Almond-Bancroft
Safe Routes To School Plan
2012 – 2017

April 2012

Village of Almond

ALMOND-BANCROFT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Soar with Eagle Pride
1336 Elm Street
Almond, WI 54909
Phone: 715-366-2941

NCWRPC

Almond-Bancroft
Safe Routes To School Plan
Acknowledgements

Almond-Bancroft Task Force
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Dan Boxx, District Administrator, Almond Bancroft School District
Jeff Rykal, Principal, Almond-Bancroft School District
Jackie Lemke, Clerk, Village of Almond
Jeanette Wilson, Chairperson, Town of Pine Grove
Brian Kelley, PE, Highway Commissioner, Portage County Highway Department
Deputy Tyler Miller, Safety Officer, Portage County Sheriffs Department
Matt Lemke, Village of Almond Fire Department

Extra Walk Audit helpers: Maria Chapa, Dawn McDonald, Trina Warzynski, and Sarah Spencer.

Participating Schools
Almond Elementary (1st -8th grades)
Bancroft Elementary (3k-5k grades)

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Cover Photo: Airphoto of Almond Schools (NCWRPC)

April 2012

Under the direction of the Almond-Bancroft Safe Routes To School Task Force, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) prepared this plan with a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

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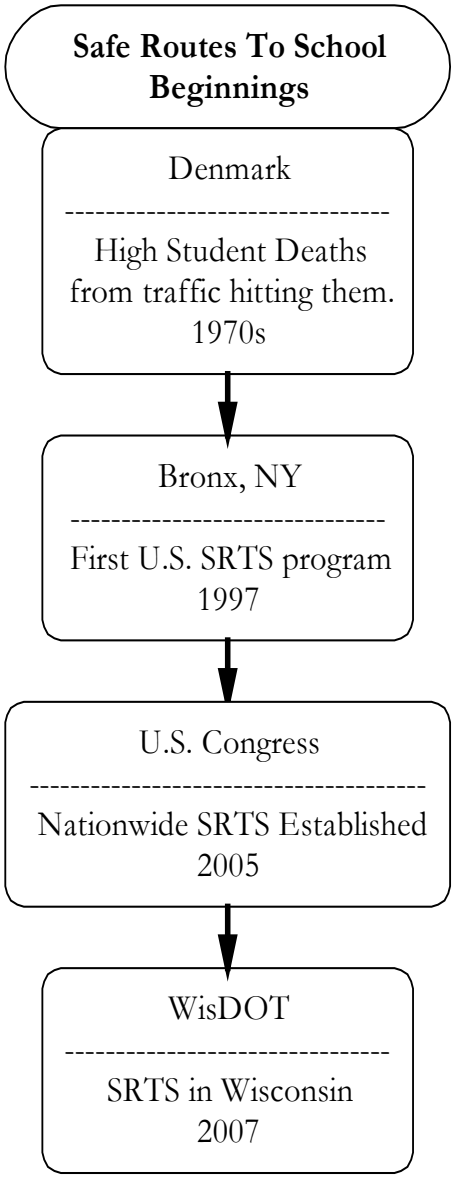
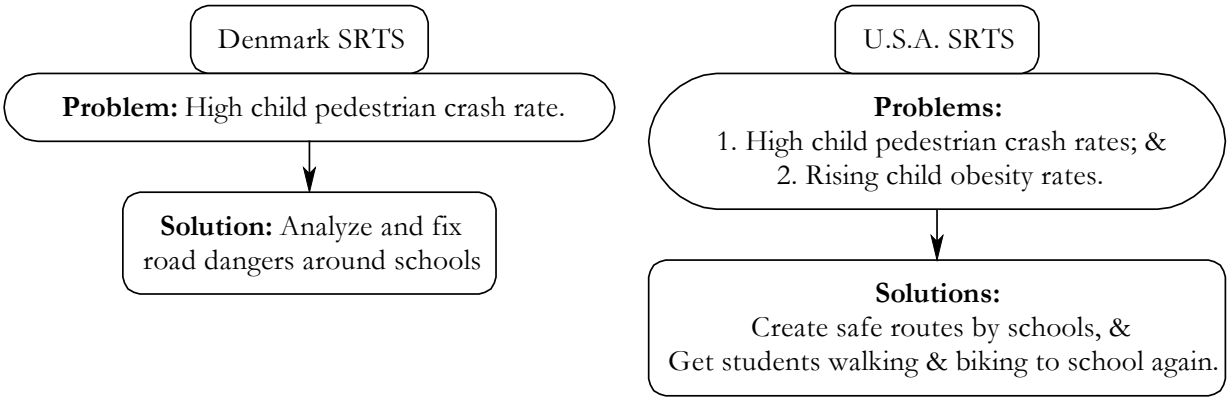
Chapter 1: Introduction

History

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) began as a European phenomenon about thirty years ago and caught on in New York City in 1997. In the 1970s, Denmark had Europe's highest child pedestrian accident rate. Implementing the first Safe Routes to School program, planners in Denmark identified specific road dangers around the country's schools and took steps to remedy the hazards. Since 1970, the child pedestrian crash rate has dropped by 80% in Denmark.

Inspired by such success and faced with rising childhood obesity and crash rates, the Bronx neighborhood in New York tested their own SRTS program. In 1998, Congress funded two pilot SRTS programs through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Marin County, California, and Arlington, Massachusetts were the first SRTS pilot programs. Within a year after launching these pilot programs, grassroots SRTS efforts were launched in other parts of the country. After the initial success of Safe Routes to School pilot programs in the United States, subsequent federal funding facilitated SRTS's expansion nationwide. The 2005 passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) institutionalized Safe Routes to School.





Why focus on Safe Routes to School?
Safe Routes to School is a nationwide effort to increase the safety and regularity of children walking or bicycling to and from school for two primary reasons.

- **Increase walking and bicycling as part of a daily routine**: Currently, there is a nationwide health and quality of life concern about rising rates of children overweight and obese. Excess weight is associated with an increased incidence of many chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, stroke, osteoarthritis and several cancers. Without daily physical activity, today's children may be the first generation to have a shorter lifespan than their parents.

- **Reduce vehicle trips and traffic congestion around schools:** This effort also deals with concerns about the amount of vehicle traffic, high speeds and traffic congestion around schools. The amount and speed of traffic pose increased injury risks to children who currently walk and bicycle to school. Traffic congestion reduces air quality and increases asthma risks as more car engines idle waiting to pick up and drop off children.

Nationally, walking and bicycling to school is viewed as a realistic way for children to achieve higher levels of daily physical activity and for communities to reduce the number and speed of vehicles in school zones.

Planning Process & Public Involvement
The Almond-Bancroft School District, along with community leaders in the Village of Almond and the Town of Pine Grove created a Safe Routes To School Task Force a year before applying for a planning grant, and actively pursued data collection and analysis on their own. They wanted to encourage more students to walk and bike to school, because drop-off & pick-up congestion was unsafe for everyone. The approved planning grant paid for NCWRPC's planning services to assist with creating a Safe Routes To School plan.

Map 1 shows the planning area.

Participating Schools:
- Almond Elementary
- Bancroft Elementary

Task Force Members:
- Jill Kollock, Community Leader
- Dan Boxx, District Administrator, Almond Bancroft School District
- Jeff Rykal, Principal, Almond-Bancroft School District
- Jackie Lemke, Clerk, Village of Almond
- Jeanette Wilson, Chairperson, Town of Pine Grove
- Brian Kelley, PE, Highway Commissioner, Portage County Highway Department
- Deputy Tyler Miller, Safety Officer, Portage County Sheriffs Department
- Matt Lemke, Village of Almond Fire Department

After the planning grant was approved, the Task Force developed the following vision and goal for this Safe Routes To School Plan:

A-B SRTS Vision

Encourage parents to have their children walk or bike to school safely all year round.

A-B SRTS Goal

Reduce traffic congestion around schools.

A-B SRTS Goal

Increase bicycle riding skills in children.

A-B SRTS Goal

Promote safer driving in residential neighborhoods.

NCWRPC and the Task Force met to gather and analyze data. In November 2010, a Walk Audit, Student Tallies, and a Parental Survey were conducted to determine how students were getting to school, and what issues were holding back parents from allowing their children from walking or biking to school. Surveys and Walk Audits were administered to compliment the parent and teacher surveys that were taken by the Task Force in 2009. Future progress will be compared with both sets of data, and recommendations will take all this background data into account.

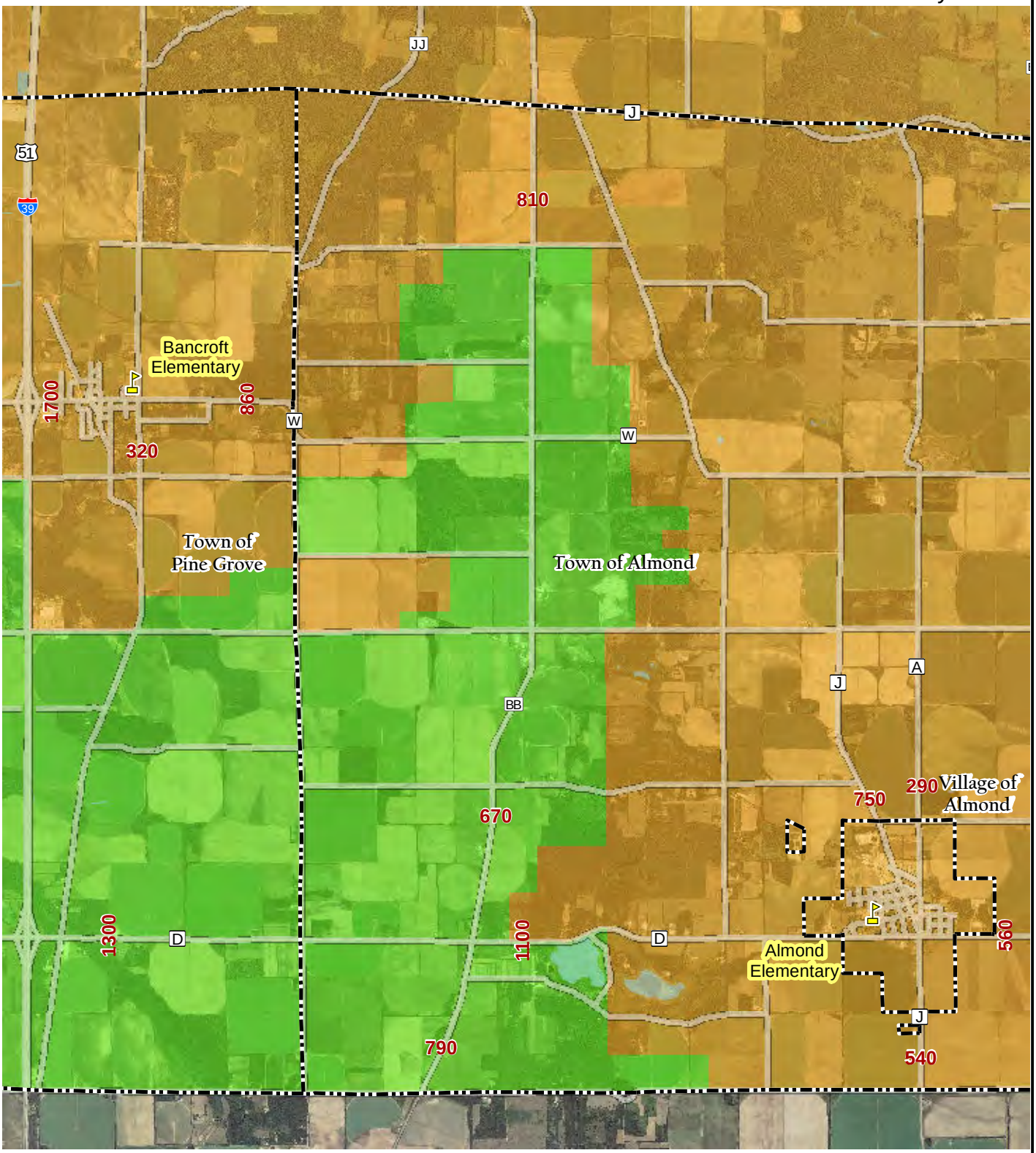
Community members representing both schools, staff from Almond School, and Task Force members conducted the November 2010 Walk Audit with training from NCWRPC staff. Specific attention was paid to the condition of sidewalks, presence of biking facilities, and the

location of specific barriers and inconveniences to pedestrians surrounding the schools. Maps were created from the Walk Audit results to see where physical barriers to walking exist.

Slide shows were created by NCWRPC and presented by Task Force members to the Village Board and School Board. The Task Force gathered comments at each of the meetings where they presented the slide shows.

Recommendations were created, modified, and approved by the Task Force. Resolutions of adoption show the approval of the Village Board and School Board. The obstacle of truancy in the Bancroft community (Town of Pine Grove) was a strong deterrent to approving any SRTS recommendations in Bancroft, but their recommendations are available in Attachment G for future consideration. A report of truancy reduction best practices was included in Attachment F.

Map 1
Almond - Bancroft
SRTS Study Area



Minor Civil Divisions

School

Roads

Water

School Districts

Almond-Bancroft

Tri-County Area

500 2002 Daily Traffic Counts, DOT

N W E S

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, WI DOT

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

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Chapter 2: Community-wide Analysis

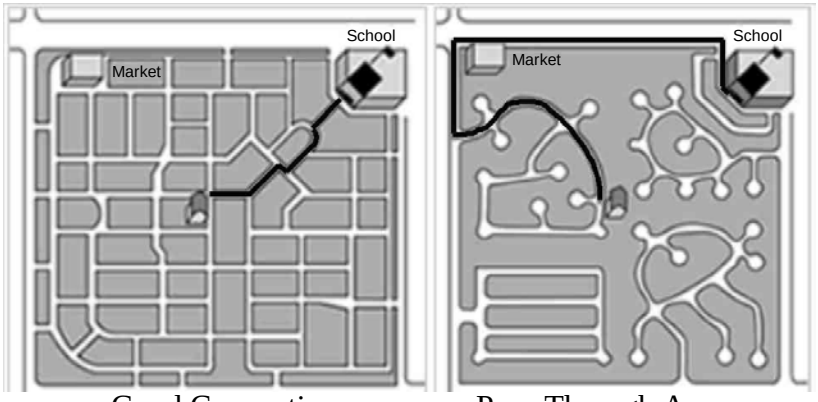
This chapter provides a community-wide inventory of physical conditions and local government policies. Assessments include traffic data, local ordinances, and non-motorized travel conditions community-wide.

Overall Development Pattern

The Village of Almond has a population of 429 (2010 WDOA estimate) and the Town of Pine Grove has a population of 919 (2010 WDOA estimate). Both Almond and Pine Grove are in southern Portage County, Wisconsin. The unincorporated community of Bancroft is the town center in the Town of Pine Grove. There are over 195 housing units (apartments, condos, and houses) in the Village of Almond, with about 76.4% of them as houses. The Town of Pine Grove has over 340 housing units, with about 67% as houses and 30% as mobile homes. Roads are generally in a modified grid pattern across the village, and are well connected in Bancroft too. The Village of Almond and the community of Bancroft were on the same rail line, but no railroad right-of-way exists today. See Map 1 for a general layout of both communities and how they exist in relation to each other.

The "walkability" of school sites in Almond and Bancroft is generally good if you live in either community, but a large percentage of the school populations also come from surrounding rural development that is too far to walk or bike from. See each school's Travel Potential table in Chapter 3 to see how many children live within walking distance of either school.

The connectivity of various bicycle and pedestrian facilities directly impacts the ability to walk or bike to school. Characteristics of a well-connected road or path network include short block lengths, numerous three and four-way intersections and minimal dead-ends (cul-de-sacs), see Figure 1. As connectivity increases, travel distance decreases and route options increase. A network of streets, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and paths in which all parts are well-connected to each other reduces the distance children travel from home to school, allows for the use of more local streets rather than major roadways and provides a greater choice of routes to travel to and from school.



Good Connections Poor Through Access

Figure 1

See the Walk Audit maps and comments within each school assessment in Chapter 3 to view how local residents perceive the walkability of their school neighborhoods.

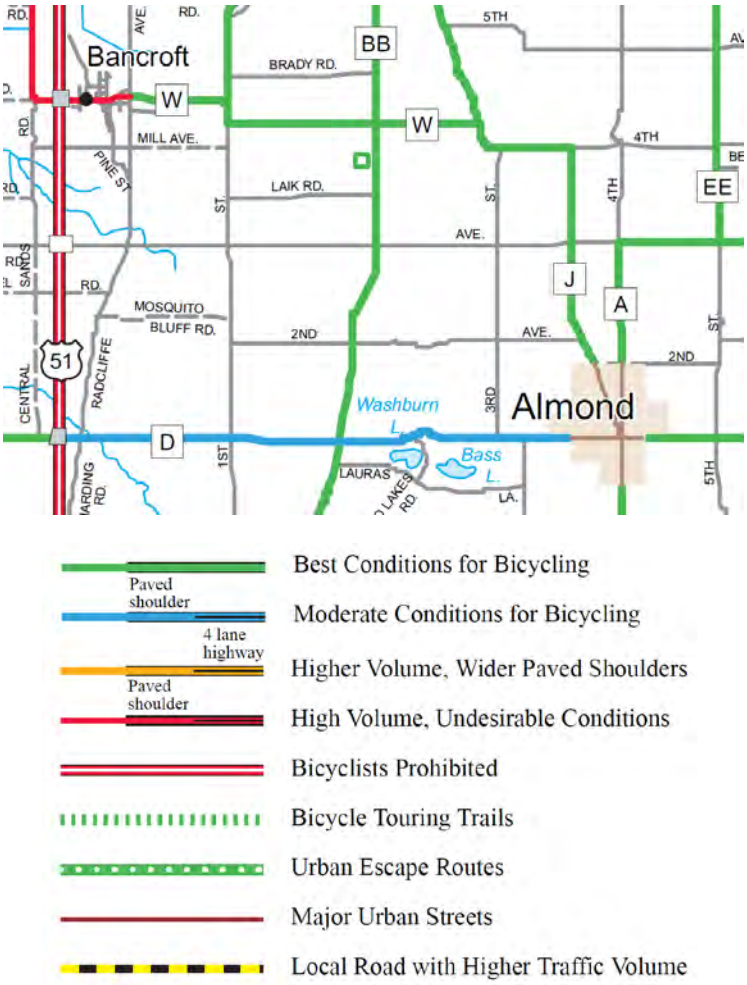
Bicycle Facilities

All roads in Almond and Bancroft are available for bicycle travel. U.S. Highway 51 prohibits bicycle travel. Highway W through Bancroft is listed as "undesirable" for bicycling, because of traffic volume and non-continuous paved shoulders. Parking is also allowed on Highway W's paved shoulders.

