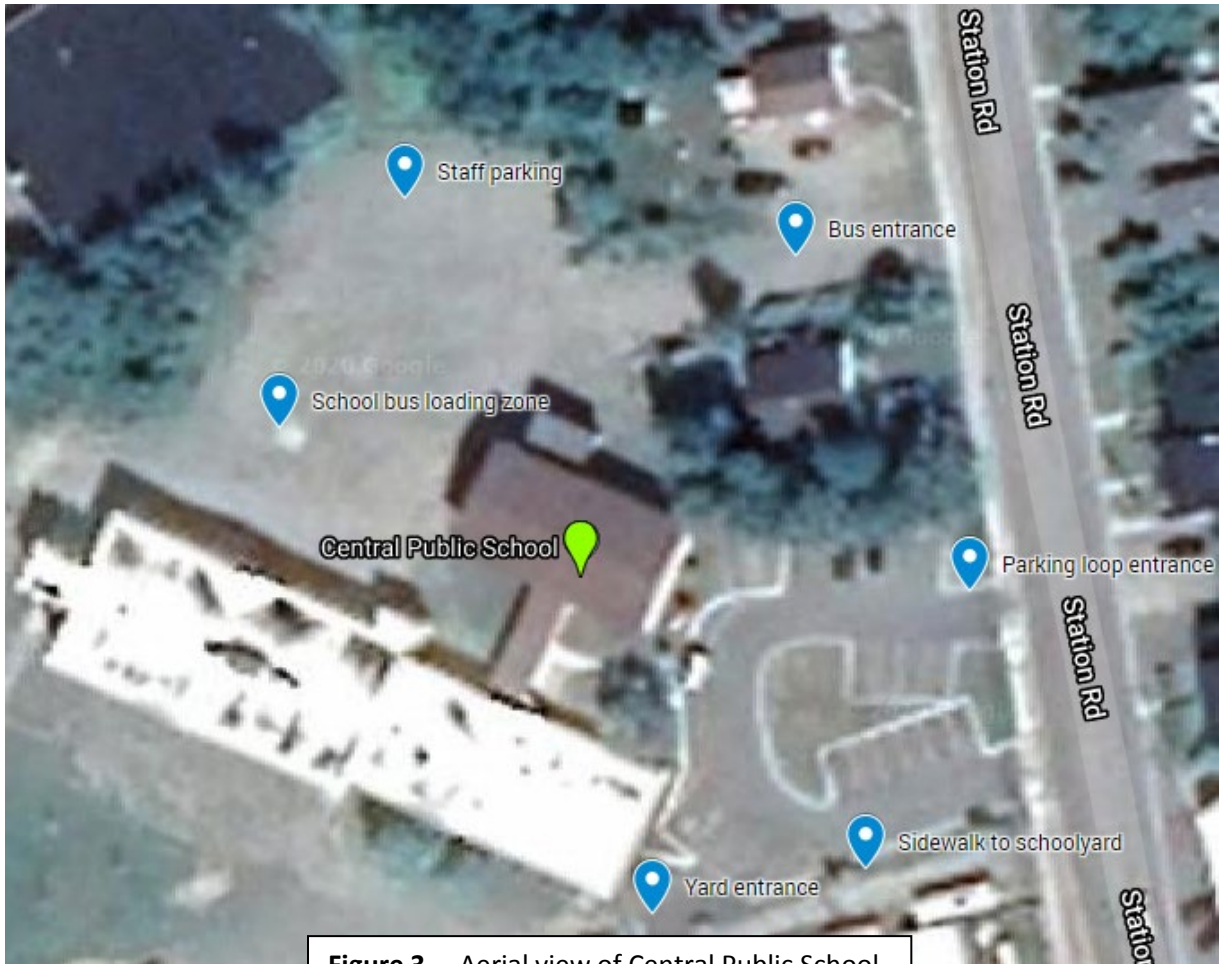


Figure 3. Aerial view of Central Public School

2. Library after-school program

- 30-50 students from the community, many from Central Public School, attend the free after-school program at the library.
- The route to the library along Kirkland Street is very well maintained and easily accessible to students.

3. Intersections at Government Rd/Station Rd and Government Rd/Tweedsmuir Rd

- These intersections were identified on the Family Survey as areas of concern, in particular, left turning vehicles not looking for pedestrians.
 - Discussed possible solution of installing “school zone” signage (\$800/sign). Lights and other sign features would be an additional cost.
- Although the full-length of Government Road is deemed a hazard by Northeast Tri-Board Student Transportation, it is known that at least five students choose to walk to school and cross Government Road at the controlled intersections at Tweedsmuir Road and at Station Road.
 - Discussed the possibility of considering each intersection along this route to determine if it is, in fact, a danger for students to cross.
- The length of the walk interval does not provide pedestrians adequate time to perceive the WALK sign indication and cross the intersection safely (the walk signal began flashing before the group was halfway across the intersection). As noted by public works staff, these times are set by the MTO.

