

NETCONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



TRAVEL PLAN

December 2006

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INTRODUCTION

The Netcong Elementary Board of Education wishes to improve the overall health and safety of the pupils traveling to and from school.

As part of the Netcong Elementary School's effort to achieve the Safe Routes to Schools Grant the Administration has agreed to write a Travel Plan. This Plan will highlight safer routes to school, encourage students to become physically fit, and reduce vehicular traffic in the community. Therefore the plan will address both student health and the environment. This plan was prepared by a committee which includes the Superintendent, the Borough Administrator, the Netcong Police Department and a concerned parent with assistance from the Borough Engineer.

GOALS

- To encourage students to walk/cycle to school
- To provide students with the life skills on how to safely walk and bicycle
- To improve the safety of our students as they travel to and from school
- To improve the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to school
- To help lessen the motor vehicle congestion around the school
- To keep children and parents healthy
- To raise awareness of daily health
- To encourage health habits for life
- To play a part in improving the environment we live in

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Netcong Elementary School is a small school of approximately three hundred students in a small town of approximately 3200 residents. The Elementary School includes Pre-K through 8th grade levels. The current student population is 295. The school is situated on a hill in the center of the Borough. Even though we are a mile square we are surrounded by several major highways including Routes 46, 183, and 80. A NJ Transit commuting rail line also bisects the town. Many of the streets surrounding the school do not have sidewalks or have sidewalks in need of repair.

EXISTING REGULATIONS

Our District is considered a walking District as there is no District provided bus service to the students. All the students in the District either walk to school or are passengers in vehicles. The amount of students traveling to and from school causes a great deal of congestion in front of the school. This traffic also causes congestion to the county roads that run through the Borough.

Currently, bicycling to school is not allowed. As part of the school's Safe Routes to School program, we intend to re-examine the ban and consider repealing it as educational programs and improved infrastructure are implemented.

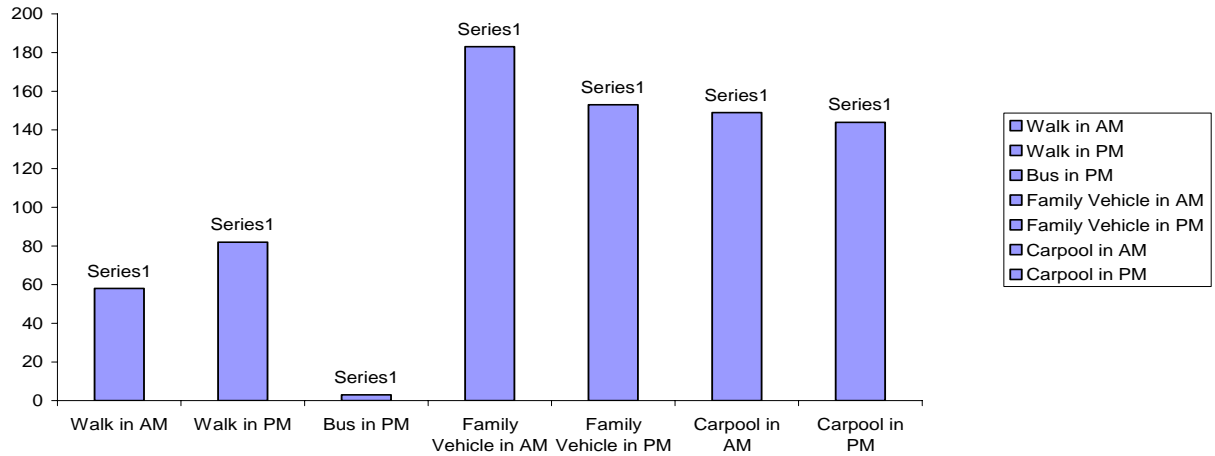
HOW STUDENTS TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

The students were all surveyed for one week* to find out how they traveled to and from school each day. The results were as follows:

1. An average of 58 students walked to school each day which represents 20% of the student population while 82 students walked home from school each day for a percentage of 28%.
2. An average of 3 students rode the bus home from school each day (Daycare supplied) which represents less than 1% of the student population.
3. An average of 183 students were driven to school each day in the family vehicle which represents 63% of the student population while 153 students were driven home from school each day for a percentage of 52%.
4. An average of 149 students carpooled to school each day in a vehicle which represents 51% of the student population while 144 students carpooled from school each day for a percentage of 49%.