County Highway D through the Village of Almond is not rated by WisDOT, because it is an incorporated community. NCWRPC's analysis shows that CTH D may have the "best conditions" for bicycling because it is a *complete street* (bicycle lanes on both sides, and a sidewalk on one side):

Complete Street (CTH D)

Figure 2 Highway Bicycling Conditions



Note: Almond also has two roads lined for two way travel of bicycles or pedestrians on only one side of the road (High School St. and part of Church St.). This lane forces students to walk or ride on the wrong side of the street for half of their journey (either going to or coming from their destination). A sidewalk would solve this safety issue. As a rule, when bicycling you will want to ride on the right (going in the same direction as automobile traffic), and pedestrians should walk against traffic.

WisDOT has determined what the bicycling conditions are on all county and state highways. All of the highways shown in Figure 2 are within 2-miles of either safe routes school. No village roads were rated either good or bad for bicycle suitability by WisDOT.

Crossing Guards & Student Safety Patrols

Adult crossing guards and student safety patrols are not used around the Almond or Bancroft schools.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks play an important role in the lives of children. Destinations such as neighborhood homes, schools, and parks are all accessible to children who use sidewalks. A safe sidewalk in good condition encourages kids to stay on the sidewalk and provides a barrier from street traffic.

Figure 3 The sidewalk stops, and is missing in an area leading to Bancroft school.

Location: On School Rd. looking west along CTH W (Main St.).

Sidewalks in Bancroft and Almond mainly do not need curb ramps, because sidewalks were placed at-grade with adjacent roads. Sandy soils and grassy buffers between roads and sidewalks have provided adequate drainage without the need for concrete curb and gutter in many areas. Curb ramps are still needed in the commercial districts and areas where curb and gutter does exist. This plan will show where sidewalks and curb ramps are missing and should be constructed for safe school travel. Figure 3 shows an area without sidewalk that leads to Bancroft Elementary. Sidewalks have not been constructed or replaced in Almond or Bancroft for over 10-years, so it would be easier to change the Sidewalk Ordinance to not assess local property owners for sidewalk installation or maintenance.

> **Note:** Almond also has two roads lined for two way travel of bicycles or pedestrians on only one side of the road (High School St. and part of Church St.). This lane forces students to walk or ride on the wrong side of the street for half of their journey. A sidewalk would solve this safety issue. As a rule, if no sidewalks exist on the road, it is recommended to walk facing oncoming traffic. Also, pedestrians should get as far to the side of the road as possible to provide additional space between you and oncoming cars.

The Walk Audit maps for Almond (Map 2), and Bancroft (Map 4) show where sidewalks exist near each school.

Some non-motorized uses are allowed on sidewalks in Bancroft and Almond (i.e.: walking, rollerblading, skateboarding, and bicycling with tires 20-inches or smaller [Almond Ordinance §7-2-1]). Adult bicycling is not allowed on sidewalks in Almond (§7-2-1).

Sidewalk Installation and Replacement Policy

The Village of Almond has a sidewalk ordinance that requires installation and reconstruction.

Installation/reconstruction – The Almond Municipal Code [§ 4-2-2 SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR.] states that whenever the Village Board determines by resolution that a sidewalk be laid, rebuilt, repaired, then the land owner is responsible to pay for

the initial sidewalk and its perpetual maintenance. See Attachment D for the official sidewalk installation ordinance.

Snow removal – The Almond Municipal Code [§ 4-5-1 SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL.] states that it is the property owner's responsibility to clear their sidewalks within 24 hours of a snow event. See Attachment D for the official sidewalk cleaning and snow removal ordinance.

Note: The Village of Almond plows all sidewalks in the Village.

School Zone Speed Limits – Wisconsin Law

Children have little concept of how fast cars are traveling, or how to anticipate what a driver is going to do, so it is up to adults to be responsible drivers. State-wide statistics show that less than half of drivers slow down in school zones.

Almond has a school speed limit zone on Elm Street. Bancroft does not have a school zone.

Transit Facilities

There are no transit related services within the Town of Pine Grove (Bancroft) or the Village of Almond. All transportation to Stevens Point, the county seat, occurs by private vehicle.

Truck Routes

Interstate 39/ U.S. Highway 51 is a designated long truck route that exists next to Bancroft, with no routes serving Almond. Trucks can still travel to Almond along the county highways.

Farm Implement Traffic

Farm implements (vehicles used in farming) use all the county highways within the Bancroft and Almond communities.

Issue: Farm implements are active in the morning on local roads at the same times that students are potentially walking and biking to school.

Traffic Counts

Traffic counts are recorded by WisDOT Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data from a variety of years based upon how much traffic is expected annually. As of 2011, the most current traffic counts near Bancroft and Almond Elementary Schools were taken in 2002. See Map 1.

Crash Data

Highway and bicycle safety specialists now use the term “crash” instead of “accident” to emphasize that most automobile and bicycle interactions are predictable and preventable occurrences. It is important to note that crash data, while useful for analysis, does not include the potentially many near misses or minor crashes that may be unreported. The knowledge and experience of people walking in and through neighborhoods around schools is also critical to the assessment of pedestrian safety. Documentation of “near misses” from walk audit participants exists under each school in this plan under ***Teacher Survey*** and ***Walk Audit Results***.

The Portage County Sheriff Department found no bicycle or pedestrian crashes from 2008-2011 within 2 miles of Bancroft Elementary or Almond Elementary.

Chapter 3: School Area Inventory and Analysis

This chapter provides a physical conditions inventory of school sites & surrounding neighborhoods, school policies related to wellness & transportation, school staff & walk audit commentary, and parent's survey responses. Assessments include policies and observed behaviors in and around school sites.

School Enrollment Boundaries

The Almond-Bancroft School District boundary encompasses all of the Village of Almond, and the community of Bancroft (urban part of the town of Pine Grove) as shown on Map 1.

School District Wellness Policies

A formal policy does not exist that is separate from providing physical education classes.

Busing Policies

The Almond-Bancroft School District requires students living within 2 miles of school to provide their own transportation, which includes walking or biking to school. If the district determines that any hazard exists within 2 miles of school, then the district will provide transportation. Bus transportation is provided for all students attending school in the district who reside more than 2 miles from school, and for special education students.

In Bancroft, two school buses make a stop in the mobile home park, then stops throughout Bancroft and transfers all students to Almond. After initial kindergarten instruction occurs in Almond, then they are bused back to Bancroft for the remainder of the day. Other school buses pick up students within the remainder of the rural district. No students in the Village of Almond are bused to Almond.

Hazard Boundaries and Plans

State statutes require school districts with unusual hazards that prohibit walking and bicycling to school to develop a transportation plan to address the hazard. Such a plan shows a map of the hazard to student travel, with explination, and proposes a plan of transportation to provide safe travel to school for affected students. Copies of the plan are filed with the sheriff to make suggestions for revision, and investigate the site and plan to make a determination as to whether unusual hazards exist. The sheriff reports the findings in writing to the state superintendent and the school board concerned.

Almond-Bancroft does not have any hazard busing routes.

Teacher Survey

Almond and Bancroft teachers were surveyed in fall 2008 about how they incorporate bicycle and pedestrian safety into their curriculum.

Pedestrian safety education includes identifying stranger danger, where to walk, reflective clothing, and how to cross an intersection. Health classes were the most popular location to teach pedestrian safety in the 1st to 3rd grades.

Bicycling safety is commonly taught at the annual Bicycle Rodeo and in the Health classes for 2nd and 3rd grades.

Teachers observed some unsafe attitudes or behaviors of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers:

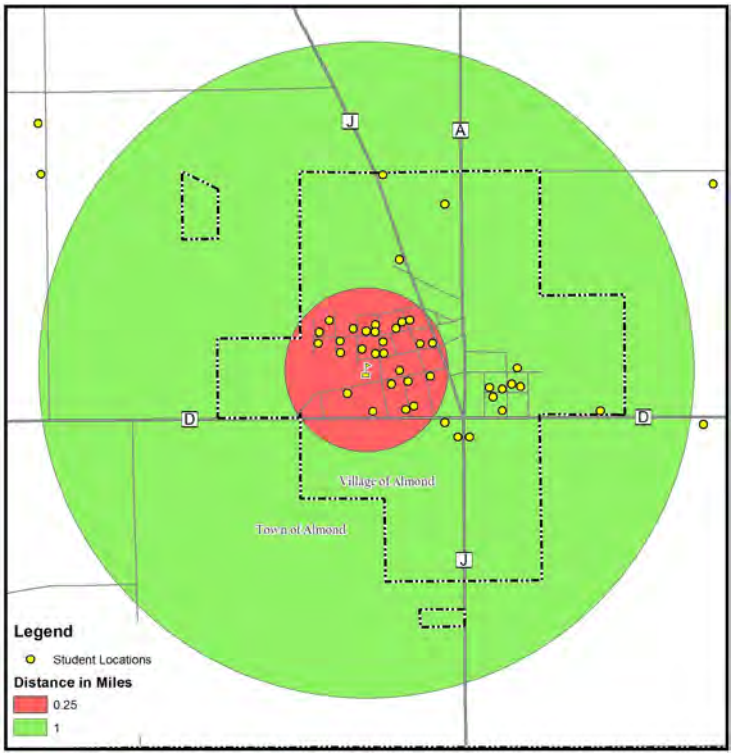
- Congestion during bus times.
- Young children that ride bikes without adult supervision or proper equipment…helmets.
- Kids riding in the streets.
- No helmets when riding.
- Student drivers driving too fast in front of school.
- Students not using crosswalks.
- Wearing helmets when biking.
- Riding double on bikes.
- No helmets.
- Sidewalks at Bancroft School
- Relocate the Student Drop Off Area at the Almond School (maybe the West Gym Entrance). This would allow for more vehicles to pull in instead of wait in the road to turn into the lot.
- Wearing Helmets
- Using hand signals
- Riding with the traffic flow
- Defensive riding
- Some times drivers exceed speed limit adding to unsafe conditions.
- Drivers at times go over posted speed limits.
- Using Bike Helmets
- Using Sidewalks
- Driving too fast in residential areas
- Not wearing helmets and other safety gear when riding a bike, skateboard, etc.
- Riding double
- Riding in the street or road
- Defensive bike riding or automobile driving
- Rural community and farm equipment
- Safety on dangerous roadways
- Bikers think they own the sidewalks
- Bikers need to learn to bike defensively
- Riding thru on roads and driveways. Cars turning right, it may be hard to see a biker racing down the sidewalk towards you.

Almond Elementary

1336 Elm Street, Almond, WI 54909

Grades Served: 1st - 12th

Almond Elementary, Middle, and High School are in the same building, along with the district offices.



Student Geography

All students' addresses, from 4 year old kindergarten through 8th grade, were plotted on a map (graphic at right) to see what potential there was for elementary age students to walk or bike to school. According to this address analysis of students, 22% of students live within 1 mile of school, and 14% live within ¼ mile of school (see Table 1).

Table 1	**Almond & Bancroft Students (4K-8) Living near Almond**	
Students living within ¼ mile	44	14%
Students living within 1 mile	69	22%
Total 4K-8th Grade Student Body (Fall 2011)	310	100%*

Source: Almond-Bancroft School District, Portage County P&Z, and NCWRPC.

**Data does not equal 100% due to students who live farther than 2 miles from school.

Table 2	**Almond Morning & Afternoon Travel Comparison**						
	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	13%	0%	65%	22%	0.4%	0%	0.2%
Afternoon	15%	0%	57%	25%	3%	0%	0%

Source: In-class Student Tally, November 2010

Almond Elementary Transportation Policies

RULES FOR BUS SAFETY:

Riding the School Buses—Riding a school bus is a service provided to you. You should not abuse the service if you want it to continue. We expect you to follow all school rules as well as obeying the following rules to help us ensure safe transportation on the bus:

1. See that you commit no act to take the driver's attention away from his/her driving.
2. You should remain in the seat assigned to you by the bus driver from the time you board the bus until you reach your destination.
3. You will face forward in the bus and your feet will not be in the aisle.
4. You will not move around while the bus is in motion.
5. No horseplay is allowed on the bus.
6. There should be no name calling or indecent language used on the bus.
7. Getting on and off the bus should be done in an unhurried fashion.
8. You should take pride in your bus and keep it clean.
9. The use of a controlled substance, alcoholic beverages, smoking or chewing tobacco is forbidden anytime. The bus driver is responsible for students' discipline on the bus. This notice is to serve as a warning to the few students who don't respect the rights of others. The drivers have misconduct slips on their buses, and they will report any violations directly to the school office.

Consequences will be determined by the severity of the incident and assigned by the Principal or Dean of Students.

**Any student guilty of using any controlled substance, drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking, or chewing tobacco will be suspended and/or may be referred for an expulsion.

****Any type of weapon or look-a-like weapon is ABSOLUTELY not allowed on our school buses at any time. Please refer to school-district policy 007.6.

Almond Walk Audit Results

Each school walk audit consists of a visual review of the behaviors and physical walking conditions that exist within ¼-mile of each school. Almond Elementary was divided into 3 quadrants for participants to walk. Two participants volunteered to walk each quadrant. The walk audit was conducted on an overcast and rainy day in November 2010. No snow existed yet. As the group gathered in Almond Elementary, participants were trained by NCWRPC on what to look for. All participants started by standing on the sidewalk outside the school closest to their quadrant at dismissal time. Participants noted general behaviors that they saw whether good or bad, and then they walked their specific quadrant to locate any physical barriers of walking to school. Broken sidewalks, existence of corner curb ramps, low hanging branches, and scary situations of all types were documented on **Map 2 – Almond Elementary Walk Audit**.

Here are the participant comments for each Almond Elementary quadrant:

Almond Elementary—North

Behavior Notes

- Elm St. to student parking lot – H.S. students do not use crosswalk.
- From back door of school students walk down center of street (Maple)
- Corner of Church and Oak barking dogs fenced in.

Walk Audit Notes

- H-1 = Path through wooded area used to get to athletic fields – off of Almart Dr.
- High School street painted walk on road leads all the way to baseball diamond.

Almond Elementary—South

Behavior Notes

Observations @ 3:20 p.m. on Monday November 22, 2010:

- One elementary student running on grass to bus.
- Two elementary students running on sidewalk to bus.
- High school and middle school students walking on grass.
- Four high schoolers running to bus.
- A number of middle school and high school students did not use the cross walks when crossing the street.

Walk Audit Notes

Observations from November 22, 2010:

Before the busses arrived at the end of the day:

- Three vehicles were parked west of the busses.
- Eight vehicles were parked across the street.

After the busses departed:

- Two vehicles were parked west of the busses.
- Five vehicles were parked across the street.
- One car that stopped to pick up students after the busses were gone did not pull up to the curb.

- The marking along Church St. appears to be for walkers, those that drive (students) and park their cars, then walk to the building.
- The marking along CTH D is an extra lane that could be used for walking but did see some cars parked there as well.
- D = dirt path

△ = Three road signs "School Zone".

Almond Elementary—East

Behavior Notes

- Jaywalker (many who leave school by Elm & Church Streets, as they walk to the student parking lot.)

****

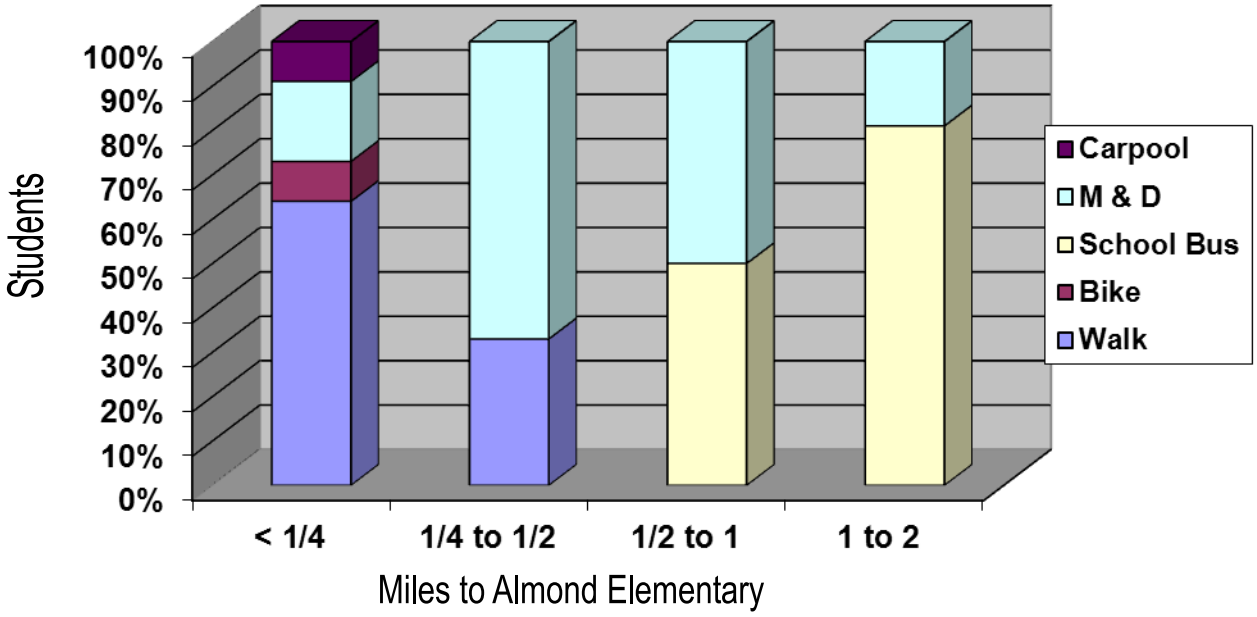
Parent Survey Results

Each family was mailed a survey in Fall 2010. 76 questionnaires were analyzed for Almond's report. Two basic sets of questions revolved around: "How did your child get to school?" and "What change is needed before you allow your child to walk to school?"

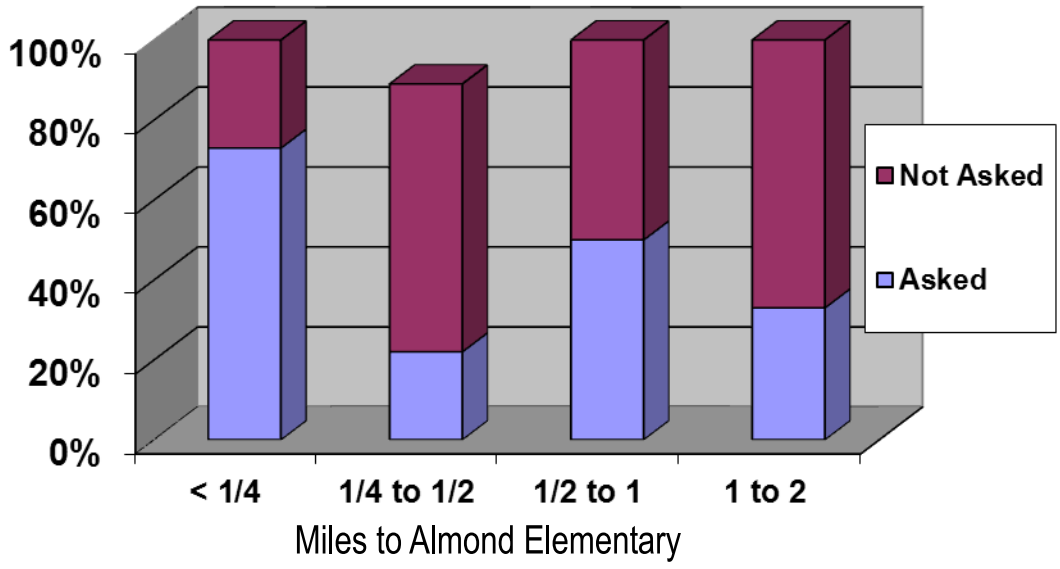
Here are the results from Almond Elementary parents:

How do students arrive at Almond?