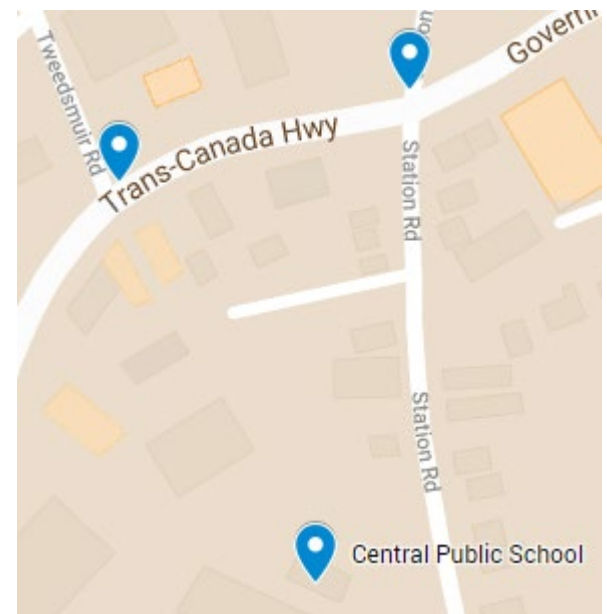


Figure 4 Tweedsmuir and Station Road intersections with Government Road (Trans-Canada Hwy)

4. Railway tracks intersecting Tweedsmuir Rd

- The railway tracks have been deemed a hazard by Northeast Tri-Board Student Transportation.
- Federal Public students living on the south side of the tracks are automatically bussed due to the fact that walkers would have to cross the tracks at the designated road and pedestrian crossing.
- According to Ontario Northland Railway, the train runs through Kirkland Lake to Rouyn Norada between 1-2pm and returns between 9-10pm, so there should be no interaction with regards to kids walking to and from school. However, ONR staff can be doing maintenance activities at any point during the day, which could possibly be at bell times.



Figure 5 Train track intersection at Tweedsmuir Road

5. Potential Walk a Block locations

- Walkabout team discussed a number of potential Walk a Block locations including the Timiskaming Health Unit, Buck or Two parking lot, Tower Street, Station Road by Home Hardware, and Kirkland Street.
- A Walk a Block program can be an intermediate step for families who aren't ready to stop driving to school by pushing drop-off away from the school site, introducing AT for the last part of the journey to school. Helps to reduce traffic chaos in the school zone.
- Buck or Two and the Timiskaming Health Unit were ruled out due to liability concerns and their location on the opposite side of Government Road from the school. It was noted that some parents drop off students some distance away from the school to avoid the congestion in the school parking lot. Common informal drop off locations include:
 - On Kirkland Street by the library
 - On first block off of Station Road at Tower Street
 - On side of road along Station Road by Home Hardware

6. Crossing at Second Street

- The municipality is exploring options to address the well-documented challenges that pedestrians face when attempting to cross Second Street/Station Road and Second Street/Churchill Drive.
- Municipality has had difficulty recruiting for vacant crossing guard positions. One suggestion by a participant was to consider replacing crossing guard locations with lighted pedestrian crossings (PXO).

Other considerations

- 30 students are deemed walkers by the North-East Tri Board Student Transportation.
- 70 students from Central Public are automatically bussed due to hazard
 - Hazards for this school include having to cross Government Road, or residing in remote area of Harvey Kirkland.
- Walkabout route is used by students from Central Public School, Sacred Heart School, École catholique Assomption, among other schools.

Potential Action Items

These potential action items were identified during the walkabout or in the discussion following. As a school travel planning committee, we will work to identify additional approaches, and to discuss the merit, timing and responsibility (i.e. who would be best to address) of each.

- 1) **Clear sidewalk from Station Road to schoolyard fence.** Maria to connect with school board to inquire about adding this stretch of sidewalk to the school’s winter maintenance contract.
- 2) **Discuss working with CHASA to fund the purchase and installation of a bike rack.** Identify ideal location for new rack.
- 3) **Re-structure the parking lot loop to function as a “Kiss n Ride”.** Goal is to improve safety for students and families, and reduce potential for vehicle pedestrian interaction. Widely advertise new plan and inform parents of how the “Kiss n Ride” is intended to work. Immediately following the Walkabout meeting, the Acting Principal began working on a plan for improving the flow of traffic in the parking lot loop, creating a new routine for parents to follow (Figure 6).



Figure 6 Pick-up/drop-off draft plan

- 4) **Remove or replace “Parking at back/no movement” sign with more relevant message.** See Figure 2. THU may be able to provide a Share the Road sign, if replacing is an option.
- 5) **Increase pedestrian signal timings at Tweedsmuir/Government and Station/Government intersections** to reflect actual time needed to cross safely from a child’s perspective. This would benefit other community members as well.
- 6) **Pilot Walk a Block program on Winter Walk Day.** Project staff to collaborate with school and school board to plan and implement the program.
Possible options:
 - a. Consider encouraging families who typically drive right up to the school to park on Kirkland Street and walk their child(ren) to the school or allow the student(s) to walk independently if comfortable.
 - b. Consider training older students to help implement Walk a Block, in which they stand on sidewalk along Kirkland Street to welcome and lead groups of younger students to the school.
- 7) **Consider replacing crossing guard locations with lighted pedestrian crossings (PXO).** Given difficulties in recruiting for vacant crossing guard positions, Rick to bring this suggestion to town council.
- 8) **Consider the merit of placing “School Zone” signs around the intersections of Station Road/Government Road, and Tweedsmuir Road/Government Road.**



Thank you to all of our participants!



Maria Sheculski (Acting Principal)

Debra Smith (Transportation Officer, North East Tri-Board Student Transportation)

Adam Gauthier (Community Safety Officer, OPP)

Michel Riberdy (Manager of Public Works, TKL)

Steve Ranta (Roads Foreman, TKL)

Rick Owen (Councillor, TKL)

Crystal Gorman (Public Health Promoter, THU)

Erika Aelterman (STP Coordinator, THU)

