

Walking Plan

Walking is among one of the best ways to promote student well being, helping children to integrate more physical activity into a daily routine. The District supports walking as transportation as long as students live within walking distance and where there are adequate facilities to do so safely (e.g. complete sidewalks and safe crosswalks.) Walking provides physical activity, decreases congestion and pollution, and provides pedestrian skills and a healthy habit that will last a lifetime.

The District regards walking to school by students as an assumption of responsibility by students and their parents – a responsibility in the care of property, in the observation of safety rules, and in the display of courtesy and consideration towards others. The District assumes no liability for injuries occurring outside school property.

The District strongly recommends that students and their parents follow recommended walking safety guidelines and always use their common sense and good judgment. If crossing guards are available, students and parents should cross where crossing guards are located. Students should use crosswalks. A crosswalk is an extension of the road, sidewalk, curb or edge of the shoulder at an intersection. Crosswalks may be either marked or painted stripes or unmarked. School employees and parents/caregivers are role models for children, and older children should be role models for younger children. Role models have a responsibility to follow the laws and rules for safe walking, bicycling and driving to ensure the safety of all road users – pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Students should cross within painted crosswalks where present. All pedestrians should cross streets only at corners or within painted crosswalks, after looking both ways. If crossing guards are available, student and parents should cross where crossing guards are located. It is recommended that students in the third grade and below walk with adult supervision. It is recommended that students in the fourth grade and above walk in groups or with adult supervision.

The District expects parents and guardians to make students aware of the following safety tips:

1. If there is a crosswalk, use it. Use sidewalks and do not walk in the street.
2. Before crossing. Look left, right, and left again to make sure that the road is clear. Continue looking while you cross and listen for traffic.
3. Do not cross the street from between parked cars.
4. If you are walking at dawn, dusk, or after dark, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.

The District expects parents and guardians who allow their students to walk to school to make them aware of these rules and conditions and the safety reasons supporting them, and to realize their obligations to reinforce adherence to the rules and recommendations provided in this plan.

Aitkin Student *Bike to School* Expectations

Bicycling is among one of the best ways to promote student well being, helping children to integrate more physical activity into a daily routine. In addition, bicycling helps to decrease vehicle congestion and resulting pollution on school grounds and provides skills/healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

The District supports bicycling as transportation for all bicyclists (including employees and parents/caregivers) as long as the cyclist lives within a comfortable bicycling distance of the school for his/her level of skill, follows the rule of the road, and wears a properly fitted bicycle helmet. The District regards the riding of bicycles to school by students as an assumption of responsibility by students and their parents – a responsibility in the care of personal property, in the observation of traffic safety rules, and in the display of courtesy and consideration towards others. The School District/Board or its subsidiaries assumes no liability for injuries occurring outside school property, and are not liable for any equipment or property damage that may occur.

The District strives to provide bicycle education in 3rd grade to teach traffic skills and rules as well as bicycle helmet safety. The district recommends that every child take this training or a similar bicycle safety course before riding in traffic. Children in 3rd grade and below should be accompanied by an adult when bicycling to or from school, as well as complying with the other conditions below. Parents are strongly cautioned to exercise great care and supervise carefully if children of this age wish to bicycle to school. Children in 3rd grade and below are unlikely to have the developmental and judgment skills for unsupervised bicycling.

Student riders should be aware of and follow Minnesota Bicycle Laws:

(An abridged summary of Minnesota Statutes Sect. 169.222 & 169.18 relating to operation of a bicycle.)

1. Ride on the right with traffic; obey all traffic signs & signals; bicyclists have all rights/duties of any other vehicle driver. (1)
2. Legal lights and reflectors required at night. (6a)
3. Continuous arm signal required during last 100 feet prior to turn or change lane (unless arm needed to control bike) and while stopped waiting to turn. (8)
4. On roadways may ride two abreast but don't impede normal & reasonable movement of traffic. Ride in single lane. (4b)
5. Ride as close as practicable to right hand curb or edge of roadway except:
6. When overtaking a vehicle.
7. When preparing for a left turn.
8. When necessary to avoid conditions that make it unsafe, e.g. fixed or moving objects, surface hazards, or narrow-width lanes. (4a)
9. Yield to pedestrians on sidewalks and crosswalks; give audible signal when necessary before overtaking. No riding on sidewalks within business districts unless permitted. (4c)
10. No hitching rides on other vehicles. (3)
11. Only one person on a bike unless equipped for more, or legal baby seat is used. (2)
12. Don't carry anything that prevents keeping one hand on the handlebars or proper operation of brakes. (5)
13. Brakes must allow skidding on dry, level, clean pavement. (6b)

14. Handlebars must not be above shoulder level. (6c)
15. Bicycle size must allow safe operation. (6d)
16. On sidewalk, parking that does not impede normal & reasonable movement of pedestrian or other traffic is allowed unless it is locally restricted. (9a)
17. Legal parking on a roadway, that does not obstruct legally parked motor vehicles, is allowable. (9b)
18. Safe bicycle events approved by local authorities, which do not seriously inconvenience other highway users, are not unlawful. Traffic laws can be waived. (10)
19. When passing a bicycle or pedestrian, motor vehicles shall leave at least 3 feet clearance until safely past the bicycle or pedestrian. (M. S. 169.18)

While on school grounds with a bicycle, students must comply with these rules and safety regulations:

1. Bicycle riders must exercise caution around motor vehicles and pedestrian students. Walking bicycles on school sidewalks is further recommended.
2. Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided.
3. Students must bring and use bicycle locks.
4. Helmets must be stored in a locker, backpack or attached to bicycle.
5. Students are not to interfere with any bikes, helmets or other equipment (steal, unlock quick releases, bounce helmets, etc.).

The District expects parents and guardians who allow their students to bike to school to make them aware of these rules and conditions and the safety reasons supporting them, and to realize their obligations to reinforce adherence to the rules and recommendations provided in this plan.

**Aitkin School Routing Plan
Walking and Bicycling**

Students who walk or bike to Rippleside or Aitkin High School are advised to use the following identified routes and recommendations below to safely cross roads and access each school. Students who walk should use all available sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks along their route to school. Students who ride a bicycle should wear a helmet and abide by the rules of the road following these same routes. If riding on a sidewalk, the cyclist shall use caution in passing pedestrians.

Rippleside Elementary

Students traveling on foot to Rippleside Elementary should use sidewalks (as they are constructed) on 1st St. SW, 2nd St. SW, 3rd St. SE and 2nd Ave. SE running directly in front of the school.

Students crossing Minnesota Avenue (Hwy 169) should cross only at marked, designated pedestrian crosswalks. A main crosswalk is located at 2nd St. SW and is the preferred crossing for all students. Aitkin Police control this intersection for bus traffic during the morning and afternoon hours and help to ensure student safety while crossing. Additional crossing guards are provided in the afternoon by the school to assist students while crossing.

Aitkin High School

Students traveling on foot to Aitkin High School should use all existing sidewalks leading to the school along Hwy. 210 in front of the school, 1st Ave. NW, 2nd Ave. NW, 3rd Ave. NW 4th Ave NW, and 3rd St. NW in back of the school.

Students crossing 2nd Street NW (Hwy 210) in front of the school and 3rd Street NW in back of the school should cross only at marked, designated pedestrian crosswalks between 2nd Ave. NW and 4th Ave. NW

Source: Aitkin Independent School District No. 0001, Aitkin, MN

Legal References: Minnesota Statutes Sect. 169.222 & 169.18 (relating to operation of a bicycle.)

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Aitkin School Routing Maps for safe walking and biking routes