(3 people did not respond)
("M & D" = Family vehicle)



How many Almond Elementary students have asked to walk?



Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to school:

89% neither; 0% discourages; and 10% encourages

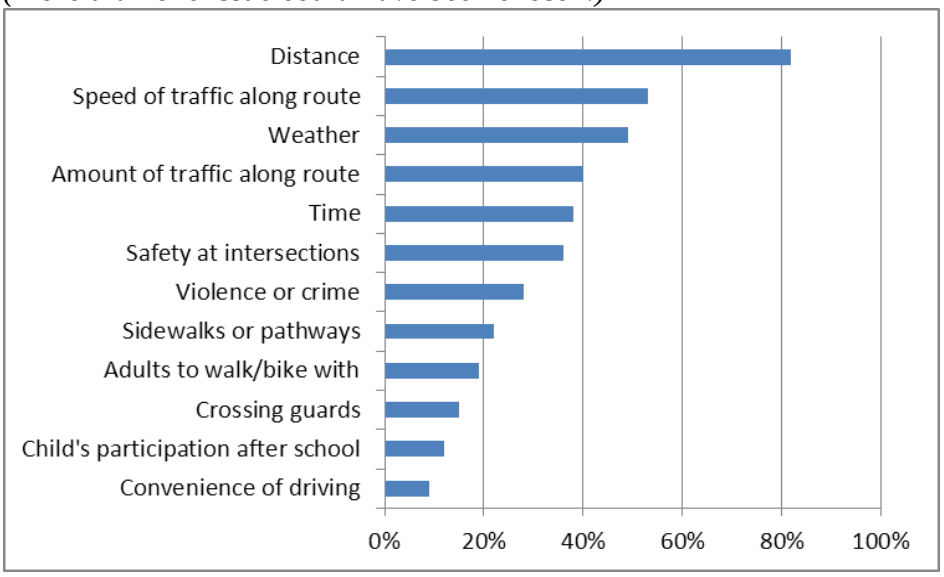
The high number of parents that chose "neither" is a good sign that no policies of the school district are affecting parent's decisions to allow their child to walk or bike to school.

Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to school is for their child:

73% neutral; 13% fun; 6% very fun; 1% boring; and 6% very boring

Almond parents do not allow walking or biking because of this issue:

(More than one issue could have been chosen.)

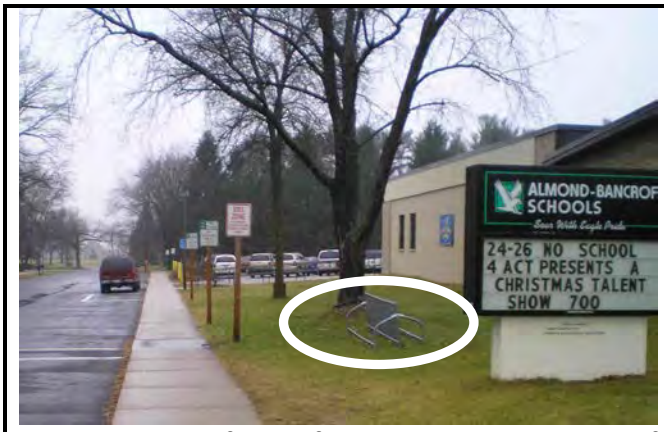


Almond Elementary parent comments on the survey:

- (8 responded) We live too far away.
- (2 responded) If we didn't live so far away, I would let my children walk/bike.
- I always encourage activity for my kids.
- I feel people who are driving need to slow down and watch where and how they park at school to avoid the possibility of a child being hit or ran over.
- Questions 12 and 13 (Q12=School level of encouragement to walk, and Q13=How fun is walking for child) does not pertain to my children. They ride the bus to school and ride it home from school.
- Would like to see kids able to enter back door - especially in winter and as they are in middle school. Easier to drop them off there in winter due to our home location. West lot is very congested at times. People park there to go into school at times and they have to park along school where we are to pull in. With a lot of the teachers parking in that lot you often run out of room. I definitely feel the parking and dropping off need to be evaluated again.
- My children have very limited participation in before and after school activities due to the distance we live away from the school and lack of available transportation.

- My son has been walking/biking since 1st grade with his brother! That is his only way to get to school or home! We moved to Almond so he could walk and we didn't have to worry if he wanted to join sports.
- I think that walking or biking to school in Almond is o.k. as long as the child is at a mature enough age and the weather is o.k. to do so.
- We live in a rural area. Our child would have to bike to school on a county road with hills and dips -- its not safe even for an adult! We bike on our trails at home.
- We drive our children to school every day in the morning because of the long bus ride, and ride to Bancroft for 4-K.
- We live to far from school and with crime today I would NEVER let my child walk or bike even if I lived a block from school.
- Even though I walk with my son I still don't always feel safe. We see a lot of speeding vehicles every week.

- **Almond Elementary Pictures**



Bike rack is in front of the school. This style of rack was never designed to provide 2 points of contact with a bike for locking and support.

Good use of in-road yield-to-ped. signs. There are 3 sign assemblies to alert drivers to the school zone, so they slow down.

Pedestrians do not have an area to continue walking on. No crosswalk exists.

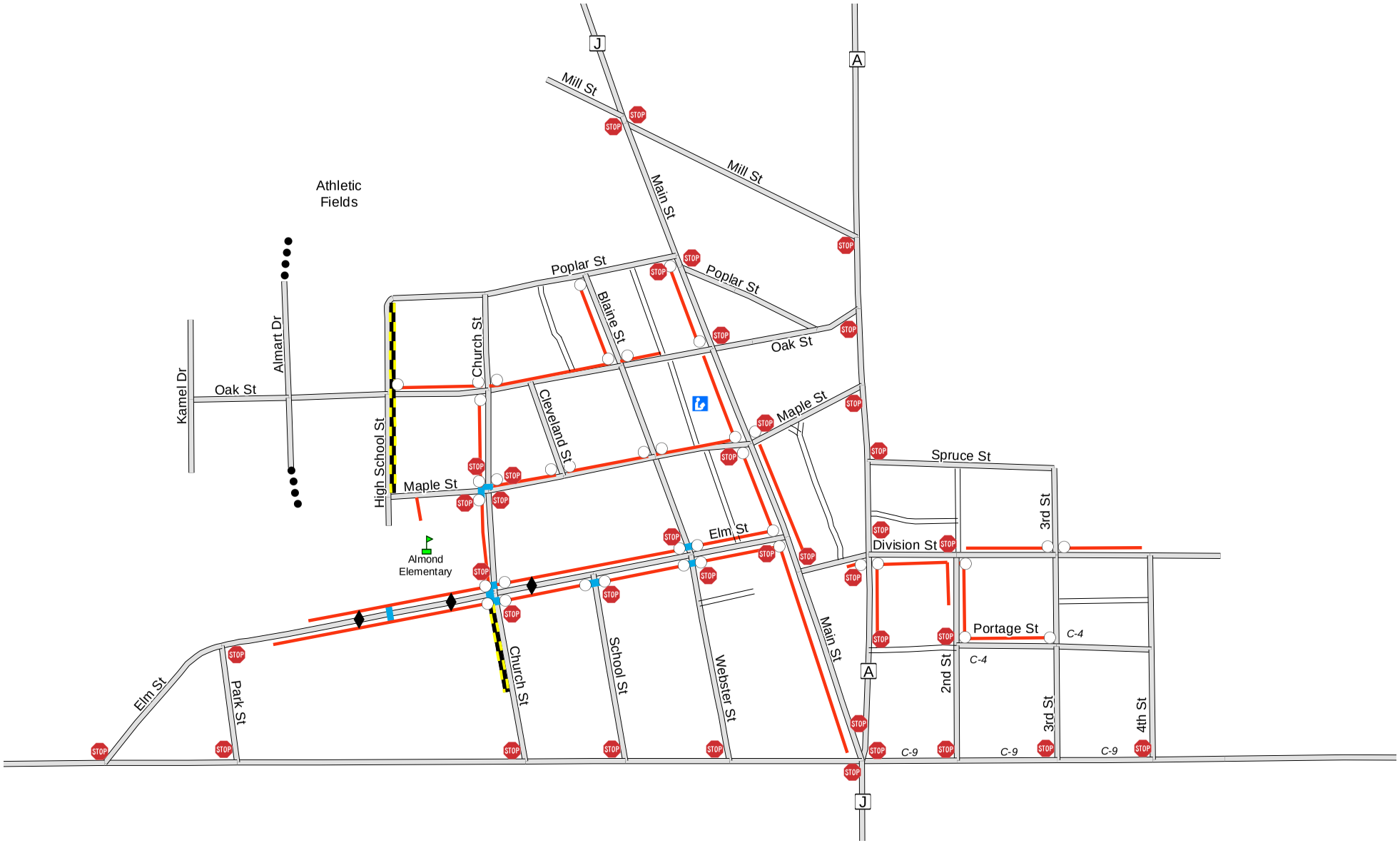
Walking lane promotes walking the **wrong way** along side of street, because a second walk lane does not exist on the other side.

How do you cross when it rains?
Crosswalk under water during a rain event.

Another instance where a sidewalk on one side of the road is needed.

Almond Elementary School - Walk Audit

Map 2



Library
School
Roads
Painted Walkway In Street
Desire Path
In Street Crosswalk Sign
Stop Sign
Sidewalk Ramp
Alley
Sidewalks
Cross Walks

C-4 Concern about dogs

C-9 Cars too close for walking

N
W
E
S

0 160 320 640 960 Feet

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Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Portage Co

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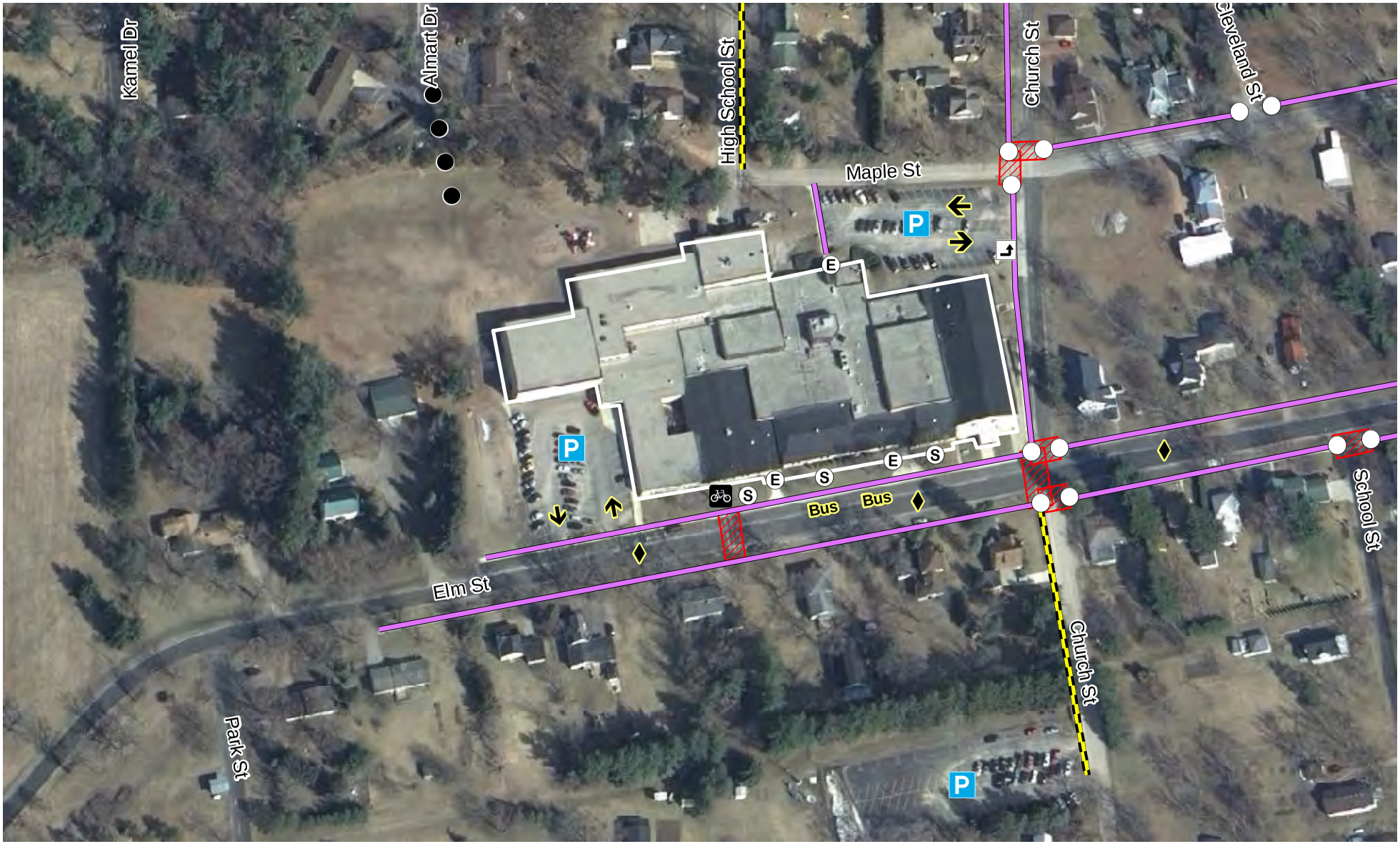
Almond Elementary School - Site Assessment

Map 3



Bike Rack
Left Turn Only
Entrance
School Sign
Parking
Vechicle Diveway
In Street Crosswalk Sign
Sidewalk Ramp
Sidewalks
Walkway
School Building Footprint
Crosswalk
Desire Path

N
W
E
S

0 55 110 220 330 Feet

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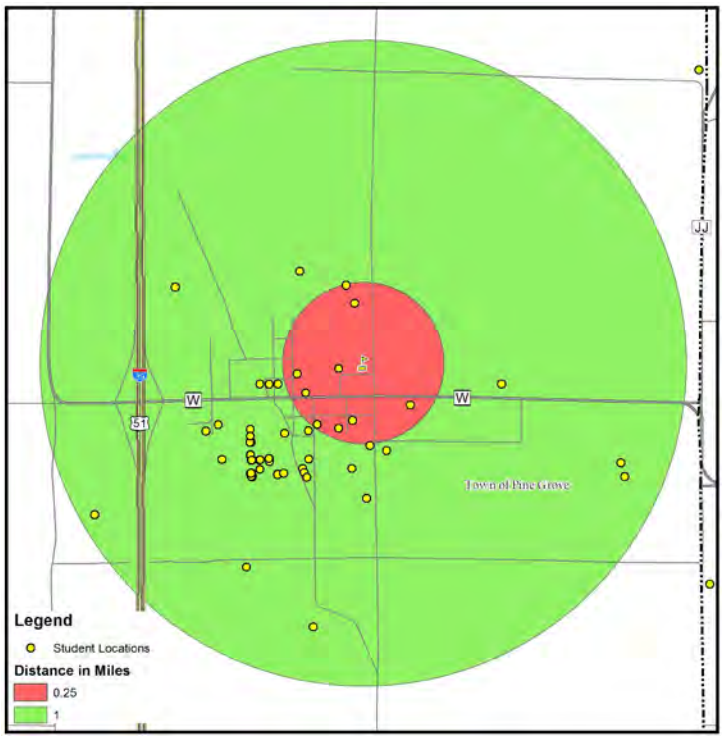
Bancroft Elementary

5590 School Road, Bancroft, WI 54921

Grades Served: 4K-5K.

All students are bused to Almond Elementary. The 4K and 5K students eat breakfast and also get there specials taken care of (e.g. music, art, PE) in Almond. The 4K and 5K students are then bused up to Bancroft Elementary. At the end of the day, they leave Bancroft to return to Almond and they transfer from the Bancroft bus to their normal routes home.



Student Geography

All students' addresses, from 4 year old kindergarten through 8th grade, were plotted on a map (graphic at right) to see what potential there was for elementary age students to walk or bike to school. According to this address analysis of students, 26% of students live within 1 mile of school (see Table 3).

Table 3	**Almond & Bancroft students (4K-8) living near Bancroft**	
Students living within ¼ mile	11	4%
Students living within 1 mile	79	26%
Total 4K-8th Grade Student Body (Fall 2011)	310	100%*

Source: Almond-Bancroft School District, Portage County P&Z, and NCWRPC

*Data does not equal 100% due to students who live farther than 2 miles from school.

Bancroft Walk Audit Results

Each school walk audit consists of a visual review of the behaviors and physical walking conditions that exist within ¼-mile of each school. Bancroft Elementary was divided into 2 quadrants for participants to walk. Two participants volunteered to walk each quadrant. The walk audit was conducted on an overcast and rainy day in November 2010. No snow existed yet. As the group gathered in Almond Elementary, participants were trained by NCWRPC on what to look for. All participants started by standing on the sidewalk outside the school closest to their quadrant at dismissal time. Participants noted general behaviors that they saw whether good or bad, and then they walked their specific quadrant to locate any physical barriers of walking to school. Broken sidewalks, existence of corner curb ramps, low hanging branches, and scary situations of all types were documented on **Map 4 – Bancroft Elementary Walk Audit**.

Here are the participant comments for each Bancroft Elementary quadrant:

Bancroft Elementary—North

Behavior Notes

- Cars for child pick up are on outer loop. Children walk across road to get to cars.
- Kids just walk on the road. If walk, had parent with them.
- 1 walker. 3 picked up w/car
- Had one parent pull up behind bus.
- No signs out/no bus flashers.

Walk Audit Notes

- C-4 dog = dog loud but chained up.
- Gravel roads on Shetland.
- S-1 = some bushes next to sidewalk, need to walk around.
- There are no curb ramps.
- Shetland and Appaloosa roads are narrow, not full size roads.
- C-9 = County Road W has heavy traffic. When walking on the county road, traffic did not slow down or get over.
- R-1 = On corner of Klondike and Co. Rd W is just a slope in the sidewalk to the road, ½ filled with sand.
- I-3 = Very busy intersection, cars turning and going out of town fast.