Background

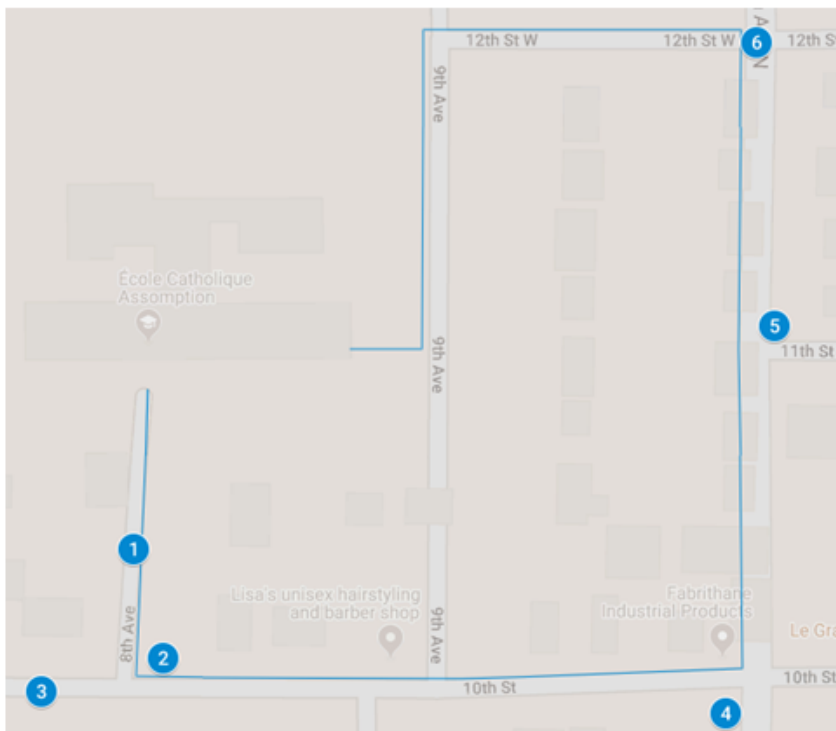
Date: Thursday January 30, 2020, 1:30-3:30

Weather: -13C

To start off the school travel planning process, stakeholders at École catholique Assomption Earlington participated in a walkabout to identify challenges and opportunities for active school travel. While walking, some of the key issues noted by stakeholders were: the demonstrated need for a designated crossing at the intersection of 10th Street and 10th Avenue, the potential for student and vehicle interaction on 8th Avenue during pick up and drop off, and the need for snow clearance on the 10th Avenue sidewalk.

After walking around the neighbourhood, participants discussed their observations, priorities in the school community, and existing programs, initiatives, and efforts that could help address these challenges. The walkabout will be used to guide the development of an action plan to promote active school travel at École catholique Assomption.

The Walk



Points d'intérêt

1. 8e ave
2. Zone de passage des étudiants
3. 10e rue - Voitures accelerant parceque les chemins de campagne approchment
4. 10e rue/10e ave (Hwy 571)
5. 10e ave – Il y a beaucoup traffic et les voitures conduires tres vite.
6. 10e Ave/12e rue - Pas de trottoirs en hiver.

Observations

1. 8th Avenue

- 8th Avenue (municipally maintained) serves as the schoolyard entry point for student walkers. This area also serves as an informal student drop-off/pick-up zone for parent drivers.
- Student walkers and those who are driven to school wait on 8th Avenue for the bell to ring.
- School policy follows that students are not permitted to enter the schoolyard until the school day begins at 8:30am.
- Sometimes there is an aide who supervises the students as they wait for the morning bell.
 - At the traffic observation conducted in December 2019, it was observed that students arrive as early as 8:05am.
 - Students play on 8th Avenue and on 10th Street during the “morning rush”.
- During the pick-up and drop off period, parents either pull over on 10th Street or turn onto 8th Street. There is a high potential for vehicle/pedestrian interaction at both locations as students play in the street and slide down snowbanks while waiting for the morning bell to ring.



Figure 1 8th Avenue

2. 10th Street/8th Avenue crossing

- The sidewalk is located on the south side of 10th Street. Student walkers cross 10th street over to 8th Avenue on the journey to and from the school.
- There is no designated crosswalk at this pedestrian desire line.



Figure 2 Student desire line toward 8th Avenue

3. Speeding on 10th Street West, and 10th Avenue

- Speeding on 10th Street was identified as an issue on the Family Survey. One comment stated that vehicles start to speed up as they drive West on 10th Street, approaching the country roads.
- 10th Avenue is a secondary highway (571), maintained by the MTO. The Family Survey revealed that parents are concerned with traffic volume and vehicles speeding on 10th Avenue. Transport trucks often use this route through town.
- When Highway 11 is closed, vehicle traffic is often re-routed through Earlton via Highway 571, introducing additional traffic to the small community.

4. Intersection of 10th Street/10th Avenue (Hwy 571)

- This intersection was identified on the Family Survey as a major area of concern. There is no crosswalk.
- Most student walkers from Assomption cross at this intersection. On the Family Survey, parents noted that they would feel more comfortable allowing their child(ren) to travel to school independently if there was a crosswalk and crossing guard at this intersection.



Figure 3 View of intersection from 10th St E

5. Sidewalk on 10th Avenue (Highway 571)

- There is a sidewalk on the West side of 10th Avenue. This sidewalk is not maintained through the winter. Students walk on the side of the road.
- Sightline visibility issues caused by snow banks and snow depots.
 - Clearing the sidewalk may be the responsibility of the MTO.
- As noted by CSCDGR Transportation, students are discouraged from entering the schoolyard at gate on 9th Avenue. This area is designated as a school bus loading zone. Students are directed to make their way to 10th Street, which leads to the schoolyard entrance on 8th Avenue.

Additional Information

- Updated January 2020 - Assomption has an enrollment of 187 students.
 - Walkers: 44
 - Number of bussed students: 123
 - Confirmed driven: 5
 - 15 students live in town and qualify for bussing (JK/SK students, special education, etc).
- The school site is set to be re-organized in the next couple of years. The School Board will be re-structuring the school site to accommodate a Kiss n Ride system to be used by both school buses and parent drivers.
 - Note that Kiss and Rides increase convenience for families to drive students to school, which may lead to an increase in students catching a ride for the school journey, instead of using active transport.