* The "Student In-Class Travel Tally Form" from the National Center for Safe Routes to School was used to conduct the survey during the week of December 4, 2006. An additional question about how students would prefer to travel was added by the committee.

How Students Travel To School



TRANSPORTATION PREFERRED BY THE STUDENTS

- An average of 65 students or 22% of the student population would prefer to walk to school.
- An average of 109 students or 37% of the student population would prefer to bike to school.
- An average of 39 students or 13% of the student population would prefer to be bused to school.
- An average of 70 students or 24% of the student population would prefer to ride in a car.

SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC SAFETY CONCERNS

The roads outside of our school are residential and do have sidewalks. The parking lot in the front of the school and the fenced-in area adjacent to the playground on the South side of the building are for staff only.

There is parking available in the spaces in the front of the Staff Lot on the side of the building, behind the school adjacent to the Board of Education building and on College Road.

On the south side of the building there is also a "drive-through" where parents are to remain in their vehicles and pull up to the fenced in area for their children to either get in or out of the vehicle depending on the time of day.

There are several major highways that connect to or go through Netcong making it very difficult for the children across town to walk to school as many of the walking routes cross business driveways along the highways. There are Crossing Guards posted at Center Street and Rt. 46 as well as at Main Street and Maple Avenue and again at Maple Avenue and Route 183/Ledgewood Avenue.

A NJ Transit commuter rail line runs through Netcong near the back of the school. Students often cut across the train tracks to walk to and from school.

IDEAS FOR ADDRESSING OUR TRAFFIC SAFETY CONCERNS

- Additional signs throughout the Borough reminding motorists that children may be walking to school.
- Improve crosswalks with more visible paint/striping
- Additional and repaired sidewalks throughout the Borough for students to walk and bike on.
- To encourage students and parents to utilize the Crossing Guards.
- To encourage students and parents to exercise by walking and biking.
- If safe routes are provided, to allow students to ride bicycles to and from school.
- To encourage parents to utilize the drop off and pick up procedures at the school.
- To encourage parents and other motorists to obey speed limits.
- To encourage students to walk with parents and/or in groups
- Additional No Parking and No Waiting signs around the school property.
- Work with the Borough and NJ Transit to provide students safer crossing over the train tracks.

WHAT THE SCHOOL CAN DO **(Education and Encouragement)**

- Allow the children to bike to school and providing bike racks for their use.
- The Board of Education will write a letter to the Town Council asking if they will assess the area around the school to see if they have any suggestions.
- The Administration will write to the parents to suggest that their children walk, bicycle or carpool as much as possible to and from school.
- To promote walking to school, the school will take part in "Walk to School Day".
- The School District will promote walking to school by running several promotional events throughout the year.
- The Administration will work with the Borough Police Department and TransOptions Transportation Management Association to develop a walking route map.
- The Administration will work with the Borough Police Department and Northern New Jersey SafeKids to run a bicycle rodeo.

HOW THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG CAN HELP (Engineering and Enforcement)

- Improve signage for school routes throughout the Borough
- Continue quality training and placement of the Crossing Guards
- Improve and repair sidewalks along school routes
- Construct additional sidewalks along school routes where needed
- Increase traffic speed and parking enforcement
- Define and improve crosswalks with more visible striping
- Continue cooperation between the school, the Police Department and the Borough
- The Borough Police Department will work with the school and TransOptions Transportation Management Association to develop a walking route map
- The Borough Police Department will work with the school and Northern New Jersey SafeKids to provide bicycle and pedestrian education