Bancroft Elementary—South

Behavior Notes

- No ditches – Water/Ice pooling alone sides of most roads – students would have to walk in the middle of the road.
- ++++++ = Sidewalks
- ╬ = No Crosswalks
- Many side streets are very narrow – little room left if 2 cares are passing.
- All students were either bussed or picked up by parents. Probably due to age – 3, 4, & 5 yr. olds.

****

Bancroft Elementary Pictures

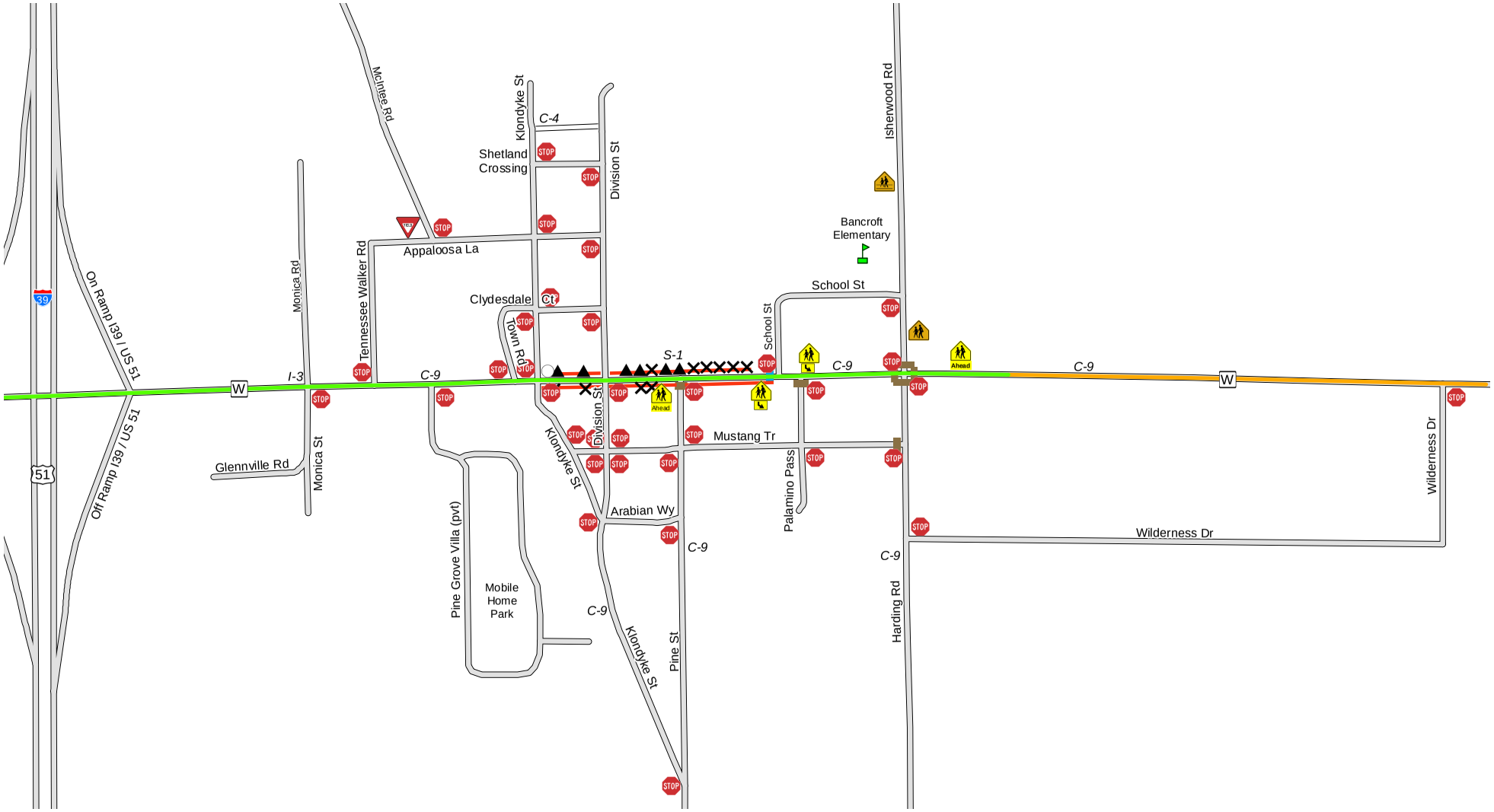
Bike rack in middle of grass island surrounded by driveways that fill with cars.

Curb is not handicapped accessible.
Crosswalk sign was replaced after picture was taken.

Missing a segment of sidewalk to access school.

Bancroft Elementary School - Walk Audit

Map 4



School
Roads
Alley
45 mph Speed Limit
35 mph Speed Limit
Broken (Wheelchair Un-Passable)
Broken (Wheelchair Passable)
In Street Crosswalk Sign
Stop Sign

Yield Sign
Sidewalk Ramp
Sidewalks
Old Crosswalk Sign
Old Crosswalk Ahead Sign
School Crossing Ahead
School Crossing

Good Crosswalk
Faded Crosswalk

I-3 Difficult crossing street
C-4 Concern about dogs
C-9 Cars too close for walking
S-1 Sidewalk obstructed by brush

N
W
E
S

0 180 360 720 1,080
Feet

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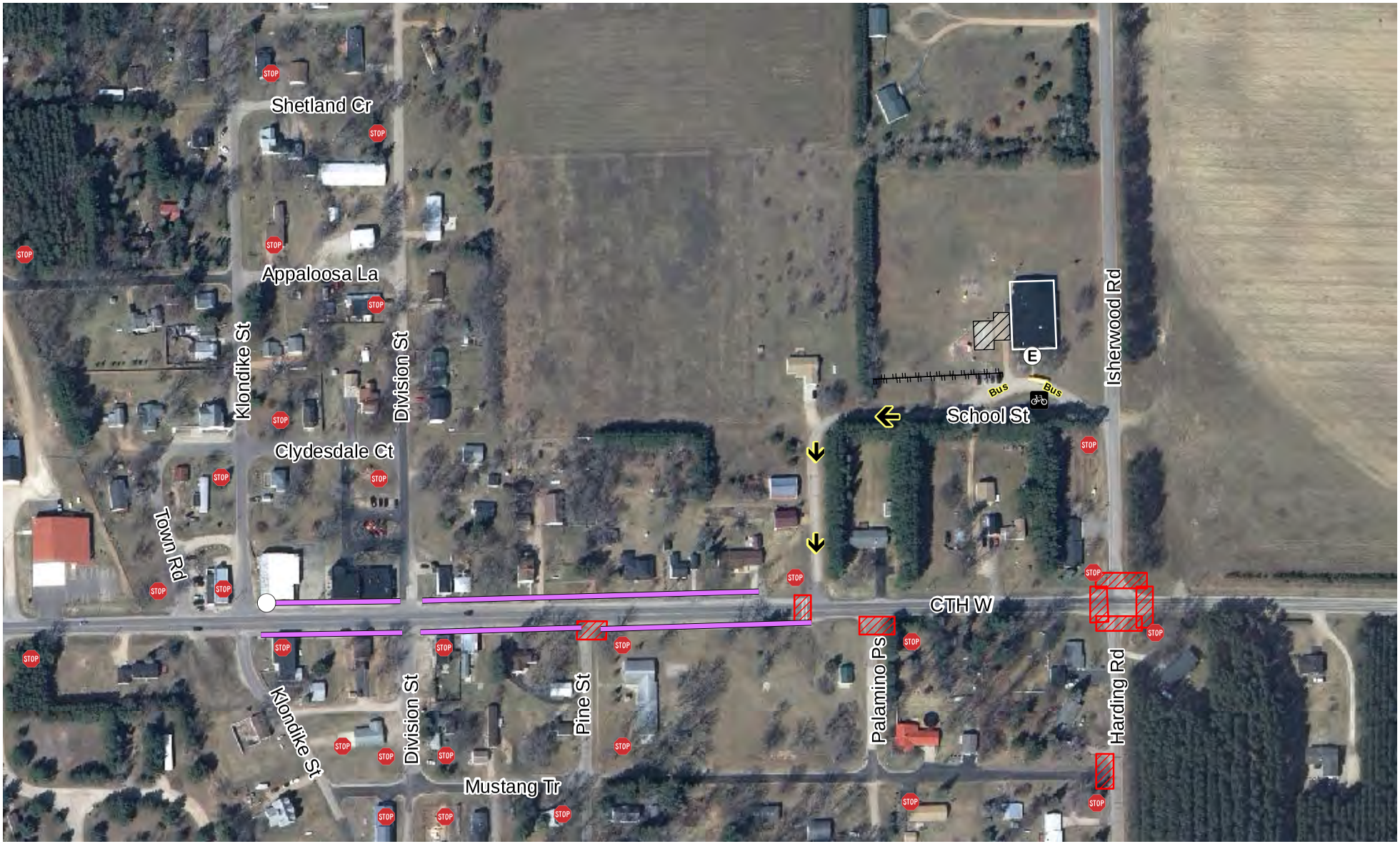
Bancroft Elementary School - Site Assessment

Map 5



Vehicle Driveway
Entrance
Bike Rack
Post & Rail Fence (non-continuous)
Sidewalks
School Footprint
Play Area (Paved)
Crosswalk
Sidewalk Ramp
Bus School Bus Lane

N
W
E
S

0 87.5 175 350 525 Feet

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Chapter 4: Recommendations

This chapter was developed to address the issues and opportunities observed by school officials, Task Force members, parents, and NCWRPC staff throughout the development of this plan. Previous chapters identified existing policies and ordinances, quantified attitudes toward walking and biking, and compiled other information about existing conditions. This chapter will present possible solutions to improve existing conditions and concerns.

The recommendations in this chapter have been developed around the 5 E's for Safe Routes to School. A successful SRTS program will incorporate components of each of these approaches:

Engineering...	Encouragement...	Education...	Enforcement...	Evaluation...
focuses on changing the built walking & biking environment. Bike racks, curb lanes crosswalks, traffic signals, and sidewalks are types of infrastructure that may need changing to improve walking and biking safety near each school.	uses events and contests to mobilize parents and students to try walking and biking to school.	includes identifying safe routes, teaching students to look both ways at intersections, trains students on proper bike riding, and may provide guidance on how to handle potentially dangerous or scary situations.	uses local law enforcement to ensure drivers obey traffic laws. Others are involved in enforcement too, like parents, schools, crossing guards and student safety patrols.	involves monitoring the outcomes and documenting the trends through data collection before and after SRTS activities. Surveys and audits provide quantitative support for improvements that become known through the SRTS planning process.

There are two sections of recommendations:

1) Community-wide; and

2) School Site and Vicinity.

The community-wide recommendations are general actions relating to the 5 E's for both the Village of Almond and the Town of Pine Grove. The school site and vicinity recommendations relate to school-specific policy changes, curriculum modifications, infrastructure changes, and programs to improve the conditions for walking and bicycling at the school site and the surrounding community.

The chapter concludes with an **SRTS Action Plan** that consolidates those actions into a spreadsheet to be implemented within a one to three year timeframe. The SRTS Action Plan also assigns responsibility for implementation, assigns how each action could be paid for, and a timeframe to complete the activity.

Community-wide Recommendations
CW 1. Motorist education.
CW 2. Encourage walking and biking.
CW 3. Bicycle Crash Prevention: Enforcement.
CW 4. School zone enforcement of traffic regulations.
CW 5. Bicyclist Education.
CW 6. Evaluate SRTS.

Issue CW 1 Motorist education

The biggest danger posed to bicyclists and pedestrians is motor vehicles. The Parent Survey responses showed that if traffic speed (50%) or traffic volume (40%) decreased, or if sidewalks or paths were available (21%), then they would allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Schools are vehicle trip generators when parents drop off their children. Residential streets with low average daily traffic volumes near schools become congested during drop-off and pick-up times. Usually, fewer signs and no painted lines on the roads near schools cause confusion about how to share the road with pedestrians and bicyclists. Appropriate signs and road markings exist by Almond and Bancroft schools for the most part.

Recommendations:

CW 1a. Create and use public service announcements to educate drivers about how to share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians.

CW 1b. Use the Village's newsletter to show resident motorists how to share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians.

CW 1c. After all engineering changes are made near a school, create a public education campaign for the surrounding neighborhood and the school parents.

CW 1d. Provide a web page that shows motorists how to share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians:

- http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/**motorist/pedestrians/rules**.htm
- http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/**vehicle/bicycle/rules**.htm

Issue CW 2 Encourage Walking & Biking

Traffic increases near schools because parents are driving their kids to school instead of allowing them to walk or bike. This flow of traffic increases the likelihood of a variety of traffic incidents that includes crashes, speeding, illegal parking, and failure to yield the right of way.

While all the engineering activities are being installed at a particular school, create and plan how to implement the following encouragement activities.

Recommendations:

CW 2a. Create a Walk To School Day every October. Also encourage the public to walk or bike to work on that same day.

CW 2b. Create a *Walking School Bus* program. Volunteer "bus drivers" will be needed, along with staff coordination. Use the guide in Attachment A to form and sustain walking school buses and possibly bike trains too.

CW 2c. Develop a student incentive program such as WisDOT's Mileage Club (http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes-club.htm).

CW 2d. Use Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin's ***"Walking Wisdom" curriculum*** in school to teach young children to walk and bike safely around the community.

CW 2e. Use Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin's ***"Bike Drivers Ed"*** curriculum in school to teach children about riding their bikes safely.

Issue CW 3 Bicycle Crash Prevention: Enforcement

Law enforcement agencies can project the community's commitment to making bicycling a safe, enjoyable activity for community members and visitors through a clear policy that bicycle safety law enforcement is part of their traffic enforcement and community policing activities. Up to 90% of bicycle crashes with motor vehicles can be prevented by selective enforcement of those few vehicular laws whose violation causes most crashes. WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety has materials available that identify these laws and recommend how, when, and why to enforce them. WisDOT's 16-hour course, ***"Enforcement for Bicycle Safety,"*** will be offered for ten or more officers at the request of a law enforcement agency or through a police science program. An introduction to bicycle safety-related laws to save lives is also available for showing at police rollcalls.

Recommendations:

CW 3. Portage County Sheriff's Department requests WisDOT to offer the 16-hour course, "Enforcement for Bicycle Safety" at the Sheriff's offices in Stevens Point.

Issue CW 4 School zone enforcement of traffic regulations

Traffic increases near schools because parents are driving their kids to school instead of allowing them to walk or bike. This flow of traffic increases the likelihood of a variety of traffic incidents that includes crashes, speeding, illegal parking, and failure to yield the right of way.

Recommendations:

CW 4a. Work with Sheriff's Department to report incidents of speeding, parking violations, and crosswalk violations in school zones. Possibly implement this recommendation at individual schools after the CW 1 recommendations for their school are implemented.

CW 4b. Police to provide visibility in each school zone on a rotating basis, so parents remember to continue obeying traffic laws.

CW 4c. Enforce on-site traffic management plan with school staff, and targeted Sheriff's Deputies patrols.

Issue CW 5 Bicyclist education

There is concern that children do not ride their bicycles correctly, and do not obey traffic signs or use crosswalks. Parents may not know the correct ways to ride a bicycle in traffic, so community-wide training may be necessary. Focus should be on educating parents about the responsibilities of being a pedestrian or bicyclist.

Recommendations:

CW 5a. Send information to parents in emails, newsletters, websites, or an instructional DVD illustrating proper ways to walk or bike, and bicycle upkeep tips.

CW 5b. Add sections to current classroom curricula on the benefits of walking or biking to school. Program examples include: *Moving and Munchin,'* the *Green and Healthy School Program,* and Bike Federation's *Walking Wisdom* and *Bike Drivers Ed*.

CW 5c. Continue providing community-wide bicycle training events (e.g. bicycle rodeo with helmet distribution or Bike Fed's *Share and Be Aware Ambassadors*).

Issue CW 6 Evaluate SRTS.

Each recommendation gets a school closer to reaching the goal and the vision of SRTS in Almond-Bancroft. The measurement tool is used to determine if an activity undertaken had the desired outcome.

If progress is not occurring, then try a different action, and measure the results again.

Indicators of Success	
Outcome	**Measurement Tool**
Change in children's behavior (e.g. more walking & biking, and traveling safely).	CW 6a. Perform Parent Survey & homeroom Student Tally after some Recommendations are complete and an education campaign has begun to determine progress. Perform these surveys & tallies at least 3 weeks after starting, or 2 weeks prior to starting any encouragement programs (e.g. Walk To School Day). CW 6b. Teacher & staff observations.
Change driver behavior (e.g. fewer parents driving kids to school, and more drivers following speed limits and regulations).	CW 6b. Teacher & staff observations. CW 6c. Random speed radar survey.
Children using new or modified paths, sidewalks, and bike racks.	CW 6a. Perform Parent Survey & homeroom Student Tally after some Recommendations are complete and an education campaign has begun to determine progress. Perform these surveys & tallies at least 3 weeks after starting, or 2 weeks prior to starting any encouragement programs (e.g. Walk To School Day).
Community & school buy-in.	CW 6d. Walking & biking integrated into curriculum with various lesson plans and school policy revisions. CW 6e. Community regularly announces Walk To School Day events, or recognizes other press releases related to safe travel.

Almond Elementary **School Site and Vicinity Recommendations**
A 1. Elm Street Speed A 2. Relocate Bicycle Parking A 3. Almond Sidewalks A 4. Congestion around school during arrival and dismissal A 5. Community Bicycle Maintenance

Issue A 1 Elm Street Speed

Speeding is still a problem on Elm Street in front of Almond Elementary. In-street school crossing assemblies were installed along with new school speed limit signs. The configuration of Elm Street from Park Street out to County Highway D is designed as a "short cut" into Almond.

Recommendations

A1 a. Place 4 traffic cones in the mid-block crosswalk on Elm Street per Figure 5.

A1 b. Revise the school zone signage per Figure 8.

A1 c. Make Elm St and Church St a four-way stop.

A1 d. Create curb extensions for the pedestrian crossing on Elm Street at Church Street (see Figure 8 for sample curb extensions).

Issue A 2 Relocate Bicycle Parking

Almond's bike rack is on the grass in front of the bus drop off area on Elm Street. When it rains or snows, then the grass becomes muddy. Placing bike racks next to student entrances reinforces that bicycling to school is important, and provides basic security and convenience, so having this rack by the doors is a good idea. The best way to lock a bike is to make 2 points of contact between the bike and bike rack to keep the bike upright, and then to lock the front wheel and bike frame together.

Recommendation

A2 Install new bicycle racks on paved surfaces near selected school entrances. See Figure 6 for possible bike rack locations, and see Figure 7 for a sample bike rack type. Attachment E shows how to determine what bike racks would work best.