Potential Action Items

These potential action items were identified during the walkabout or in the discussion following. As a school travel planning committee, we will work to identify additional approaches, and to discuss the merit, timing and responsibility (i.e. who would be best to address) of each.

- 1. Provide comments on the school site redesign plan.** Explore how the school site can be re-designed to encouraging active and sustainable school travel (walking, cycling, school bus), and discouraging private vehicle use.
- 2. Recommend changing school policy to allow for wider arrival windows.** Providing supervision in school yards for 20-30 minutes prior to school opening could potentially disperse traffic over a longer time, reducing the chaos and dangers currently faced on 8th Avenue and 10th Street where children congregate and play before the bell rings, and where parents currently drop off their child(ren). Allowing students into the schoolyard before the morning bell would reduce the potential for vehicle/pedestrian interaction during the morning drop off period. The extra time in the school yard could provide students with a valuable opportunity for exercise before class that can lead to greater focus and higher performance.
- 3. Create schoolyard entrance off of 9th Avenue where it meets 12th Street West.** This would create a more direct route to school for students living in the northeast section of Earlington. Constructing a second schoolyard entrance for walkers would become feasible if students were permitted to be on school property before the start of the school day at 8:30am.

4. **Pilot a “School Streets” program on 8th Avenue.** A “School Street” program involves closing or blocking off the street(s) outside schools to motor vehicle traffic at school opening and closing times – with the aim of improving road safety and accessibility for those walking and cycling. This would encourage active to school for children, parents, and staff; provide a safe space for students to play as they wait for the school day to begin, and improve air quality at the school gate.
5. **Work with Assomption students to design and paint a school crosswalk across 10th Street to 8th Avenue.** School and student ownership over the crosswalk could result in students being more likely to use the designated crosswalk.
6. **Work with the municipality and the MTO to determine the most appropriate solution for improving pedestrian safety at the desire line crossings at the intersection of 10th Street and 10th Avenue (Hwy 571).** Options discussed at the Walkabout include:
 - a. Paint crosswalks to improve safety for students
 - b. Install a pedestrian crossover (PXO) on 10th Avenue
 - c. Hire an adult crossing guard
 - d. Train student Foot Patrollers. Patrollers monitor school crossings by ensuring students cross roads near their school in a safe and responsible manner. Unlike Adult Crossing Guards, Patrollers do not stop or direct traffic. (See CAA Foot Patroller program)
7. **Maintain the sidewalk on the West side of 10th Avenue (Hwy 571).** Ask MTO why this stretch of sidewalk is not maintained through the winter months. Find out if maintaining this sidewalk is municipal or MTO responsibility.
8. **Employ traffic calming measures to address speeding on 10th Street as well as 10th Avenue.** Options discussed include:
 - a. Install School Zone signs
 - b. Student engagement activity – place students’ artwork underneath speed limit and school zone signs. Artwork could have messages reminding drivers to share the road and abide by the speed limit (i.e. “Thanks for slowing down”)
 - c. Obtain speed display signs
9. **Pilot a Walking School Bus program.** A Walking School Bus is an organized system of walking with school children from home to school and back. Students in the same geographic area walk to school together under the supervision of an adult volunteer. Like a regular school bus, the Walking School Bus follows a planned and safe route with scheduled stops.

Thank you to all our participants! Merci!



Nathalie Grenier-Ducharme (Principal)

Mayor Jean Marc Boileau (Mayor of Armstrong)

Julie Rivard (Transportation Officer, CSCDGR)

Annie Rivard (Parent council)

Michèle Rivard (Armstrong Councillor, Parent council)

Krystal Oviatt (Meeting facilitator, THU)

Erika Aelterman (STP Coordinator, THU)



Background

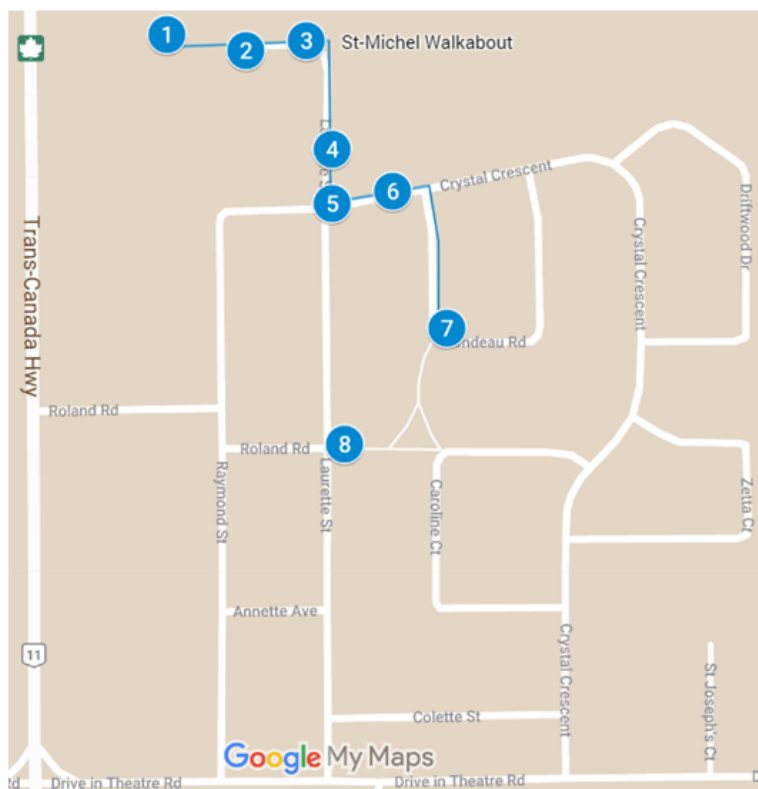
Date: Monday January 20, 2020, 1:00-2:30pm

Weather: -11C

As the final step of the data collection phase of the school travel planning process, stakeholders at École catholique St-Michel participated in a walkabout to identify challenges and opportunities for active school travel. While walking, some of the key issues identified by stakeholders are the congestion in the school parking lot during pick up and drop off, the unmaintained path leading to the back entrance of the school, and the potential hazard posed by the gully.

