



Student Travel Tally Week Frequently Asked Questions

What is Student Travel Tally Week?

Student Travel Tally Week is the time each school year when schools count how students travel to school. The count occurs at the beginning of two successive days in September or October. The PE teacher asks for a simple show of hands by students, and enters the student responses into an online form or gives the results to the school's Student Travel Tally Week coordinator.

Who should participate in Student Travel Tally Week?

All schools are encouraged to participate, regardless of whether they have a SRTS program, are about to start one, or **plan to seek other resources for your program in the near future. Whether it be a QuickStart Mini-grant, a Transportation Alternatives set aside grant, or non-monetary support from a local business**, conducting a tally provides schools with valuable information. It also helps the Virginia SRTS Program know how students get to school. In the past, you may have completed a student travel tally form as part of a School Travel plan.

When is Student Travel Tally Week?

Student Travel Tally Week can be any week of your choosing in September or October. Be sure to collect travel tallies on two days within that week. If your school has conducted tallies before, aim to take tallies during the same week as previous years. Be sure to avoid taking tallies on International Walk to School Day, as it will not reflect an average school day.

How does it work?

Collecting Student Travel Tallies takes a few hours to organize and about 5 minutes to do at the beginning of class twice during the week. It involves three simple planning steps to be ready:

1. **Become familiar with the student tally process.** The Virginia SRTS Program offers a number of materials to use that are [available online](#). Detailed guidance regarding how to set up a Student Travel Tally on [saferoutesdata.org](#) is provided [here](#).
2. **Work with your school's administrators** to get approval, identify the best days to complete the tallies, and gather all the materials you'll need (e.g., a log-in for [saferoutesdata.org](#), the paper tally form). The Student Travel Tally [Learn it. Do it. Live it!](#) tip sheet includes a sample letter your principal can send to your teachers explaining the tally process.
3. **Tell other teachers, students, and parents about it.** The Virginia SRTS program website includes resources to help with, such as
 - ✓ A Student Travel Tally [Learn it. Do it. Live it!](#) tip sheet to instruct teachers how to collect the data and includes scripts for teachers to use in the classroom. It's easy and only takes a few minutes during the start of each PE class.
 - ✓ A Classroom Connections tip sheet with examples for integrating travel tallies into the classroom.
 - ✓ Two flyers – one to promote the event at school and another to send home with students so parents know about it.
 - ✓ An article suitable for your school's newsletter (paper or electronic) to help spread the word.





What specifically do teachers need to know?

Each day you collect student travel to/from school information, record the information. Two choices are available: a paper form and an online form provided by The National Center for Safe Routes to School. The online form is recommended if teachers have an Internet-connected computer, tablet, or smart phone they can use in the classroom, since in this case the data collected is automatically uploaded to saferoutesdata.org. The paper form can be used in cases where teachers do not have this capability; however, the data collected using the paper form will later need to be entered on saferoutesdata.org.

How soon do we need to get started if we're going to participate?

When	What to do
Now	Become familiar with how to collect and record student travel tallies
One month before	Talk with the principal to get her/his support and agreement to tell teachers about it. Reach out to the school division superintendent if their approval is necessary for a student survey.
Two weeks before	Work with teachers on some co-curricular activities.
The week before	Post flyers at school. Send backpack flyer home. Include an article in your school newsletter . Create a user account linked with your school on saferoutesdata.org
The day before	Make sure you have your plan in place, including the method you'll use to collect the tallies and any co-curricular activities you'll use in class.
During Student Travel Tally Week	Make daily announcements. Distribute paper forms or links to online forms to teachers. If using paper forms, collect the forms after the second day. Thank the principal, teachers, and students for participating.
By October 31	Complete Student Travel Tallies.
By November 15	If using paper forms, enter student travel tally data on saferoutesdata.org by this date. Schools that have never participated before will receive a SRTS event banner and schools that have conducted tallies will receive a participation decal. Remember: you must have at least 80% participation (students or classrooms) to be eligible for the incentive banner/decals.
After completion	Celebrate your success and use the newfound insight about your school's travel patterns to help make walking and biking safer!





Why is this important for our school?

Evaluation is one of the most important elements of any safe routes to school program because it measures the most basic success of the program – the number of students walking and biking to school. Using the co-curricular activities is also great for your students!

How else can I collect meaningful data for my SRTS program?

There are a number of ways to collect additional information that can help you better understand existing travel patterns at your school, concerns about walking and biking, and the impact of your SRTS program. In addition to Student Travel Tallies, we recommend the Parent Survey, which is also provided by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. Whereas the Student Travel Tally asks students how they travel to and from school on a particular day, the Parent Survey asks parents how their child usually travels to school throughout the year and what the top barriers to walking and bicycling are. Parent Surveys can, therefore, be a helpful way to confirm the picture of existing travel patterns captured through the Student Travel Tally and a way to understand barriers that may be preventing more students from walking and bicycling to school. Parent Surveys can be set up through saferoutesdata.org and are conducted through distribution of a link to an online form.

Where can I get the materials referenced here or other help?

Contact us to let us know that you plan to participate. If you're not sure about the process, we can answer your questions and talk you through the process. You can reach your Virginia SRTS Local Technical Assistance Coordinator on our toll-free hotline, 1-855-601-7787. All the materials mentioned here are on the [Virginia SRTS Program](http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes) website under Student Travel Tally Week.