Issue A 3 Almond Sidewalks

The Village of Almond sidewalk ordinance requires new sidewalks to have a width of 40 inches, or to be consistent with abutting sidewalks. The current federal standard is 5 feet (60 inches). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities state that where sidewalks are less than five feet in width, passing spaces sufficiently wide enough for wheelchair users to pass one another or to turn around shall be provided at intervals of 200 feet. Driveways provide this passing space. The ADA and ABA guidelines also state that a clear width of 36 inches is the minimum width necessary for a person who uses mobility aids to travel within the restricted space. Therefore an existing sidewalk cannot be less than 40 inches wide.

Any sidewalks installed with Safe Routes To School money must be at least 5 feet wide.

According to a study by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center conducted for the Federal Highway Administration, the likelihood of a site with a paved sidewalk being a crash site is 88.2% lower than a site without a sidewalk after accounting for traffic volume and speed limits (http://www.walkinginfo.org/library/details.cfm?id=51).

Roads are not assessed to the local property owners, so why should sidewalks be any different? Almond's sidewalk ordinances are located in Attachment D of this plan, and are similar to most other incorporated municipalities in Wisconsin. The Village of Weston, Marathon County, WI, pays for installation of all sidewalks as of 2009.

Recommendations:

A3 a. Consider revising sidewalk ordinance (§ 4-2-2) in three ways:
- Change minimum width to 60 inches;
- Require sidewalks along roads that the Village and School District designate as safe routes to school; and
- Have Village, instead of property owner, pay 100% of the cost to install and maintain all sidewalks.

A3 b. Install sidewalk and intersection curb extensions on Division Street per Figure 9.

A3 c. Grind off white line on Church Street, install sidewalk and lights on west side of Church Street from Elm St south to CTH D. This will benefit Walking School Bus kids coming from houses near CTH D to the east and west of Church Street per Figure 9.

A3 d. Grind off white line on High School Street.

A3 e. Paint the following Almond crosswalks in the "Ladder" style (Figure 4) to add visibility to each crossing:
- On CTH J and CTH A at Division Street;
- Mid-block on Elm Street in front of Almond School;
- At the intersection of CTHs A & J (Figure 9); and
- At the intersection of CTH D (Figure 10).

Issue A 4 Congestion around school during arrival & dismissal

Many parents are driving their children to school, and therefore cause congestion around the school property.

Recommendations

A4 a. Evaluate the on-site traffic management plan on an annual basis.
A4 b. Use staff for on-site traffic management enforcement.
A4 c. Promote carpooling among parents to reduce the number of cars from parents that live far from school.
A4 d. Promote school bus use.
A4 e. Promote walking and biking to school among Almond residents.

Issue A 5 Community Bicycle Maintenance

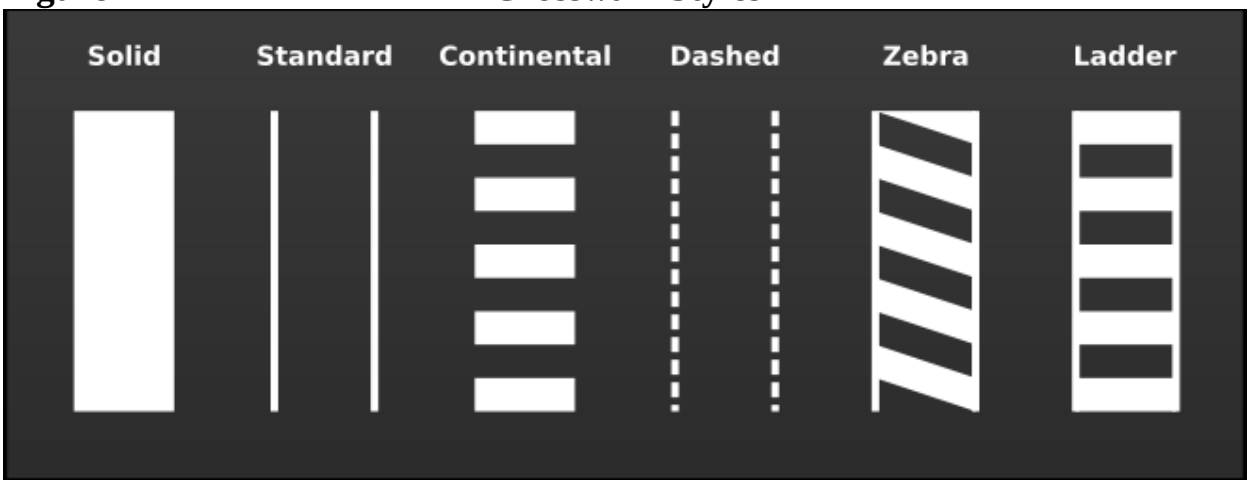
If we want to encourage bicycling, then basic and advanced bicycle maintenance needs will exist. This is an opportunity to engage the community and students to work together to provide this service to everyone.

In Omro, Wisconsin, population 3,517, a middle school physical education teacher started a modest bicycle shop as an after school program. Now there are a host of programs to create the best school for biking, including an expanded on-site bike shop, a school based bike-share program with 35 bikes for PE classes, lunch break rides, and a cyclocross course.

Recommendations

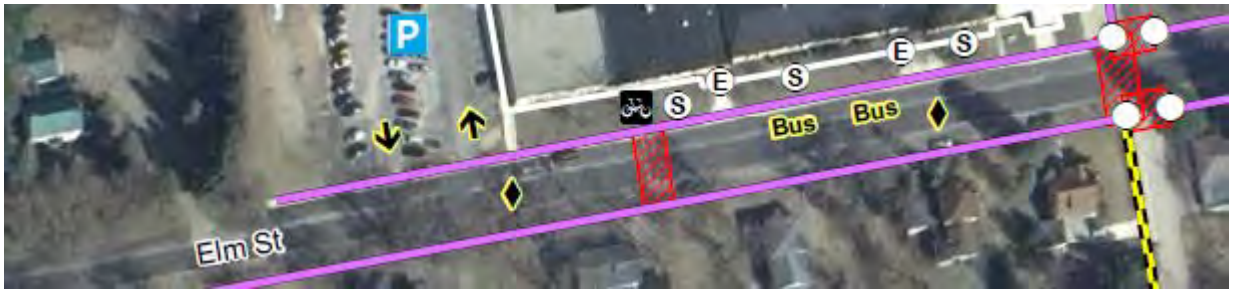
A5 a. Consider developing a school or community bicycle maintenance shop, maybe on the Omro model either in a downtown store front or on school property.
A5 b. Install a bike fixing station in a centrally located public space to allow everyone to walk their bike to the fixing station.

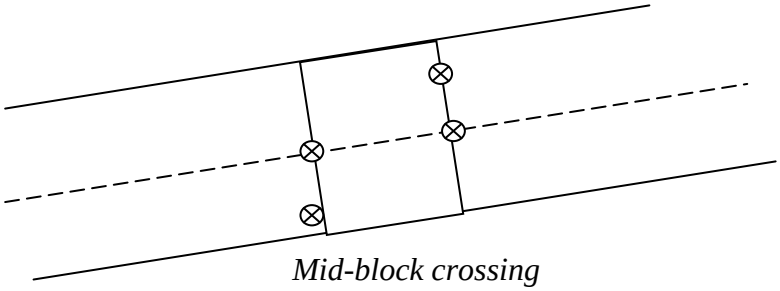
Figure 4 **Crosswalk Styles**



Source: U.S. FHWA

Figure 5 **Slowing Down Elm Street (see A1 e.)**





Mid-block crossing

Placing traffic cones ("⊗") in locations pictured above will reduce perceived lane width and slow vehicles down. In each direction, place one cone on centerline, and one cone 11-feet toward the curb. Paint dots on the road where cones should be placed to make cone placement easier.

Figure 6 Potential Almond Bike Rack Locations (see A2)

Elm Street entrances for Almond School

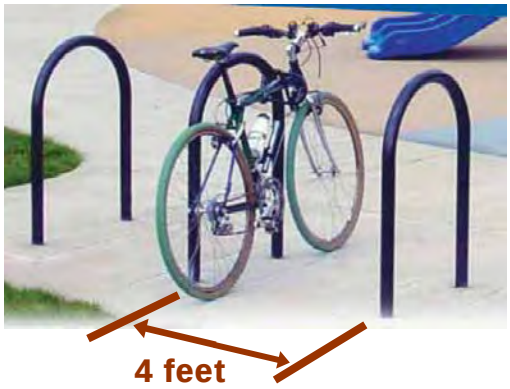
Install bike racks on concrete pads in areas adjacent to the sidewalk in the "X" areas.

Figure 7 Bike Rack Examples (see A2)

cyclesafe.com & NCWRPC

3 inverted U's attached to create movable bike rack. This rack parks 6 bikes.

Mount the inverted U's 4-feet apart.



cyclesafe.com & NCWRPC

3 inverted U's mounted into the concrete. This rack assembly also parks 6 bikes.

Mount the inverted U's 4-feet apart.

See the guide in <u>Attachment A</u> showing how to choose a good bike rack.

Figure 8 **Elm Street Changes (A1 f, g, & h.)**

Source: NCWRPC

Elm Street looking east from Park Street.

A1 f.

- Move school speed limit sign closer to front of school on its own post. That would be the first school speed limit sign in this direction on Elm Street. This way people will respect the reason behind the speed limit. The speed limit is in effect from where the sign is placed.
- Move school zone sign (S1-1) higher on post, and add "ahead" sign (W16-9P) below school sign (S1-1).
- Add speed limit and "School Zone End" signs per MUTCD standards as people leave school zone.

Source: Jill Kollock

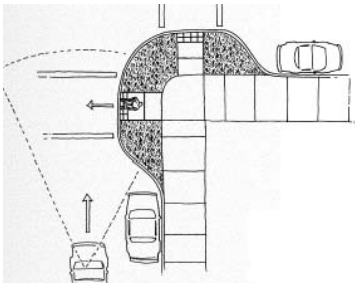
Elm Street looking east at Church Street

Source: Richard Drdul

Street with midblock curb extensions

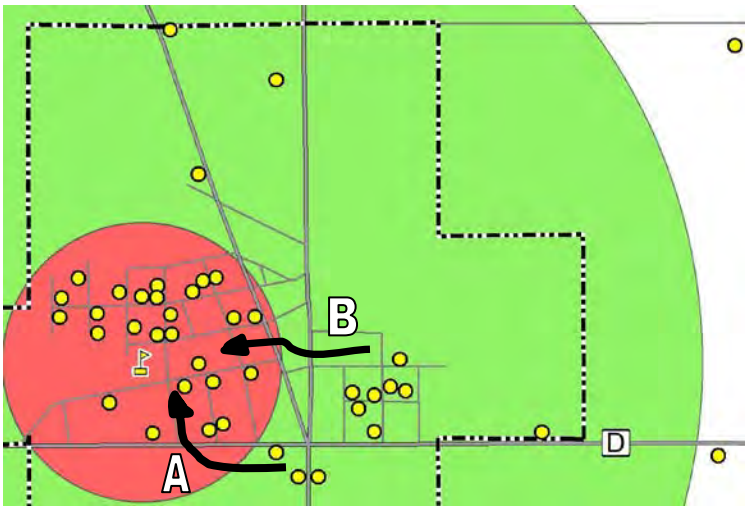
A1 g. Add stop signs on Elm Street at Church Street. Elm & Church would become a 4-way stop.

A1 h. Create curb extensions on all four corners of Elm Street at Church Street.



Source: FHWA

Figure 9 Sidewalks for Walking School Buses (A3 b.; A3 c.; & A3 e.)



Approximate student locations in Almond.

A represents students that would walk up new sidewalk on west side of Church St, north off of CTH D. Church Street also has parental traffic heading south to CTH D after dropping kids off from out in the country, so a sidewalk on this street would help kids stay safe.

B represents students walking across CTHs A and J (Main St) along Division Street.

Source: NCWRPC

Potential new Division Street sidewalk & curb extensions.

Legend

1. Curb extensions (bump-outs).
2. Sidewalk on north side of Division between CTH J (Main St) and CTH A.
3. "Ladder" style painted crosswalks (Figure 4).
4. Remove this sidewalk segment so kids use the new crossings and sidewalk.

Figure 10 New Crosswalks (see A3 e.)

Source: NCWRPC

5 corners intersection in Almond

Legend

3. Paint "ladder" style crosswalks (Figure 4).

Bancroft Elementary **School Site and Vicinity Recommendations**
B 1. Bancroft School Truancy

Issue B 1 Bancroft School Truancy

The Town of Pine Grove (Bancroft) and the school district both have been frustrated with the problem of truancy. The transient nature of mobile home park residents makes sustaining any program a constant struggle. School buses pick up students at one stop within the mobile home park, and on a loop throughout Bancroft, and then drop them off in front of Almond Elementary (8 miles away). Many parents are not home when the children leave for school.

Recommendations:

B1 a. Continue researching and trying new ways to get kids to want to attend school. *Truancy Reduction Efforts, 2000,* tabulated by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Committee is in Attachment F.

B1 b. Consider using SRTS recommendations in Attachment G as part of truancy reduction efforts.

Almond-Bancroft SRTS Action Plan

The following **SRTS Action Plan** lists all of the previous recommendations, provides a cost estimate, and a lead entity to implement each action.

There is a **Community-wide SRTS Action Plan** for all the activities that will affect both schools, and there is an **SRTS Action Plan for Almond and for Bancroft**.

These Action Plans are lists of reasonably attainable actions that may occur in 2-3 years. Each Action Plan contains activities within each strategy area: 1) Engineering; 2) Encouragement; 3) Education; 4) Enforcement; and, 5) Evaluation. A successful SRTS program will incorporate components of each of these approaches.

The Action Plans are meant to complement the recommendations discussed throughout this chapter by assigning each action with a cost assignment, a timeframes to complete the activity, and responsibility for implementation.

An annual review of these Action Plans by the SRTS Task Force will provide guidance to make additional changes if low results occur. New activities to consider may become apparent when data received annually after each Class Tally and Parental Survey, or from the WisDOT SRTS website.

Abbreviated terms:

Eng. = An engineering action

Hwy. = Portage County Highway Department

BFW = Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin

NCWRPC = North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Sheriff = Portage County Sheriffs Department

Both schools = Almond Elementary and Bancroft Elementary.

School Dist. = Almond-Bancroft School District

SRTS = Safe Routes To School

Town = Town of Pine Grove

Village = Village of Almond

WisDOT = Wisconsin Department of Transportation

UWEX = University of Wisconsin Extension staff located in Portage County

Community-wide SRTS Action Plan

Strategy Type	Activities	Schools that an Activity Applies To	Funding Source	Responsible Agencies (Lead agency in bold)	Time Frame
Engineering	All engineering actions are listed under each school.	Both Schools			See school Action Plans
Encouragement	**CW 2a.** Create Walk To School event each October.	Both Schools	Current staff	**School Dist**., NCWRPC	Summer/Fall annually
	CW 2b. Create Walking School Bus program.	Both Schools	Current staff	**School Dist**., NCWRPC	Spring 2013
	CW 2c. Develop student incentive program.	Both Schools	Current WisDOT & school staff	**School Dist.,** NCWRPC	With start of Walk School Bus.
Education	**CW 1a.** Create public service announcements to educate drivers about sharing the road.	Both Schools	Current staff	**BFW**, School Dist., NCWRPC	Spring 2013
	CW 1b. Use Village/Town newsletter to show residents how to share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians.	Both Schools	Current staff	**Village**, **Town**, BFW, School Dist.	Start in 2013
	CW 1c. Implement school and neighborhood education about Engineering actions.	Both Schools	Current staff	**Village, School Dist.**	As engineering actions occur
	CW 1d. Provide a web page to show motorists how to share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians.	Both Schools	Current staff	**NCWRPC,** Village, Town, School Dist.,	Fall 2012
	CW 2d & 2e. Use Walking Wisdom and Bike Drivers Ed curriculums.	Almond	Current staff	**School Dist.,** BFW	Annually
	CW 3. Request Enforcement for Bicycle Safety course.	Both Schools	Current staff	**Sheriff,** WisDOT	2013
	CW 5a. Provide parents with information illustrating proper ways to walk or bike, and bicycle upkeep tips.	Almond	Current staff	**School Dist.,** BFW, WisDOT	Fall 2012
	CW 5b. Add sections to current classroom curricula on the benefits of walking or biking to school. Program examples include: *Moving and Munchin,'* the *Green and Healthy School Program*, and Bike Federation's *Walking Wisdom* and *Bike Drivers Ed*.	Almond	Current staff	**School Dist.**	Fall 2013
	CW 5c. Continue providing community-wide bicycle training events (e.g. bicycle rodeo with helmet distribution or Bike Fed's *Share and Be Aware Ambassadors*).	Both schools	Current staff	**School Dist.**	Annually

Community-wide SRTS Action Plan Continued…

Strategy Type	Activities	Schools that an Activity Applies To	Funding Source	Responsible Agencies (Lead agency in bold)	Time Frame
Enforcement	**CW 4a.** Work with Sheriff's Department to report incidents of speeding, parking violations, and crosswalk violations in school zones.	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist., Sheriff**	Regularly
	CW 4b. Police to provide visibility in each school zone on a rotating basis, so parents remember to continue obeying traffic laws.	Both schools	Existing staff	**Sheriff**	As needed
	CW 4c. Enforce on-site traffic management plan with school staff.	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Regularly
	CW 3c. Provide visibility in each school zone to remind parents to obey traffic laws.	Both schools	Existing staff	**Sheriff**	Regularly
Evaluation	**CW 6a.** Perform Parent Survey & homeroom Student Tally after some Recommendations are complete and an education campaign has begun to determine progress. Perform these surveys & tallies at least 3 weeks after starting, or 2 weeks prior to starting any encouragement programs (e.g. Walk To School Day).	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	1 semester after eng. activity done.
	CW 6d. Walking & biking integrated into curriculum with various lesson plans and school policy revisions.	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Annually
	CW 6e. Community regularly announces Walk To School Day events, or recognizes other press releases related to safe travel.	Both schools	Existing staff	**Village, Town**	Annually