After walking around the neighbourhood, participants discussed their observations, priorities in the school community, and existing programs, initiatives, and efforts that could help address these challenges. The walkabout will be used to guide the development of an action plan to promote active school travel at École catholique St-Michel.

The Walk



Checkpoints

1. School parking lot
2. Bike racks
3. Path to rink/Laurette St
4. "The gully"
5. STATO bike path
6. Crystal Crescent
7. Path through Kinsmen Park
8. Suggest location for Walk a Block pilot



Observations

1. School parking lot

- Parking lot and 15 min parking area along sidewalk in front of main entrance are heavily trafficked areas during the morning and afternoon school rush.
- Parents picking up/dropping off students idle in the 15-minute parking lane for long periods, and often fail to signal in and out of right parking lane



(Google Maps, 2018)



(Erika Aelterman, 2020)

2. Bike rack

- Weathered grid-style bike rack is located out of sight behind a storage shed at the back of the schoolyard.



(Krystal Oviatt, 2019)

3. Footpath from schoolyard fence to ice rink, and Laurette St North (gravel road from Crystal Crescent to ice rink)

- The footpath and Laurette Street North are not paved.
- The municipality is responsible for snow removal on Laurette Street and the ice rink parking lot.
- The footpath to the schoolyard is not maintained. The path is packed with snow.
- In the Family Survey, parents voiced concern over mud, potholes, ice and snow buildup in this area, making the route to school unpleasant for student walkers and cyclists. It was also noted in the survey that parents drive up Laurette Street North to the ice rink to drop their students off, creating potential for pedestrian/vehicle interaction.



(Footpath to schoolyard – Krystal Oviatt, 2020)



(Laurette Street North – Erika Aelterman, 2020)



4. The gully

- All grade 1-3 students who live in the walk zone (0.8km from the school) are bussed due to the perceived danger of the gully off Laurette St North (there is water at the bottom)
- Bus eligibility related to this hazard does not apply to grades 4-8 students.
- Addressing this hazard could result in 16 more students walking to school

5. STATO Trail

- The STATO trail runs through Dymond. It is an on-road active travel system on Laurette Street. The pathway is intended for use by cyclists and pedestrians. Project interventions should capitalize on this designated pathway by highlighting it on best routes to school mapping, and considering the merit of designating the path for the proposed Walk a Block program pilot (see Potential Action Items).

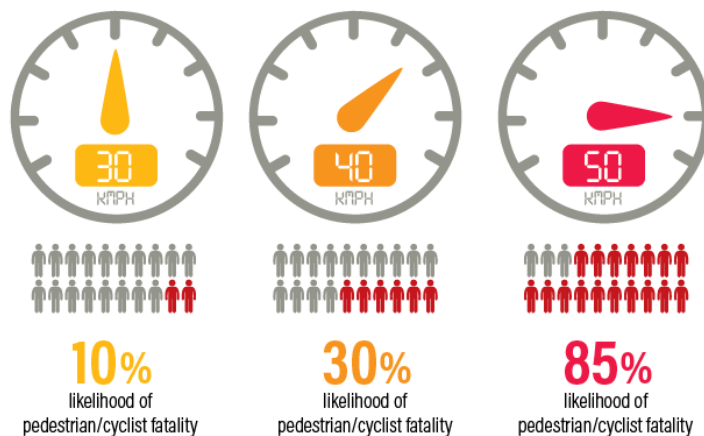


(Google Maps, 2020)

6. Crystal Crescent

- Speeding on Crystal Crescent has been identified on the Family Survey as an issue.
- The speed limit is posted at 40km/hr. Reducing speeds to 30km/hr would prevent crashes and in the event of a crash, would increase the likelihood of survival of a crash.

Higher Vehicle Speeds Increase Likelihood of Pedestrians/Cyclists Dying in Collisions



Source: Cities Safer by Design (2015)
wri.org/publication/cities-safer-design



7. Path through Dymond Fireman's Park (previously Kinsmen Park)

- The boardwalk path through the park has been identified by the school board as best route for student walkers. The path is not maintained in the winter.
- While signs indicate that motor vehicles are not permitted in the park, walkabout participants noticed lots of snowmobile tracks. A parent shared that snowmobilers will occasionally drive through the park with the intent of making a path for students to use.



(Krystal Oviatt, 2020)

Additional Information

- St-Michel's student enrollment: 407
 - 350 receive bus services, 32 are driven in to school or school daycare, 25 walk
 - One hazard is addressed and hazard bussing is removed, this would add 16 more potential walkers
- Student transportation representative noted that cyclists do not stop for school buses when bus STOP arm is out.
 - Could be addressed with cyclist education, building on the "I stop, you stop" campaign.



Potential Action Items

These potential action items were identified during the walkabout or in the discussion following. As a school travel planning committee, we will work to identify additional approaches, and to discuss the merit, timing and responsibility (i.e. who would be best to address) of each.