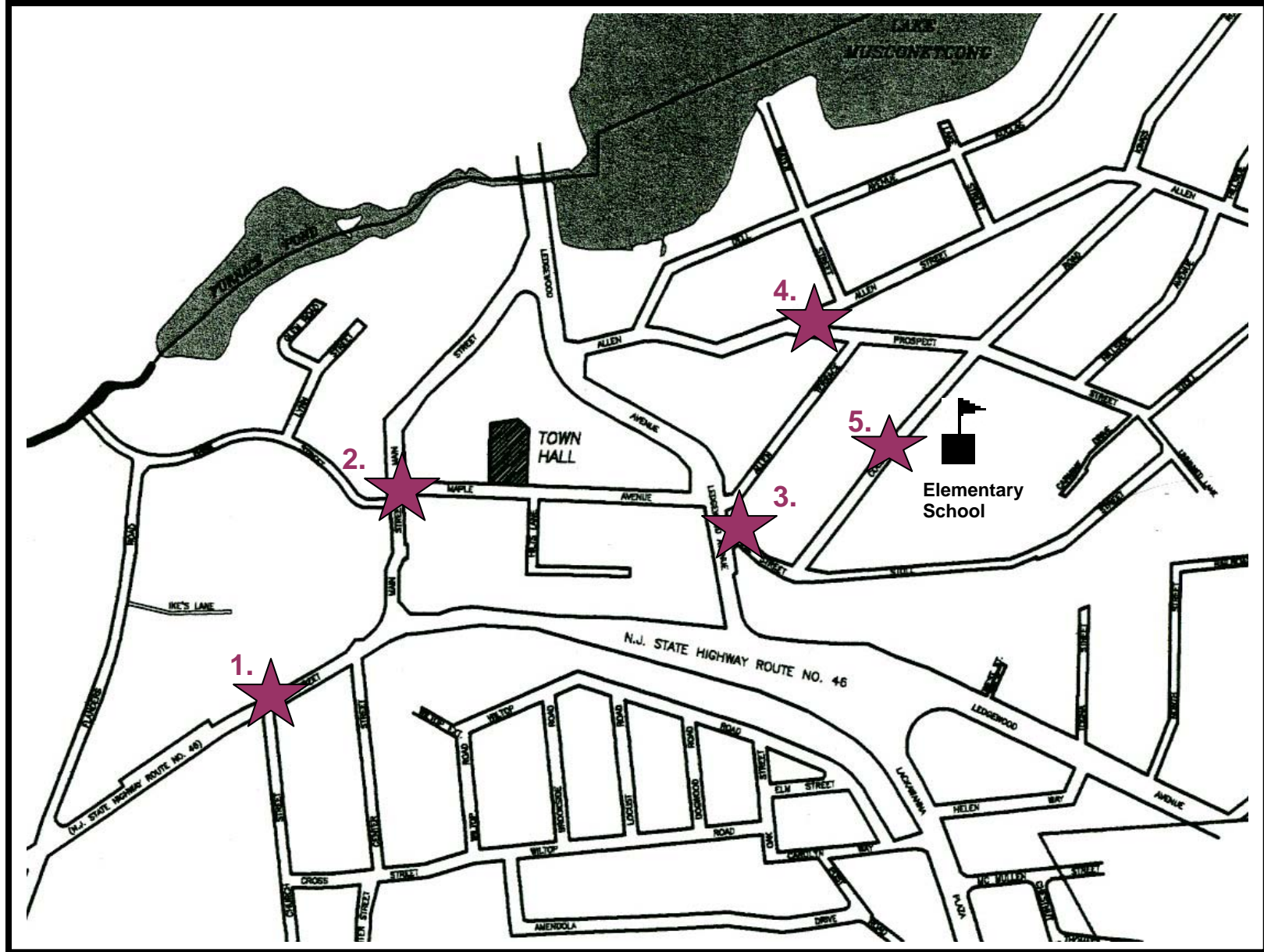
WHAT THE SCHOOL IS ALREADY DOING

- The Administration is encouraging parents and students to use the *Crossing Guards*.
- The Administration regularly patrols outside before and after school.
- The school encourages healthy ways of traveling to school through poster and assemblies.
- The Administration frequently reminds the parents of our parking situation and the proper use of the drive-through.
- The Administration is in constant contact with the Borough's Police Department regarding pick up and drop off procedures.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The Administration will review the action in the Travel Plan by the end of the school year.
- A second Student Travel Talley Survey will be completed during grant implementation period. The survey will assist in tracking any increase or decrease in children walking or cycling to school as a result of the initiatives outlined in the Travel Plan.
- A third Student Travel Talley Survey will be completed the following year to find out if the percentages changed according to the time of year.
- A bi-lingual survey to assess parent's attitudes towards walking and bicycling to school will be administered.

School Crossing Guard Locations for Netcong's K-8 School



1. Church Street and Route 46
2. Main Street and Maple Avenue
3. Maple Avenue and Route 183 (Ledgewood Avenue)
4. Prospect Street and Allen Street
5. College Road Crossing Guard (Front of School)