Almond Elementary SRTS Action Plan

Strategy Type	Activities	Location of Activity	Funding Source	Responsible Agencies (Lead agency in bold)	Time Frame
Engineering	**A1 a**. Place 4 traffic cones in the mid-block crosswalk on Elm Street per Figure 5.	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Daily
	A1 b. Revise the school zone signage per Figure 8.	Elm St from Church St, west to end of school parking lot	Existing staff	**Village**	Summer 2012
	A 1c. . Make Elm St and Church St a four-way stop.		Existing staff	**Village**	Annually
	A 1d. . Create curb extensions for the pedestrian crossing on Elm Street at Church Street (see Figure 8 for sample curb extensions).	Intersections at 8th St & Airport, and 8th St & Pepper Ave.	SRTS grant	**Village**	2011
	A 2. Install new bicycle racks on paved surfaces near selected school entrances (see Attachment E).	Almond	SRTS grant	**Village, School Dist.**	Summer 2013
	A 3b. Install sidewalk and intersection curb extensions on Division Street per Figure 9.	Almond	SRTS grant	**Village**	Summer 2013
	A 3c. Grind off white line on Church Street, install sidewalk and lights on west side of Church Street from Elm St south to CTH D.	Almond	Existing staff	**Village**	Summer 2013
	A 3d. Grind off white line on High School Street.	Almond	Existing staff	**Village**	Summer 2013
	A 3e. Paint the following Almond crosswalks in the "Ladder" style (Figure 4) to add visibility to each crossing	• CTH J and A @ Division St (Fig.9) • Mid-block Elm St in front of Almond • CTHs A, J, & D (Fig.10)	Existing staff	**Hwy**	Summer 2012
	A 5b. Install a bike fixing station in a centrally located public space to allow everyone to walk their bike to the fixing station.	Almond	SRTS grant	**Village**	Summer 2013
Education	**A 2a.** Create a public education campaign for the surrounding neighborhood.	Whole community.	Current staff	**School Dist.**, PTA, UWEX, BFW, NCWRPC	When all Eng. actions done.
	A 3a. Participate in citywide Walk To School Day.	Whole community.	Current staff	**School Dist.**, PTLs, **Sheriff,** NCWRPC	Annually in October

Almond SRTS Action Plan continued

Strategy Type	Activities	Location of Activity	Funding Source	Responsible Agencies (Lead agency in bold)	Time Frame
Encouragement	**A 3b.** Create *walking school bus*, or *bike train*.	Almond	SRTS grant	**School Dist**., NCWRPC	2013
	A 3c. Develop student Mileage Club	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist**., NCWRPC	2013
	A 4c. Promote carpooling among parents who live far from school.	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Annually
	A 4d. Promote school bus use.	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Annually
	A 4e. Promote walking and biking to school among Almond residents.	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist., Village**, NCWRPC	Annually
	A 5a. Consider developing a school or community bicycle maintenance shop.	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist.,** NCWRPC	2012-2017
Enforcement	**A 3a.** Consider revising sidewalk ordinance.	Almond	Existing staff	**Village**	2012-2017
	A 4b. Use staff for on-site traffic management enforcement.	Almond	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Daily
Evaluation	**A 4a.** Evaluate the on-site traffic management plan.	Both schools	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Annually

Bancroft Elementary SRTS Action Plan

Strategy Type	Activities	Location of Activity	Funding Source	Responsible Agencies (Lead agency in bold)	Time Frame
Enforcement	**B 1a.** Continue researching and trying new ways to get kids to want to attend school.	Bancroft	Existing staff	**School Dist.**	Annually
Encouragement	**B 1b.** Consider using SRTS recommendations in Attachment G as part of truancy reduction efforts.	Bancroft	Existing staff	**School Dist**, NCWRPC	Annually

ATTACHMENT A
WALKING SCHOOL BUS & BIKE TRAIN GUIDE

ATTACHMENT B
STUDENT TALLY & PARENT SURVEY FORMS

Parent Survey About Walking and Biking to School

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Your child's school wants to learn your thoughts about children walking and biking to school. This survey will take about 5 - 10 minutes to complete. We ask that each family complete only one survey per school your children attend. If more than one child from a school brings a survey home, please fill out the survey for the child with the next birthday from today's date.

After you have completed this survey, send it back to the school with your child or give it to the teacher. Your responses will be kept confidential and neither your name nor your child's name will be associated with any results.

Thank you for participating in this survey!

+ CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY – BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY +

School Name:

1. What is the grade of the child who brought home this survey? ☐☐ Grade (PK,K,1,2,3…)

2. Is the child who brought home this survey male or female? ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. How many children do you have in Kindergarten through 8th grade? ☐☐

4. What is the street intersection nearest your home? (Provide the names of two intersecting streets)

and

Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box.

5. How far does your child live from school?

- ☐ Less than ¼ mile
- ☐ ¼ mile up to ½ mile
- ☐ ½ mile up to 1 mile
- ☐ 1 mile up to 2 miles
- ☐ More than 2 miles
- ☐ Don't know

Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box. +

6. On most days, how does your child arrive and leave for school? (Select one choice per column, mark box with X)

Arrive at school	Leave from school
☐ Walk	☐ Walk
☐ Bike	☐ Bike
☐ School Bus	☐ School Bus
☐ Family vehicle (only children in your family)	☐ Family vehicle (only children in your family)
☐ Carpool (Children from other families)	☐ Carpool (Children from other families)
☐ Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)	☐ Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)
☐ Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)	☐ Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)

+ Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box +

7. How long does it normally take your child to get to/from school? (Select one choice per column, mark box with X)

Travel time to school	Travel time from school
☐ Less than 5 minutes	☐ Less than 5 minutes
☐ 5 – 10 minutes	☐ 5 – 10 minutes
☐ 11 – 20 minutes	☐ 11 – 20 minutes
☐ More than 20 minutes	☐ More than 20 minutes
☐ Don't know / Not sure	☐ Don't know / Not sure

+ +

8. Has your child asked you for permission to walk or bike to/from school in the last year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. At what grade would you allow your child to walk or bike to/from school without an adult?

(Select a grade between PK,K,1,2,3…) ☐☐ grade **(or)** ☐ I would not feel comfortable at any grade

Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box

10. What of the following issues affected your decision to allow, or not allow, your child to walk or bike to/from school? (Select ALL that apply)

11. Would you probably let your child walk or bike to/from school if this problem were changed or improved? (Select one choice per line, mark box with X)

	My child already walks or bikes to/from school		
☐ Distance	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Convenience of driving	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Time	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Child's before or after-school activities	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Speed of traffic along route	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Amount of traffic along route	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Adults to walk or bike with	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Sidewalks or pathways	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Safety of intersections and crossings	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Crossing guards	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Violence or crime	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure
☐ Weather or climate	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Not Sure

Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box

12. In your opinion, how much does your child's school encourage or discourage walking and biking to/from school?

☐ Strongly Encourages ☐ Encourages ☐ Neither ☐ Discourages ☐ Strongly Discourages

13. How much fun is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

☐ Very Fun ☐ Fun ☐ Neutral ☐ Boring ☐ Very Boring

14. How healthy is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

☐ Very Healthy ☐ Healthy ☐ Neutral ☐ Unhealthy ☐ Very Unhealthy

Place a clear 'X' inside box. If you make a mistake, fill the entire box, and then mark the correct box

15. What is the highest grade or year of school you completed?

☐ Grades 1 through 8 (Elementary)
☐ Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school)
☐ Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate)
☐ College 1 to 3 years (Some college or technical school)
☐ College 4 years or more (College graduate)
☐ Prefer not to answer

16. Please provide any additional comments below.

Safe Routes to School Students Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet

CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY – BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY

School Name:

Teacher's First Name:

Teacher's Last Name:

Grade: (PK,K,1,2,3...) 0 2

Monday's Date (Week count was conducted) M M D D Y Y Y Y

Number of Students Enrolled in Class: 1 5

- Please conduct these counts **on two of the following three days Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. (Three days would provide better data if counted)**
- **Please do not conduct these counts on Mondays or Fridays.**
- Before asking your students to raise their hands, please read through all possible answer choices so they will know their choices. Each Student may only answer once.
- Ask your students as a group the question "**How did you arrive at school today?**"
- Then, reread each answer choice and record the number of students that raised their hands for each. **Place just one character or number in each box.**
- Follow the same procedure for the question **"How do you plan to leave for home after school?"**
- You can conduct the counts once per day but during the count please ask students both the school arrival and departure questions.
- Please conduct this count regardless of weather conditions (i.e., ask these questions on rainy days, too).

Step 1.
Fill in the weather conditions and number of students in each class

Step 2.
AM – "**How did you arrive at school today?**" Record the number of hands for each answer.
PM – "**How do you plan to leave for home after school?**" Record the number of hands for each answer.

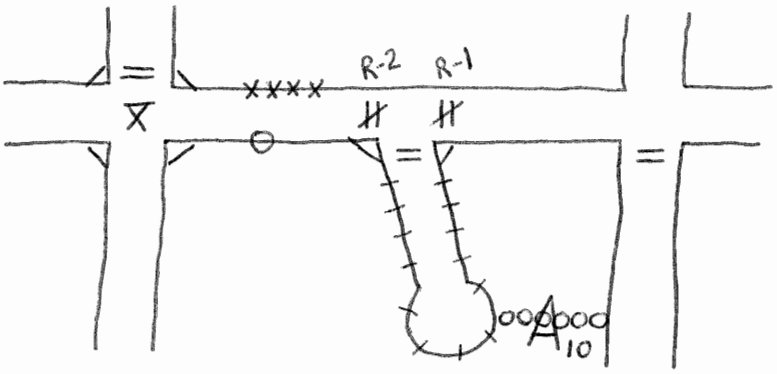
Key	**Weather** S= sunny R= rainy O=overcast SN=snow	**Student Tally** Number in class when count made	**Walk** -	**Bike** -	**School Bus** -	**Family Vehicle** Only with Children from your family	**Carpool** Riding with children from other families	**Transit** City bus, subway, etc.	**Other** Skate-board, scooter, etc.
Sample AM	S N	2 0	2	3	8	3		3	1
Sample PM	R	1 9	3	3	8	1	2	2	
Tues. AM									
Tues. PM									
Wed. AM									
Wed. PM									
Thurs. AM									
Thurs. PM									

Please list any disruptions to these counts or any unusual travel conditions to/from the school on the days of the tally.

ATTACHMENT C
WALK AUDIT MAP CODES

Walking Audit
Example and Legend

1. Please indicate on the map your observations of walking & bicycling conditions.
2. Write any concerns you have along the route on the map and the attached paper too.
3. Use the following symbols and codes ("S-1" etc.) below for common observations or concerns:



Notes:

A10 was overgrown and no signs existed at either end.

Sidewalk

- No sidewalk
- Un-passable/Un-even sidewalk (not wheelchair accessible)
- Broken sidewalk (wheelchair can still use)
- Asphalt path between houses, 10 feet wide
- Concrete path between houses, 5 feet wide

S-1 Sidewalk/path obstructed by tree branches or bushes
S-2 Sidewalk width reduced, difficult for wheelchair to use
S-3 Visibility at driveways blocked by bushes or fences
S-4 Drivers going in or out of driveways did not yield
S-0 Other sidewalk concerns or observations

Intersections

R-0 No curb ramp at the corner
R-1 Curb Ramp

- Curb ramp (diagonal hash mark on corner)

R-2 Curb ramp difficult for wheelchair user (give reason: too steep, broken, etc.)

- Crosswalk painted
- Faded crosswalk

I-2 Problems seeing drivers or drivers seeing you (please explain)
I-3 I did not feel safe crossing the street (please write why)
I-0 Other intersection concerns or observations

Traffic Signals

- Traffic Signal
- Traffic Signal with pedestrian signals on all 4 crossings

T-1 Took too long for ped. signal to come on
T-2 Not enough time to cross before signal changed
T-3 Turning drivers did not yield
T-4 Problems with drivers turning right on red
T-5 Problems with drivers running yellow/red signal
T-0 Other traffic signal concerns or observations

Comfort Considerations and Concerns

C-1 Drinking fountain
C-2 Benches
C-3 Shade Trees
C-4 Concern about dogs or other animals
C-5 Concern about scary people
C-6 Concerns about odors or fumes
C-7 Noisy
C-8 Steep or long hills
C-9 Cars on the street are too close to walking
C-0 Other comfort concerns or observations

General Traffic Concerns

A-1 Too much traffic **A-3** Drivers too fast **A-2** Sidewalk too close to the street **A-0** List Other traffic concerns

ATTACHMENT D
VILLAGE SIDEWALK ORDINANCES

Village of Almond, Clerk
1190 County Road D
Almond, WI. 54909

CHAPTER 2: STREETS AND SIDEWALKS

Section

§ 4-2-1 SPECIAL STREET IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(A) *General application.*

(1) The installation of any special street improvement shall be an exercise of the special taxing power or of the police power of the village as may from time to time be determined by the Village Board and the property served shall be assessed pursuant to the provisions of Wis. Stats. §§ 66.0701 and 66.0703.

(2) The total cost of any special improvement to be paid in whole or in part by special assessment shall include the direct and indirect costs reasonably attributable thereto including, but not limited to, materials, supplies, labor, equipment, side preparation and restoration, damages occasioned by the special improvement, interest on bonds or notes issued in anticipation of the collection of assessments, and a reasonable charge for engineering, legal and administrative costs.

(3) The total assessment for any special improvement shall be based upon the total cost, as defined in division (2) above, and shall be apportioned among the individual parcels benefitted. The apportionment shall generally be computed on a lineal frontage basis unless the Village Board otherwise determines that extenuating circumstances require a different method of assessment.

(B) *Curb and gutter.*

(1) Curb and gutter shall be installed in accordance with specifications established by the Village Board.

(2) Special assessment for all new curb and gutter shall be levied at 100% of the total cost and replacement curb and gutter shall be levied at 50% of the total cost, or as determined by the Village Board.

(C) *Homeowner to pay one-half of cost.* Whenever the Village Board shall remove existing sidewalks permanently, the homeowner will pay one-half the cost of the sidewalk being removed and restoration of black dirt and seeding.

(D) *Assessments a lien.* All charges established in this section shall be direct liens upon the property improved.
(Am. Ord. passed 4-14-2003)

§ 4-2-2 SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR.

(A) *Owner to construct.* It shall be the duty of the abutting owner to repair, construct and perpetually maintain sidewalks along or upon any street, alley or highway in the village. Whenever the Village Board shall, by resolution, determine that a sidewalk be laid, rebuilt, repaired, lowered or raised along or upon any public street, alley or highway within the village, it shall proceed according to Wis Stats. § 66.0907.

(B) *Permit required.* No person shall hereafter lay, remove, replace or repair any public sidewalk within the village unless he or she is under contract with the village to do the work or has obtained a permit therefor from the Village Superintendent at least 7 days before work is proposed to be undertaken. No fee shall be charged for such permits.

(C) *Specifications.*

(1) *Location.* The sidewalk shall be located in such places as designated by the Village Board.

(2) *Subgrading.* When cutting the subgrade, the material shall be excavated to a depth 2 inches below the underside of the concrete and brought to grade with sand. When filling is required, the subgrade shall be brought to proper grade in uniform layers not to exceed 6 inches in thickness and shall be thoroughly compacted mechanically.

(3) *Width and thickness of sidewalks and driveways.* All walks, unless otherwise provided for, shall have a standard width of 40 inches or consistent with abutting sidewalks with a transverse slope of 1/4 inch per foot toward the curb. The minimum thickness of any part of a walk shall be 4 inches and in places where driveways cross, shall have a minimum thickness of 6 inches.

(4) *Concrete.* All sidewalks shall be one course concrete construction, 6 bag mix, with 4-inch slump. The surface shall be struck, troweled and brushed in a uniform and even mariner. Contraction joints shall be located transversely every 5 feet at a depth of ½ inch. Expansion joints shall be 1-inch thick and shall be located transversely at each property line, and in addition, 1 expansion joint shall be located at least every 20 feet.

(D) *New sidewalks.* Special assessments for all new sidewalks shall be levied at 50% of the total cost.

(E) *Width and thickness.* Residential walks shall be 4 feet in width and not less than 4-inches thick except within driveway approaches where the minimum thickness shall be 6 inches; provided that walks in residential areas may be repaired or replaced to a width not less than the existing width on the effective date of this section. Sidewalks in front of commercial or industrial establishments shall be not

less than 8 feet in width and 5 inches in thickness except within driveway approaches where the minimum thickness shall be 7 inches.

(F) *Finishing*. Before the last finish has set, the sidewalk shall be steel troweled and brushed in transverse direction. Before final finishing, the surface shall be checked with a 10-foot straight edge and any areas departing more than 1/8 inch from the testing edge shall be corrected by adding or removing concrete while the concrete in the walk is still plastic.

(G) *Jointing*. Transverse, full depth, 1/2-inch thick expansion joints of premolded expansion material shall be located at the property line, and where the walk intersects another walk, curb line, building or driveway approach, and at buildings, walls, poles and stop boxes. The expansion joint material shall be placed in a neat and workmanlike manner with its upper edge slightly below the finished sidewalk surface. Dummy groove joints for controlled cracking, at least 1 inch in thickness and 5/16-inch in depth, shall be placed at intervals of approximately 5 feet.

(H) *Curing and drying*. As soon as any of the concrete work hereinbefore mentioned has been finished and hardened sufficiently to prevent excessive marring of the surface, it shall be cured and protected against rapid drying. Failure to comply with this requirement shall be deemed sufficient cause for suspension of the work. Curing shall be accomplished by the "Impervious Coating," "Wet Fabric" or "Paper" methods. For impervious coating or membrane curing, only those materials meeting requirements of ASTM Specs. C156-44T, *Method of Test for Efficiency of Materials for Curing Concrete* shall be used. The specifications are hereby adopted by reference as if fully set forth herein. Walks shall be kept free from all traffic at normal temperatures for 48 hours and in cold weather (below 5u°F) for 96 hours. No concrete shall be poured when the temperature may be expected to fall below 35°F in any 72-hour period or upon frozen subgrade.

(I) *Alteration*. These specifications shall be adhered to, unless altered by the Almond Village Board.

.SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL 4-5-1 §

TITLE IV: PUBLIC WORKS - 5. Snow and Ice Removal

The owner, occupant or person in charge of each and every building or structure or unoccupied lot in the Village of Almond fronting or abutting any street shall clean or cause to be cleaned the sidewalk in front of or adjoining each such home, building or unoccupied lot, as the case may be, of snow or ice to the width of the sidewalk within 24 hours from the time when the snow ceases to fall and shall cause the same to be kept clear from ice and snow, provided that when the ice has formed on any sidewalk so that it cannot be immediately removed, the persons herein referred to shall keep the same sprinkled with salt, sawdust or sand. If the snow or ice is not removed, the Village Board shall cause such to be removed and shall report the cost of the removal to the Village Clerk .who shall insert the cost in the tax roll as a special tax and lien against the premises

:Statutory reference

(Wis Stats. § 66.0907(5

Last Updated on Saturday, 03 July 2010 16:45

.OPERATION ON SIDEWALKS PROHIBITED 7-2-1 §

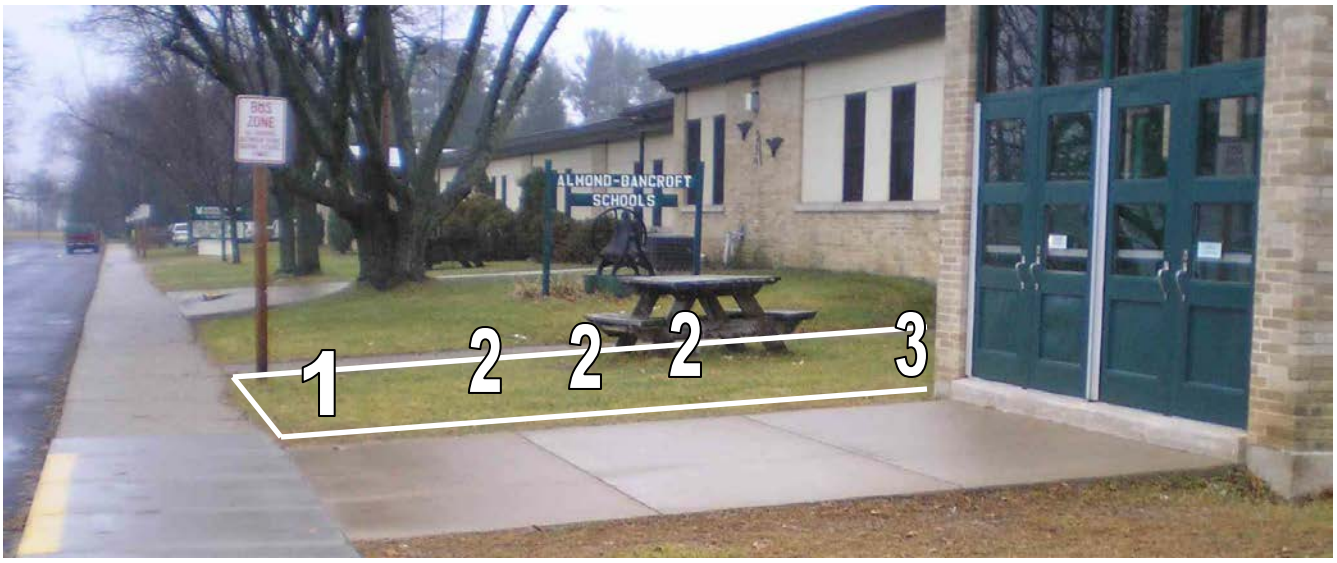
TITLE VII: MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC - 2. Bicycles

A) No person shall run or propel any bicycle on any sidewalk within the village, except bicycles with wheels 20 inches in) .diameter or less in residential areas for the purpose of learning

.B) Bicycles of all sizes may be operated on bridge sidewalks, but shall maintain the right?of?way to pedestrians)

Last Updated on Saturday, 03 July 2010 20:29

ATTACHMENT E
BICYCLE RACK PURCHASE GUIDES



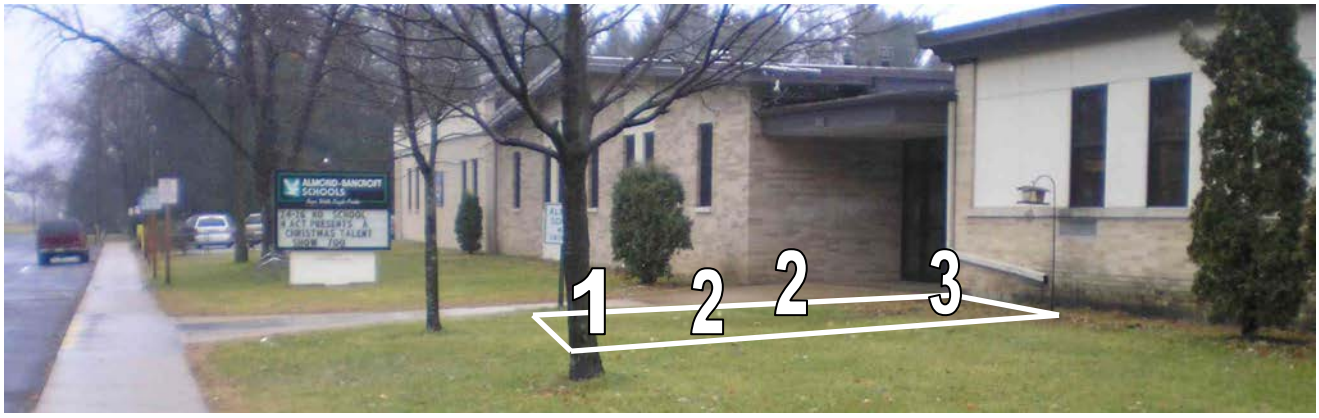
Concrete bike parking pad outline

1 is this: 

2 is a series of inverted “U”s.

The whole assembly could look like this:

3 is a skateboard locking rack like this:



Concrete bike parking pad outline

If the inverted “U”s don’t park enough bikes, then use:

City of Madison Bike Rack Requirements

1) Bicycle Parking Space Size, Access Aisles, and Vertical Clearance

a) Required bicycle parking spaces shall be at least 2 feet by 6 feet.
b) An access aisle of at least 5 feet shall be provided in each bicycle parking facility.
c) Such space shall have a vertical clearance of at least 6 feet.

2) Bicycle Rack Design

Structures that require a user-supplied locking device

a) shall be designed to accommodate U-shaped locking devices.
b) All lockers and racks must be securely anchored to the ground or the building structure to prevent the racks and lockers from being removed from the location.
c) The surfacing of such facilities shall be designed and maintained to be mud and dust free.

3) Bicycle Rack Location on Site

a) Bicycle parking facilities shall be located in a clearly designated safe and convenient location.
b) The design and location of such facility shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment.
c) The facility location shall be at least as convenient as the majority of auto parking spaces provided.

Examples of Bicycle racks that <u>do not</u> meet the design requirements above:

Grid or Fence Style Racks

Wave or Ribbon Style racks

Racks that hold the bike by the wheel with no way to lock the frame and wheel to the rack with a U-lock

Examples of Bicycle racks that do meet the design requirements above:

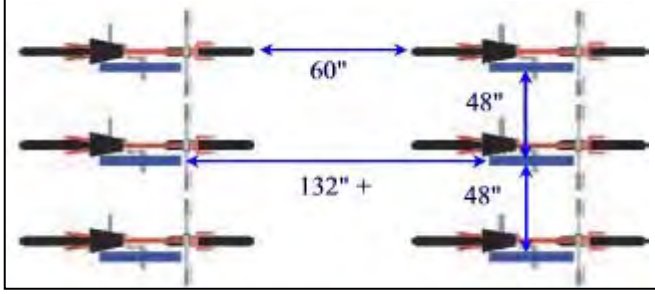
Madrax Spartan Rack

Madrax Sentry Rack

Dero Campus Rack

Saris City Rack

Layout for inverted-U type rack installation, two bicycles to be parked on each inverted-U.



Inverted-U Type Racks

Dero Bike Hitch

Saris Post & Ring

Dero Swerve Rack

If you have questions about whether a particular bicycle parking rack you are considering using meets these requirements, please contact
Arthur Ross, Pedestrian-Bicycle Coordinator, 608/266-6225

ATTACHMENT F
TRUANCY REDUCTION EFFORTS

A BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

Truancy Reduction Efforts

August 2000

1999-2000 Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

Senate Members:	Assembly Members:
Gary R. George, Co-chairperson	Carol Kelso, Co-chairperson
Judith Robson	Stephen Nass
Brian Burke	John Gard
Peggy Rosenzweig	Robert Ziegelbauer
Mary Lazich	David Cullen

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August 9, 2000

Senator Gary R. George and
Representative Carol Kelso, Co-Chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator George and Representative Kelso:

We have completed a best practices review of local government operations, as directed by s. 13.94(8), Wis. Stats. Efforts to reduce truancy in Wisconsin public schools are the topic of this review.

On average, approximately 15,600 students are truant from school on any given day, and nearly one-third of absences in the 1998-99 academic year were caused by truancy. To address the problem of truancy, state statutes were significantly modified in 1997 Wisconsin Act 239, which expanded the definition of habitual truancy and provided municipal governments with additional options for addressing both simple and habitual truancy. Many of the local governments with which we spoke have moved to strengthen their truancy ordinances as a result, and most local government officials, school administrators, and law enforcement officials believe the changes assist municipalities in addressing truant behavior.

We found, however, that the statutory changes intended to reduce truancy have not yet resulted in lowered truancy rates. The proportion of students classified as habitual truants increased significantly during 1998-99, the first year for which the expanded definition of habitual truancy applied: 74,569 students, or 8.7 percent of the total enrollment in Wisconsin public schools, were classified as habitual truants in that year. In the previous year, 59,304 public school students, or 6.9 percent of the total enrollment, had been classified as habitual truants. It is important to note that changes to truancy laws occurred relatively recently, and improvement in truancy rates may occur in the future as municipalities take advantage of the increased number of options provided by the changes.

Schools, municipal courts, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations play a role in addressing truant behavior. Our review describes several best practices used by these organizations.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by the Department of Public Instruction, local government officials, school administrators, truancy abatement center staff, and law enforcement agencies.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/DB/cr

SUMMARY

On average, approximately 15,600 students, or 1.6 percent of those enrolled in Wisconsin public schools, are truant on any given day. Approximately 31.1 percent of total absences in the 1998-99 academic year were the result of truancy. Truancy has negative effects on students who miss classroom instruction time and are therefore less likely to complete high school; on the community, as truant students may engage in delinquent behavior while not in school; and on the schools, which must devote resources to addressing unexcused absences and attempting to reduce truancy.

Students may fail to attend classes for school-related reasons, such as poor academic performance; for family-related reasons, such as being needed at home to care for younger siblings; or as a result of individual circumstances such as drug use, pregnancy, or social difficulties with classmates.

To address the problem of truancy, the Legislature enacted 1997 Wisconsin Act 239, which:

- changed the definition of habitual truancy from five or more unexcused absences in ten consecutive days or ten per semester, to five unexcused absences per semester;

- permitted municipalities to enact ordinances against simple truancy, defined as a single instance of truancy, rather than against habitual truancy only, and increased the number of sanctions against habitual truancy available to municipalities; and

- increased sanctions for parents who fail to ensure that their children attend school.

Between academic years 1993-94 and 1998-99, the number of habitual truants in Wisconsin public schools increased by 62.3 percent, while enrollment grew by only 4.0 percent. In 1993-94, 45,936 students, or 5.6 percent of Wisconsin's public school enrollment, were classified as habitual truants. By the 1997-98 academic year, the habitual truancy rate had increased to 6.9 percent, or 59,304 students. It increased further during the 1998-99 academic year, to 8.7 percent or 74,569 students, largely as a result of the changed definition of habitual truancy.

The problem of truancy is particularly evident in several of Wisconsin's largest school districts. For example, 32.3 percent of Milwaukee Public Schools students were classified as habitually truant in the 1998-99 academic year. Overall, the ten largest school districts in Wisconsin represented 27.6 percent of statewide enrollment in 1998-99, but 66.3 percent of habitual truants in that year.

We spoke with representatives of 23 school districts regarding the recent changes to truancy law and found that their opinions of the changes were mixed. Some educators believed that the changes were positive overall because the lower threshold for habitual truancy allows schools and the municipal and circuit court systems to intervene earlier. Others perceived the changes to be ineffective because they believe:

- that defining students as habitual truants does not address the underlying reasons for truancy;

- that sanctions and consequences available under the new law are not effective in changing students' behavior; and

- that too much time can elapse between a student's truancy and the resulting sanction because some counties are unable or unwilling to devote resources to prosecuting truancy violations, which can require a significant amount of time.

Schools are responsible for initial efforts to address truancy and, as a result, have several statutorily required duties related to truancy. These include defining excused and unexcused absences, recording attendance for each class period, notifying parents of unexcused absences and students' habitual truancy status, and completing and documenting required steps before beginning proceedings against habitual truants. We include several best practices for meeting these requirements most effectively, including efforts to contact parents directly, to notify parents when their children are in danger of being classified as habitual truants, and to use the municipal court system to speed the process of sanctioning habitual truants.

Municipalities can address simple and habitual truancy through the use of ordinances. Action under municipal ordinances can allow for earlier intervention and swifter consequences for truant behavior than action taken under state statutes in circuit courts, particularly if the county is unable or unwilling to devote resources to prosecuting truancy cases. For that reason, we suggest that municipalities consider the use of municipal ordinances against both simple and habitual truancy.

Suspending driving privileges is one means of sanctioning truant students. In calendar year 1999, a total of 1,617 driver licenses were suspended for truancy; in comparison, 74,569 students were classified as habitual truants in the 1998-99 academic year. The number of students whose licenses have been suspended has declined in recent years; reasons for the decrease are unclear.

As another means of addressing truancy, several communities in Wisconsin have established multi-agency programs that include youth service centers commonly known as truancy abatement centers. Truancy abatement centers provide counseling for truants apprehended by local law enforcement officers. Centers are currently located in Milwaukee, Sheboygan, Racine, Eau Claire, and Appleton. Start-up funding for truancy abatement centers is typically provided by federal grants administered by the Wisconsin's Office of Justice Assistance. Funding for their continuation may be provided by local law enforcement, municipalities, and schools. While the primary goal of the centers is to address truancy, an important secondary goal for some is to reduce daytime juvenile crime associated with truancy.

Although truancy abatement centers attempt to reduce truant behavior and increase school attendance, the number of juveniles counseled by a truancy abatement center is small in comparison to the number of habitual truants in a school district. Therefore, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect changes in a school district's overall habitual truancy rate to result from establishment of a center, although individual students' attendance rates may be improved.

The success of truancy abatement centers in reducing daytime juvenile crime is more clear. The Milwaukee, Sheboygan, and Racine centers have compared daytime juvenile arrests before and after their inception, and while it is important to note that crime rates in general have been declining throughout the state, there is some evidence to suggest that daytime juvenile arrests in those cities have decreased since the centers began operation.

We include suggestions for additional types of analysis truancy abatement centers can use to determine their effectiveness, as well as considerations for communities that may be interested in establishing centers.

****

INTRODUCTION

As directed by s. 13.94(8), Wis. Stats., the State Auditor conducts periodic reviews of local government operations to identify practices that may save money or provide more effective delivery of government services. A five-member advisory council, representing counties, cities, villages, and towns, assists with the selection of topics for these "best practices" reviews. In contrast to performance evaluations, which identify problems or weaknesses in government operations, best practices reviews seek to build upon successful local efforts by identifying cost-effective approaches to providing government services.

The subject of this review is truancy abatement efforts and was selected with the assistance of the best practices local government advisory council, whose members are listed in Appendix I. Although Wisconsin's truancy laws apply to students in both public and private schools, this report focuses on truancy and attendance in public schools.

In conducting our review, we examined:

- school attendance policies and procedures;
- statutorily required actions that schools must take in response to truancy;
- the use and effectiveness of municipal truancy ordinances; and
- multi-agency truancy programs, including truancy abatement centers.

In preparing our review, we talked to representatives of 23 school districts, including 11 who were selected because they indicated in an Association of Wisconsin School Administrators survey that they were willing to discuss their efforts to reduce truancy. We also visited four youth service centers, commonly known as truancy abatement centers, at which truants apprehended by local law enforcement officers during school hours receive counseling. The school districts and truancy abatement centers we contacted are indicated on the map in Appendix II. In addition, we interviewed school administrators, school district officials, caseworkers, law enforcement officials, nonprofit program administrators, municipal judges, and a juvenile court intake worker, and we reviewed national literature related to school attendance and truancy.

State Truancy Laws

Simple and habitual truancy are defined in state statutes.

Section 118.16(1)(c), Wis. Stats., defines truancy—which is referred to as "simple truancy" in this report—as any absence of part or all of a school day for which a pupil's parent or guardian has not provided a valid excuse. Statutes define a habitual truant as a student who is truant on five or more days in one semester. Each school district is responsible for determining which absences may be excused, such as those due to illness, and which may not be excused.

Nearly one-third of all Wisconsin public school absences are the result of truancy.

On average, 15,600 students, or 1.6 percent of those enrolled in Wisconsin's public schools, are truant on any given day. As shown in Table 1, 31.1 percent of all absences were the result of truancy in the 1998-99 academic year. In comparison, 35,000 students, or 3.6 percent of all enrolled students, have excused absences on an average day; these absences accounted for 68.9 percent of total school days missed. Unexcused absences have accounted for an increasing percentage of all absences since the 1993-94 academic year; however, it is not clear how much of the increase can be attributed to actual increases in truancy and how much is the result of better record-keeping on the part of school districts. For example, implementation of the Learnfare Program for teenagers in 1988 and for younger children in 1994 caused Milwaukee Public Schools to improve attendance record-keeping, which may have resulted in additional students being classified as habitual truants.

Table 1

Unexcused Absences in Wisconsin Public Schools
1993-94 to 1998-99

Academic Year	Percentage of School Days Lost to Unexcused Absences*	Percentage of All Absences That Are Unexcused
1993-94	1.1%	20.6%
1994-95	1.6	27.8
1995-96	1.6	29.9
1996-97	1.6	29.2
1997-98	1.7	31.4
1998-99	1.6	31.1

* Enrollment figures used by the Department of Public Instruction to determine rates of excused and unexcused absences are based on counts of students taken at various points throughout the year.

Many of the current truancy-related statutes were originally enacted as 1987 Wisconsin Act 285, which took effect July 1, 1988. The act included the first statutory definition of a habitual truant and required schools to notify parents or guardians of students' status as habitual truants. It also allowed municipalities to enact ordinances against habitual truancy and required each county to establish a truancy committee, consisting of representatives from school districts, the county district attorney's office, local law enforcement agencies, the juvenile court intake unit, the county department of social services, and the circuit court system.

Subsequent to 1987 Wisconsin Act 285, the Legislature made additional changes to truancy statutes:

- 1993 Wisconsin Act 16 allowed school boards to establish youth service centers for truants taken into custody by local law enforcement;

- 1993 Wisconsin Act 56 allowed school district administrators to designate specific school district or social services agency employes who may take truants into custody and described to whom truants may be released; and

- 1997 Wisconsin Act 205 allowed schools to refer habitual truants to teen court programs in which students are judged by their peers.

Significant changes to Wisconsin truancy law took effect in 1998.

In 1997, the Legislature enacted 1997 Wisconsin Act 239, which took effect on July 1, 1998, and modified statutes affecting the definition of a habitual truant, allowances for municipal simple truancy ordinances, meetings of county-wide truancy committees, and sanctions on parents for violating compulsory schooling laws, as shown in Table 2.

The most significant of these changes were the expanded definition of a habitual truant, which increased the number of students with the classification in the 1998-99 academic year, and the expansion of municipal options for truancy ordinances. The new law allows municipalities to enact ordinances against simple truancy and gives them the option of issuing citations or levying other sanctions at the first occurrence of truancy, before habitual truancy occurs. Municipalities also retain the ability to enact ordinances prohibiting habitual truancy; however, the change in statutes has expanded allowable sanctions to include forfeitures of up to $500 for the first offense, curfews, and mandated counseling.