- 1. Plan a Walk a Block pilot program as part of Winter Walk Day Celebration.** Discussed locating a designated drop off area at Laurette St and Roland Road in the Dymond subdivision. Intention would be to encourage families who choose to drive to drop their students off at designated area some distance away from the school, introducing active travel for the last leg of the journey. As a part of the pilot Walk a Block program and promotion campaign, student transportation could suggest best route for drivers to use when dropping off students at designated drop off, that would minimize the potential effect of introduced traffic.
- 2. Improve visibility of the STATO trail in Dymond.** Ask the municipality to paint this lane to increase visibility – and if there is any opportunity to put up a flexible barrier to further delineate the active travel lane from the motoring lane.
- 3. Discuss funding opportunities for new bike rack and scooter rack with principal and parent council.** Potential locations could be on the grass across from the natural playground (visible to main parking lot), or at schoolyard entrance where there is frequent foot traffic. Some funding is available through AST project. Project staff to discuss openness and funding opportunities for new bike rack with principal and school council.
- 4. Discuss possibility to pave or grade the gravel on Laurette St N and the footpath leading to the schoolyard.** Ask municipality if they would be able to either pave or grade the gravel on Laurette St N and the footpath to the school. As well, ask if there is any opportunity for the municipality or school board to ensure this path is cleared in the winter. Paving the footpath to the municipal standard would enable snow removal.
- 5. Pilot a “School Streets” program on Laurette Street North.** A “School Street” program involves closing or blocking off the street(s) outside schools to motor vehicle traffic at school opening and closing times – with the aim of improving road safety and accessibility for those walking and cycling. This would encourage active to school for children, parents, and staff; provide a safe space for students to play as they wait for the school day to begin, and improve air quality at the school gate.



6. Pilot a walking buddy program for students residing in the Dymond subdivision.

“Having someone to walk with” is commonly cited as one of the top ways to encourage children to walk or cycle to school. A walking buddy may help to alleviate parents’ concerns related to the school journey. School and project staff to work with student council and parent council to help plan these encouragement initiatives. Potential options discussed include:

- a. initiate an AST walking/cycling buddy program
- b. Initiate a walking school bus program
- c. Pilot Walk a Block program for Winter Walk Day.

7. Address speeding on Crystal Crescent. Options discussed include

- a. Reduce speed limit on Crystal Crescent from 40km/hr to 30km/hr.
- b. Partner the speed limit reduction with a student engagement activity - place students’ artwork underneath speed limit and school zone signs. Artwork could have messages reminding drivers to share the road and abide by the speed limit (i.e. “Thanks for slowing down”)
- c. Obtain a speed display sign to mount at a location along Crystal Crescent.

8. Clear snow from boardwalk path in Dymond Fireman’s Park. Potential options discussed were to:

- a. Ask the Public Works department about the possibility for the municipality to maintain this desire line for students throughout the winter.
- b. Build a partnership with the local snowmobile club to have their groomer maintain the path for walkers throughout the Winter
- c. If the trail is not maintainable in the winter, inform student walkers to walk around the block to Laurette Street. This would not be a significant increase in walking distance.





Thank you to all our participants!



Jonathan Blier (Principal)

Julie Rivard (Transportation Officer,
CSCDGR)

Angela Labonte (Parent council)

Angie Manners (Parent council)

Louise Gauthier (Parent council)

Mark Wilson (GEMS - Going the Extra Mile
for Safety)

Krystal Oviatt (Meeting facilitator, THU)

Erika Aeltermann (STP Coordinator, THU)



Background

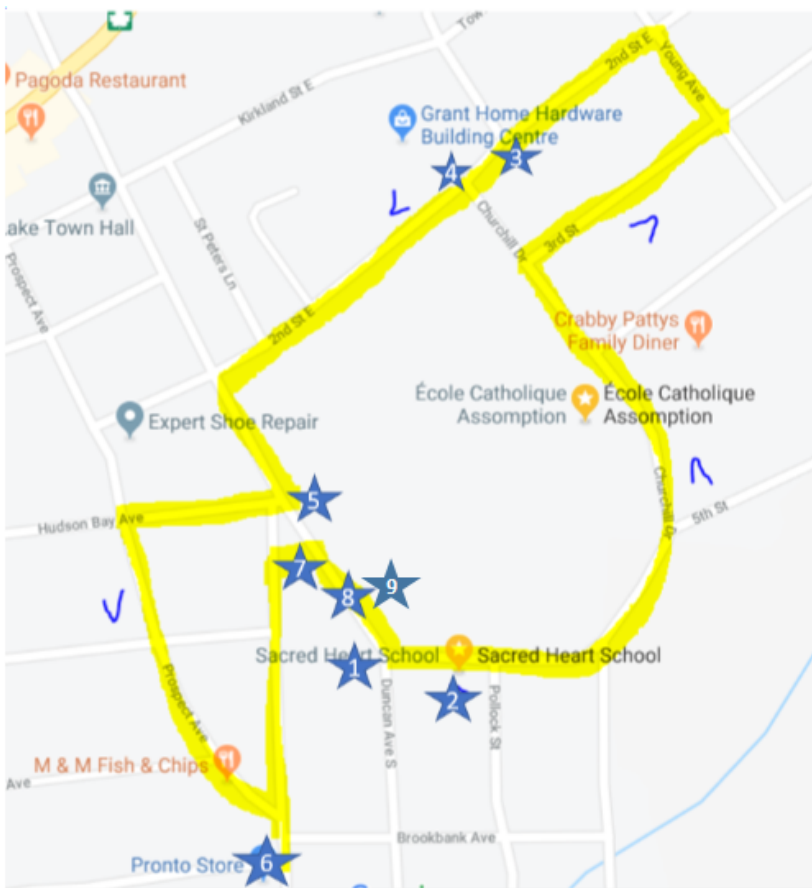
Date: Tuesday December 17, 2019, 12:30-2:30

Weather: high of -7C, low of -17C

To start the school travel planning process, stakeholders at Sacred Heart School participated in a walkabout to identify challenges and opportunities for active school travel. While walking, the key issues noted by stakeholders were congestion and jaywalking along Duncan Ave during the pick-up and drop off period, the need for a designated crossing on 2nd Street, and concerns around winter maintenance of sidewalks.

