



# Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools



## Teacher Guide Transportation

If your students have chosen to do an Improvement Project in the Transportation category, the resources below can help them as they complete the Project Form.

### **Remember to let your students lead!**

As much as possible, let the students decide the direction of their investigation and come up with Improvement Project ideas.

#### **Places to Investigate**

- Sidewalks and roads
- Bike paths and bike lanes
- Carpools
- Pick-up and drop-off zones
- Bus garage

#### **People to Interview**

- Transportation staff
- Administrative staff
- Maintenance/custodial staff
- Community members
- Students
- Teachers

### **Questions**

These questions can be utilized as prompts should you need them. Ideally, we would like students to engage in their own questioning to provide an authentic learning experience.

- Classroom Survey
  - What mode of transportation do students/staff in your class use most to get to school?
  - How far does each student live from school (e.g., a range of 0.2 – 7 miles with the average student living 4 miles away)?
- Walking and Biking to School
  - What percentage of students/staff who live less than one mile from school walks or bikes?
  - What measures are in place to ensure the safety of those students who walk or bike to school?
  - Are any of these features listed in the table below available between school and the homes of your classmates?
    - sidewalks (3-5' wide)
    - bike paths (8-12' wide)
    - bike lanes (on road)
    - wide shoulders (>5' wide)
    - secure bike parking
  - Do intersections near or on the way to school have:
  - Pedestrian signals at busy intersections?
    - Enough time to cross at pedestrian signals?



- Crosswalks?
- Curb cuts?
- Adequate lighting?
- Smooth paved walking surfaces?
- Crossing guards or safety patrols?
- Vehicular Traffic
  - What percentage of students/staff who live near a public bus route uses it to travel to school?
  - Of the students/staff who come to school in a car, van, minivan, truck or SUV, what percentage of students/staff comes to school in a carpool?
  - Does your school have a “no idling” policy for vehicles and/ or buses?
  - How many school buses stop at your school during the day?
  - How many school buses idle their engines for longer than 3 minutes while parked outside the school?
  - Are road signs posted indicating a school zone?
  - What safety measures are used for drop-off/pick-up points for vehicles?
    - Are there two separate drop-off/pick-up points for buses and personal vehicles?
    - Are drop-off/pick-up points located so students do not have to cross traffic flow?
    - Are drop-off/pick-up points located away from other parking areas?
    - Are drop-off/pick-up points supervised during heavy traffic times?
    - Are drop-off/pick-up points located near school air intake vents?
- Community and Curriculum
  - In what programs does your school sponsor or participate to encourage carpooling, use of public transportation, or non-vehicular transportation to and from school (e.g., ride-share, bike to school week, pedestrian or bike safety classes)?
  - Does your school district use fuel-efficient vehicles as a part of its fleet (e.g., bio-diesel fuel for buses, fuel-efficient driver’s education cars, small capacity buses, passenger vans)?
  - What training and/or safety policies do school staff follow to drive school vehicles (include those dealing with seat belts and interactions between vehicles, pedestrians and bikers)?
  - Does your school district offer a driver’s education course for students?
  - How are topics covering health and environmental impacts (e.g., fuel economy, emissions, alternative fuels, impervious parking lots, loss of habitat from road construction) of transportation choices part of each grade’s curriculum?

## Resources

- [Kentucky Air Education \(KAIRE\)](#) - KAIRE works with schools in Indiana and Kentucky to help them be Idle Free. KAIRE provides fact cards to go home in backpacks and signage for the car rider line. Contact us for more information so that your school can be proud to be Idle Free. KAIRE is Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District’s community outreach and education program for the Louisville metro area. Enhancing our neighborhoods and quality of life helps to ensure environmental and economic health for residents. KAIRE's primary goal is to increase public awareness of the impact individual choices can have on local air quality.
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [School Flag Program](#)** - This program helps children, parents, school personnel and the community be aware of daily air quality conditions using brightly colored flags. Each day, a flag is raised in front of participating schools that signals the level of air pollution for that





day. By comparing the colored flags to the Air Quality Index (AQI), members of the school and the surrounding community can tell what the daily air quality is, and adjust their activities to reduce their exposure to air pollution.

- [EEinKentucky.org](http://EEinKentucky.org) - This website is a one-stop resource for environmental education in Kentucky. The site lists grant announcements, jobs, news, professional development opportunities, conferences, and other events from across the state.
- [The Safe Routes to School Program \(SRTS\)](#) is designed to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative; and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.
- [WalkScore.com](http://WalkScore.com) – Provides walkability ratings for U.S. addresses.

## Improvement Projects

Your students should come up with their own ideas for an Improvement Project, but below are some examples of previous Improvement Projects for Transportation:

- Starting or expanding paper, cardboard, cell phone, drink pouch and metal recycling programs
- Starting composting programs and purchasing compost bins
- Campaigns to reduce Styrofoam and paper use
- Presentations on recycling, composting and solid waste, and awards for reduction
- Installing trash cans and signs to reduce litter

## Extensions

After coming up with an idea for an Improvement Project, consider the following optional extensions.

- A) Submit your investigation documentation to the Project Learning Tree (PLT) GreenSchools! program for their Environmental Quality category. Once you submit investigation documentation, your school becomes eligible for thousands of dollars in grant money from the GreenSchools! program. You can also submit your completed Improvement Project to this site. Learn more at [www.plt.org/greenschools](http://www.plt.org/greenschools).