After walking around the neighbourhood, participants discussed their observations, priorities in the school community, and existing programs, initiatives, and efforts that could help address these challenges. The walkabout will be used to guide the development of an action plan to promote active school travel at Sacred Heart School.

The Walk



1. Corner of Churchill Dr and Duncan Ave S
2. Sidewalk opposite main entrance of school
3. Second St E and Station Rd
4. Second St E and Churchill Dr
5. Hudson Bay Ave and Duncan Ave S (Crossing Guard at High School)
6. Prospect Ave, O'Meara, Brookbank, Taylor (confusing intersection by Pronto Store)
7. Desire line between fire hall and park
8. Duncan Ave S (pick up/drop off point)
9. School yard entrance

**** Bypassed 3rd St, Young Ave, and 2nd St section during the walk. Walkabout team continued on Churchill Drive and turned left on 2nd St E.**

Observations

1. Corner of Churchill Drive and Duncan Ave S.

- **High traffic volume during the morning and afternoon rush.** There is a visibility issue at the yield sign when cars are lined up starting around the school yard entrance to the corner during pick up and drop off. On the other side of the street, although the by-law officer has made recent efforts to deter families from parking in the no-parking zone along the fence at Fireman's Park, families continue to park there when the officer is not present.
- Variability in how drivers treat yield (noted at Traffic Observation) suggests the need for public education in general on how to treat a yield sign.
 - TDRSC is looking into public education on yield signs.
- A stop sign has been recommended to council to replace the current yield sign. All community yield signs have been suggested to be reviewed to confirm that a yield is the most appropriate signage for each point. Any visibility issues should make a yield into a stop.



(Google Maps, 2009)

2. Sidewalks opposite main entrance of school (Churchill Drive)

- Sidewalk directly across from school (right side in picture) is not maintained in the winter. This forces students to walk on the side of the road for this stretch. Sidewalk opposite the school cannot be cleared for a number of reasons including insufficient sidewalk width, presence of posts, non-compliance with AODA requirements, etc.
- The short stretch of sidewalk on the side of the school (left side of picture) is maintained by municipality, but leads into school parking lot.

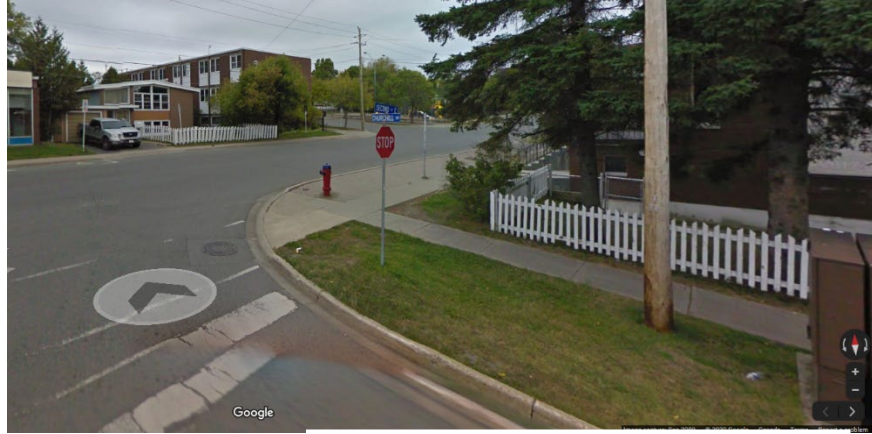


(Google Maps, 2009)

Walkabout at Sacred Heart School

3. Second St E and Station Rd, and Second St E and Churchill Dr.

- Well-documented Challenges for walkers crossing at Station and Second Street, and Churchill Drive and Second Street include lack of adequate crossing markings, high traffic volumes at bell times, and impact of snow piles and parking on visibility.
- Drivers ignore the no parking sign on side of Second Street opposite Home Hardware loading zone (visibility issue).
- TKL considering installing concrete bollard to address parking violations at location mentioned above.
- This area has had a lot of attention with regards to pedestrian safety in recent months within the community.



(View of Second St from Churchill Drive, Google Maps, 2009)

4. Hudson Bay Ave and Duncan Ave S (Crossing Guard at High School)

- Many student walkers use the desire line by fire hall/Fireman's Park to get to/from school (see #6 for picture).
- Children using this desire line are not likely to walk up the street away from the school to utilize crosswalk and crossing guard near Weggie's Store (school crossing is pictured below). Even if students did this, there is no sidewalk from desire line up to crosswalk along Duncan, and the street is very busy during pick up and drop off.



(Google Maps, 2009)



5. Prospect Avenue, O`Meara Boulevard, Brookbank Avenue, Taylor Avenue (confusing intersection by Pronto Store)

- Awkward intersection with visibility issues. Unsure where safest crossing points are.
- Large snowbank on Brookbank Ave (created by homeowner) that reduces visibility was present, forcing pedestrians to walk nearly to the middle of the street before they can see vehicles coming from Duncan Ave along Brookbank Ave.
 - TKL has a by-law prohibiting the public from putting snow on someone else's property (\$100 fine).
 - Snowbank issues may be addressed by the By-Law Officer.
- A school crossing guard used to cross students at Taylor Ave and Brookbank Ave, but the community is currently short 2 crossing guards, so the person who was here was relocated to a location deemed more in need. Postings for this location have gone out several times to no success.



(Google Maps, 2013)



Walkabout at Sacred Heart School

6. Desire line between fire hall and Fireman's Park

- Students use this desire line to cut through the park on their way to/from school. Students then jaywalk across Duncan to school yard entrance on other side during high traffic times, and in the middle of pick up/drop off zone.



(Google Maps, 2009)

7. Duncan Ave S (pick up and drop off area)

- Students jaywalk during high-traffic times
- Observed unsafe driving behaviours including failing to signal and cutting off school buses
- Cars park illegally next to Fireman's Park on Duncan Avenue.
- **Pictured:** Lineup of parents vehicles on Duncan Avenue, waiting to pick up their child(ren) after school.



(Crystal Gorman, 2019)

8. School yard entrance off Duncan Ave

- Students are encouraged to park their bikes against the fence located inside schoolyard entrance, leading to recurring challenges concerning students riding their bikes in schoolyard at recess.
- There are two schoolyard entrances available to students. Students either enter at the opening in the fence near the bus zone or at the entrance on Duncan (pictured below).



(Google Maps, 2009)

Other observations and considerations

- As of January 2020, there are 140 students enrolled at Sacred Heart School.
 - o Walkers: 74
 - o Bussed: 40
 - o Confirmed driven: 15
 - o Bussed due to hazard: 11
 - Hazard types: Crossing Government Road; Residing in remote area of Harvey Kirkland
- Walkabout route is used by students from Sacred Heart, Central Public, Assumption, and ECJV.
- Cars parked in no parking zones
- Residents piling snow near street curb is a recurring issue for the municipality during snow removal
- Plentiful yield signs in heavily trafficked areas (vehicles and students walking)
- Discussed possibility of encouraging snow sidewalk clearance by homeowners. Some communities have put the onus of sidewalk snow clearance on individual homeowners, thus having them clear the sidewalk in front of their home. TKL currently does not require this. Should project staff want to pursue this idea, a public consultation would be required in advance of bringing this to council for decision. For any suggestions brought to council, where possible, it is ideal to bring to council many options for addressing challenges. Challenges identified with regards to proposing making homeowners responsible for sidewalks include the contraindication with the community Age Friendly Plan, which recognizes the community’s aging population. Not all residents are physically able to clear their sidewalks.
- Sidewalk maintenance & snow clearance is very expensive.
- Tri-Board staff identified a need for and have developed a document for distribution to families informing them of walking distances as students age through the local education system. The document includes a colour coded map to allow families to easily identify when and what distance their child will be required to walk. These walking distances are:

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grades 9 -12
Distance	All are bused	0.8 km	0.8 km	0.8 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	2.6 km
Distance to a stop	0.3 km or less	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	0.5 km	1.0 km

- So far, DSBONE has agreed to distribute this document to families. Debra is communicating with NCDSB and CSPNE to distribute through their boards as well. Project staff encouraged discussing with CSCDGR Transportation to determine if a similar need has been identified from their perspective and possibly sharing the idea. Additional action items:



Potential Action Items

These potential action items were identified during the walkabout or in the discussion following. As a school travel planning committee, we will work to identify additional approaches, and to discuss the merit, timing and responsibility (i.e. who would be best to address) of each.

1. **Purchase new bike rack and install in a location away from the schoolyard.** Discuss with parent council. Potential locations could be near front entrance of school. However, this may cause interactions with vehicles and students, as students attempt to get to this space. With active travel students entering the school yard at one of 2 school yard access points, it would be ideal to have bike racks set up at each point.
2. **Replace the YIELD sign at the corner of Churchill Drive and Duncan Avenue with a STOP sign.** Follow up with the municipality on the process and progress of proposed solutions for improving road safety at the corner of Churchill and Duncan.
3. **Install pedestrian crossover (PXO) at Churchill Drive/Second Street desire line crossing.** The municipality is in the process of addressing the safety hazard with a potential installation of a pedestrian crossing PXO at the Second St and Churchill Dr intersection. Municipality is also looking at extending snow clearance on Second St sidewalk. If PXO is installed, THU and/or TDRSC could provide education on how drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists should treat PXOs.
4. **THU can recommend and make a delegation to council re: snow clearance in front of school.** TKL Town Planner to amend winter maintenance plan map to reflect snow clearance in front of school from corner of Churchill and Duncan to bus lane exit (sidewalk clearance stops beyond this, as there is no sidewalk present). THU or school could put in request to build sidewalk on school side or widen sidewalk opposite of school so that it can be cleared using municipal sidewalk plow.
5. **Consider including bus eligibility distances on active school travel magnet being developed for families.**
6. **Identify and clearly communicate best routes to school.** In the school STP plan, encourage students coming from Taylor Avenue to cross Prospect Avenue at Brookbank Avenue, walk along Brookbank and up Duncan to the school. Develop “best routes to school” mapping.
7. **Block off the desire line path next to Fireman’s Park with fencing at each end.** This would force walkers to walk up Prospect, closer to the crossing guard, which may increase the likelihood that students will cross at the safer crossing point.

8. **Add in a loading zone similar to the front bus loading zone** (minimum 60 metre radius to meet standards) off of Duncan into the school yard. Challenge identified with this is that the already small school yard would be further reduced and a project like this would involve significant funding from the school board as well as infrastructure changes. This would also increase the convenience for families to drive students to school, possibly increasing the likelihood that this would encouraging more families to drive rather than encourage their students to use active transportation.

9. **Convert Duncan Avenue into a 1-way street** with the street on the lane closest to the playground, and put a drop off lane on the side closest to the school (“Kiss and Ride”). Noted that Kiss and Rides also increase convenience for families to drive students to school, which may lead to an increase in student catching a ride for the school journey, instead of using active transport.

Thank you to all our participants!

Julia Spadetto-Forward (Acting Principal)

Debra Smith (Transportation Officer, North East Tri-Board Student Transportation)

Ashley Bilodeau (Town Planner, TKL)

Steve Ranta (Roads Foreman, TKL)

Crystal Gorman (Public Health Promoter, THU)

Erika Aelterman (STP Coordinator, THU)