Table 2

Changes in Truancy Statutes Resulting from 1997 Wisconsin Act 239

	Before 1997 Wisconsin Act 239	After 1997 Wisconsin Act 239
Definition of a habitual truant	A student who missed part or all of five days in ten consecutive days, or part or all of ten days in a semester.	A student who misses part or all of five days in a semester.
Municipal ordinances	A municipality may enact an ordinance prohibiting habitual truancy.	A municipality may enact an ordinance prohibiting simple truancy in addition to prohibiting habitual truancy. A variety of sanctions for simple and habitual truancy are available.
County-wide truancy committees	A county-wide truancy committee must have convened and issued a report in 1988.	Committees must meet at least every four years to review and make recommendations on the truancy plans of the school districts in the county.
Sanctions for violating compulsory schooling law	Parents or guardians faced a fine of up to $500 and/or imprisonment for up to 30 days.	For the first offense, parents or guardians face a fine of up to $500 and/or up to 30 days' imprisonment. For the second offense, they face a fine of up to $1,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 90 days.

Other state efforts to address truancy include the Children at Risk program, which provides $3.5 million in annual funding to school districts based on the number of students identified as at risk of not graduating from high school for reasons that include habitual truancy.

Comparisons with Other States

To determine how Wisconsin's attendance and truancy statutes compare with those of other midwestern states, we contacted Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio. Comparisons are summarized in Appendix III. Overall, Wisconsin has been one of the most active states in enacting legislation requiring schools to take certain actions against truancy and in providing options for schools and municipalities to sanction truants and their parents or guardians. Wisconsin is the only

state that statutorily limits the number of pre-excused absences a school may grant to no more than ten days per student per academic year. In most other midwestern states, school boards are responsible for setting attendance policies, and the state imposes no restrictions on the types or number of absences permitted.

Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota have defined habitual truancy in statutes.

Wisconsin is the only midwestern state that specifically permits the creation of local ordinances against both simple and habitual truancy. Wisconsin and Ohio are the only midwestern states to require school attendance until age 18. Only Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota define habitual truancy in state statutes. In Illinois, a habitual truant is a student absent without excuse for at least 10 percent of the previous 180 school days. In Minnesota, a high school student can be classified as a "continuing truant" by missing three or more periods on three days without an excuse.

Changes in Truancy Rates

In the past five years, the number of habitual truants increased by 62.3 percent, while enrollment increased by 4.0 percent.

The percentage of students who meet the definition of "habitual truant" has risen steadily over the last six academic years, as shown in Table 3. As noted, much of the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 likely resulted from the expanded definition of habitual truant included in 1997 Wisconsin Act 239. The increase in earlier years is most likely a reflection of both changing attendance patterns—students are absent without excuse more frequently—and improved attendance record-keeping on the part of school districts. The number of habitual truants in Wisconsin has grown by 62.3 percent from 1993-94 through 1998-99, while total enrollment has grown by 4.0 percent over the same period.

Although truancy can be a problem in any school district, the state's ten largest school districts experience a disproportionate share of truancy. In 1998-99, these districts accounted for 27.6 percent of statewide enrollment but 66.3 percent of the state's habitual truants. There is, however, considerable variation among the ten districts, as shown in Table 4. Milwaukee Public Schools had the highest rate of truancy: 32.3 percent of its total enrollment in the 1998-99 academic year.

Table 3

Habitual Truants in Wisconsin Public Schools

Academic Year	K-12 Enrollment*	Habitual Truants	Percentage of Enrollment Classified as Habitual Truants
1993-94	826,633	45,936	5.6%
1994-95	840,897	50,331	6.0
1995-96	851,914	57,553	6.8
1996-97	859,359	57,094	6.6
1997-98	861,588	59,304	6.9
1998-99**	859,374	74,569	8.7

* Enrollment figures used by the Department of Public Instruction to determine habitual truancy rates are based on counts of students enrolled in school on the third Friday in September.

** 1997 Wisconsin Act 239, which expanded the definition of a habitual truant, took effect on July 1, 1998.

Table 4

Habitual Truants in the Ten Largest Wisconsin School Districts
1998-99 Academic Year

School District	K-12 Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Percentage of Enrollment Classified as Habitual Truants
Milwaukee	93,368	30,129	32.3%
Madison	24,747	2,168	8.8
Racine	21,211	5,069	23.9
Green Bay	19,308	3,634	18.8
Kenosha	18,948	4,091	21.6
Appleton	14,325	498	3.5
Waukesha	12,819	243	1.9
Eau Claire	11,147	1,279	11.5
Oshkosh	10,521	458	4.4
Janesville	10,517	1,855	17.6
Total	236,911	49,424	20.9
Statewide Total	859,374	74,569	8.7

Effects of Truancy

Truancy has negative effects on the student, the school, and the community.

Truant students are not only likely to fail to maintain academic pace with their peers, they are at risk of becoming involved in delinquent activities or of dropping out of school. According to a 1994 report by the National School Safety Center, up to two-thirds of daytime burglaries are attributed to truants. Truants may also become involved in retail theft, vandalism, other property crimes, and assaults.

Truancy also requires schools to devote resources to contacting and meeting with parents and guardians, meeting with and disciplining truant students, and preparing documentation of habitual truancy for referral to the municipal or circuit court systems. School administrators responsible for attendance and truancy indicated that between 25 and 75 percent of their time is generally devoted to these matters. In addition, clerical personnel are required to contact parents or guardians by telephone or letter when students are absent without excuse, as well as to maintain absence and truancy records. Administrators stated that between one and four clerical staff at each high school are typically needed to perform these duties, depending on enrollment.

Causes of Truancy

Truancy can result from difficulties with school or within the family, or from individual problems.

School administrators we spoke with indicated that truancy can be caused by:

- school-related problems, such as doing poorly in classes and deciding not to attend as a result, or difficulty with a traditional classroom setting;
- family-related issues, such as being needed to care for younger siblings at home or not being required by parents to attend school regularly; and
- individual difficulties, such as drug or alcohol use, pregnancy, or social problems with classmates.

In general, administrators believe that truancy in elementary school students is more often the fault of parents or guardians who do not send their children to school, while middle and high school students are more often truant as a result of their own decisions.

Because the reasons for truancy vary, it is reasonable to expect a variety of approaches to addressing truant behavior, including:

- legislation, such as increasing fines for truancy or providing additional municipal options for sanctioning truants;

- community-based intervention approaches, such as truancy abatement centers; and

- school-based alternatives to the standard classroom model, such as alternative schools that encourage students with educational difficulties to remain in school and attend regularly.

This report examines Wisconsin's efforts to address truancy through legislation, the implementation of statutes by schools and local governments, and the establishment of truancy abatement programs. It suggests best practices for schools, municipalities, and truancy abatement centers to improve their truancy reduction efforts. It does not review efforts by schools to develop specialized education programs to encourage students who would otherwise be truant to attend school more regularly.

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SCHOOLS' EFFORTS TO REDUCE TRUANCY

Under state law, schools have several responsibilities to address truancy, including monitoring attendance, notifying parents of absences, and taking steps to sanction habitual truants. Some methods developed by schools to meet these responsibilities appear to be more successful than others.

Attendance and Truancy Responsibilities

In general, an effective approach to addressing attendance and truancy should emphasize several principles:

- Timeliness of action - Several school administrators indicated that it is important to establish a close link between truancy and the resulting negative consequence so that students understand their truancy will be addressed.

- Early intervention - Several school administrators stated it is important to intervene early, so that fewer days of instruction are lost and the student does not develop the habit of being truant.

- Personal contact with parents or guardians - Many school administrators indicated personal contact is important because it gives responsible adults a chance to speak with school personnel.

- Assurance of contact - Because truant students can circumvent systems that notify parents of truant behavior, administrators believe it is important to be certain that parents or guardians have, in fact, been notified of truancy-related issues.

Individual schools commit differing levels of resources to addressing truancy.

Definitive evidence does not exist to indicate which methods best reduce truancy and improve attendance. School administrators identified a number of methods that, in their judgment, are most likely to have a positive effect. Administrators also noted that most efforts to combat truancy require staff time and other resources. While some schools devote considerable resources to addressing truancy, others may not wish or be able to do so. In part, the level of commitment depends on other competing priorities, the seriousness of the truancy problem in the school, and the community's attitude toward school attendance.

Defining Excused Absences and Recording Attendance

School boards are responsible for defining excused absences.

By statute, school boards are responsible for establishing written attendance policies specifying the reasons for which absences may be excused, and a written copy of the attendance policy must be given to each student. In general, school boards in Wisconsin have established similar attendance policies, which permit excused absences for student illness, family emergency, medical and dental appointments, death or serious illness in the immediate family, religious holidays, school-related functions such as field trips, and special circumstances such as college visits or family vacations. All of the schools we contacted provide written copies of attendance policies to students, and many include this information in a student handbook and academic planner.

The State requires that teachers submit daily attendance information for all students under their charge. Elementary schools take attendance at the beginning of the school day, while all of the middle and high schools we visited take attendance during each class period. Software programs are often used to track attendance, determine when students have met the definition of habitual truancy, and generate letters to parents or guardians regarding absences.

Notification of Absences and Habitual Truancy

Schools are required to notify students' parents or guardians of unexcused absences by the end of the second school day following the absence. Statutes permit the contact to be made personally, by telephone, or by letter, but s. 118.16(2)(c), Wis. Stats., specifies personal contact and telephone calls should be attempted before contact by mail. Schools must maintain written records of the telephone calls.

Most of the schools we contacted are able to meet notification requirements for unexcused absences.

The majority of schools we visited indicated they are able to notify parents or guardians of unexcused absences within the required time period. Some school administrators reported, however, that the cost of notification for each individual absence can be considerable. Administrators in larger districts also indicated that computerized autodialers are often used to place the telephone calls to parents and guardians because their use requires less staff time.

However, some school administrators also stated that autodialers were not as effective for notification and often frustrate parents or guardians. Because the autodialer simply begins providing its prerecorded message when the telephone is picked up, schools have no means of determining whether or not the responsible adult was the party receiving notification of the unexcused absence. For example, some students have provided incorrect telephone numbers so that autodialed calls are made to local

businesses instead of their homes. In addition, autodialers do not enable a parent or guardian to immediately speak with a school employe regarding the child's absence.

A strong effort to contact parents or guardians personally may be a deterrent to truancy.

Most administrators we spoke with agree that direct personal contact with parents is the most effective method of notification. Some schools make a strong effort to contact parents or other relatives on the day of an absence and will try to reach several different contact persons or will call parents at work in order to speak with someone directly. Administrators at Appleton Area West High School indicated this approach lets adults know the school cares about their children and provides the school with an opportunity to speak with parents or guardians directly at the time of the absence, as well as to clear excused absences immediately.

Schools are also required by s. 118.16(2)(cg), Wis. Stats., to notify parents or guardians when a child meets the legal threshold for habitual truancy. The notice must be sent by registered or certified mail and must provide the following information:

- the adult has a legal responsibility to cause the child to attend school regularly;
- the parent or child may request curriculum modifications and the child may be eligible for enrollment in a program for children at risk;
- the adult is requested to meet at a specific time with school administrators regarding the child's truancy; and
- penalties may be imposed on the adult if he or she does not cause the child to attend regularly.

Early notification of impending habitual truancy allows parents and guardians to intervene.

Some schools send letters prior to the five-absence threshold to explain the definition of habitual truancy and notify parents or guardians that their children may reach that status with additional unexcused absences. Altoona High School sends such a letter after three unexcused absences and requests a meeting with parents at that time. The Beloit School District sends such letters after two unexcused absences. Notifying parents and guardians before the threshold for habitual truancy is reached is considered a good step for schools to take, because the adults may not be aware of the recent changes in truancy laws and because the lowered threshold results in a greater number of children meeting the legal definition of habitual truant with a smaller number of absences.

Sanctioning Truants

Schools use a variety of methods to sanction students who miss all or part of a school day, including detention time or in-school suspension, additional assignments, prohibitions on participation in extra-curricular activities, removal of work-release privileges, and lowered class participation grades. These methods are typically used for occasional truants.

Schools are required to try to address the causes of habitual truancy before referring students to court.

Habitual truants are sanctioned in different ways, including referrals to municipal or circuit court. However, before referring a student to the county human services department or the municipal court system for possible prosecution as a habitual truant, a school is required by statute to take the following steps, which must be documented:

- attempting to meet with parents or guardians regarding the truancy;
- providing an opportunity for educational counseling and determining whether a change in the student's curriculum would resolve the truancy;
- evaluating the student to determine whether learning problems are contributing to the truancy; and
- determining whether social problems are contributing to the truancy, and taking appropriate action if necessary.

Section 118.16(4)(b), Wis. Stats., prohibits schools from denying a student course credit solely because of non-attendance. However, a course grade may include a participation or attendance component, so non-attendance can be considered in grading. A student may also be denied credit for examinations or other school work due on days for which the absence was unexcused. Administrators we spoke with indicated that participation scores were used by some teachers as a component of overall grades in a course.

School Day Scheduling

Block scheduling may help to reduce truancy.

We spoke with several school administrators who indicated that the scheduling and structure of the school day can have an effect on truancy. For example, the use of a block schedule, rather than the more traditional hourly schedule, has reduced truancy problems in some schools. A block schedule has longer class periods (typically 1 ½ hours), and many courses are taught for only one semester rather than the entire academic year. Block schedules may reduce truancy because:

- students may have an incentive to attend when more instruction time would be missed; and

- with fewer class periods, students are moving through the building fewer times, which gives them less opportunity to leave the building.

Administrators at Evansville Community High School and Black River Falls High School indicated that the use of block schedules has reduced their truancy problems. An administrator at La Crosse Central High School estimated a move to block scheduling could reduce attendance problems by as much as 70 percent.

Several administrators we spoke with indicated that an open campus policy, which allows students to leave campus during their lunch period, can contribute to truancy because students are tardy in returning from lunch or simply do not come back. Administrators at Little Wolf High School in Manawa indicated that closing the campus during the lunch period has reduced the truancy problem in the school significantly.

Administrators' Opinions on State Truancy Laws

School administrators' opinions on the recent changes in truancy laws were mixed.

By enacting recent changes to state truancy laws, the Legislature intended to reduce truancy and provide schools and municipalities with additional flexibility in addressing truancy at the local level. We found that school administrators' opinions on recent law changes were mixed.

Some school administrators commented that the changes to the law were positive because:

- the lowered threshold for habitual truancy requires schools to monitor individual students' attendance more closely to determine if truancy is becoming a significant problem;

- schools can begin judicial intervention efforts with truant students earlier, before significant amounts of instruction time have been missed; and

- schools have greater flexibility to sanction students because they can request that students be cited for simple truancy as well as habitual truancy.

On the other hand, some school administrators believed the law changes have had a limited effect because:

- the changed definition for habitual truancy is not meaningful for some schools in which the truancy problem is so large that only those students who have gone significantly beyond the threshold for habitual truancy will be referred for further action;

- the sanctions and consequences available under state law often do not affect student or family behavior;

- some counties are unable or unwilling to prosecute habitual truancy violations because of competing priorities or a belief that prosecuting truancy is not a high-priority use of limited resources; and

- changes to the truancy laws have a more limited effect on juveniles' behavior if too much time elapses between the act of being truant and its consequences, and often weeks or months can pass before a truant student is referred to municipal or circuit court and appears before a judge.

For example, school administrators in Stoughton and Racine indicated that several months can pass between a student reaching the level of habitual truancy and the point at which he or she faces municipal or circuit court-ordered fines or sanctions, and during that time it is likely the student will continue to be truant.

Barriers to Addressing Truancy

Some administrators cite a lack of resources as a barrier to addressing truancy successfully.

A lack of resources can present a barrier to effective truancy programs. Some schools, citing substantial costs, do not follow statutory requirements to notify parents or guardians after each unexcused absence and, instead, send a notification letter only after several unexcused absences.

Registered and certified letters notifying responsible adults of students' habitual truancy status represent another use of administrative resources to address truancy. Although the cost of a single registered or certified letter is small, large school districts such as Milwaukee Public Schools, which must send thousands of such letters, indicate the cost is burdensome.

Facility limitations may present another barrier to truancy reduction. Some schools must have an open campus during the lunch period because cafeteria facilities are too small to provide for the entire student body. Administrators at Eau Claire Area North High School, Green Bay

Area East High School, and Bayfield High School, for example, expressed frustration at the small size of their cafeterias and their resulting inability to have completely closed campuses.

School administrators cite uninvolved, uninterested parents and guardians as another hindrance to the effectiveness of school-based truancy programs. Although most parents and guardians of truants are interested in improving their children's attendance, school administrators say some appear unconcerned about their children's truancy. Some also actively enable their children to avoid school by reporting them as ill or otherwise providing an excused absence. School administrators indicate that the younger the truant, the greater the likelihood that the parent is the cause of the truancy.

Some school officials believe the compulsory schooling age of 18 contributes to truant behavior.

Finally, during our discussions of truancy and attendance in Wisconsin public schools, several school administrators expressed frustration with the current compulsory school age law. Some educators believe the requirement that students attend school through the term in which they turn 18 is a good public policy because it helps to keep some students in school longer. However, many educators who expressed an opinion about the law believe that some students who are forced to remain in school when they do not want to attend are disruptive to other students or become habitual truants.

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Wisconsin statutes permit municipalities two means of sanctioning truants: local ordinances prohibiting habitual truancy, which became permissible under 1987 Wisconsin Act 285, and local ordinances prohibiting simple truancy, which were made permissible by 1997 Wisconsin Act 239. As shown in Table 5, simple and habitual truancy ordinances have been enacted in the majority of Wisconsin's ten largest cities.

Table 5

Truancy Ordinances Enacted in Wisconsin's Ten Largest Cities

City	Simple Truancy Ordinance	Habitual Truancy Ordinance
Milwaukee	X	X
Madison	X	X
Green Bay	-	X
Kenosha	-	-
Racine	X	X
Appleton	X	X
West Allis	X	-
Waukesha	X	X
Oshkosh	X	X
Eau Claire	X	X

Although habitual truancy ordinances are more common, municipalities are increasingly enacting simple truancy ordinances as they search for additional means of addressing truancy. Administrators in some communities have found that municipal ordinances, which are enforced under the municipal court system, not only increase local control but also increase the timeliness with which truancy is addressed.

Habitual Truancy Ordinances

School administrators in 17 of the 23 communities we contacted indicated that their communities had enacted habitual truancy ordinances. However, we were not able to determine the total number of Wisconsin municipalities with habitual truancy ordinances.

Municipal sanctions for habitual truancy may include:

- suspension of a driver license for between 30 days and one year;
- a fine of up to $500 plus costs, assessed against the student, the parent or guardian, or both;
- an order to participate in counseling, a supervised work program, or community service work;
- home detention;
- an order to participate in an educational program;
- revocation of the student's work permit;
- an order for the student to be placed in a teen court program, which requires the student to be judged and sanctioned by a group of his or her peers;
- an order to attend school;
- an order placing the student under formal or informal supervision for up to one year;
- an order for the parent or guardian to participate in counseling, or to attend school with the student; or
- any other reasonable conditions, including a curfew.

Driver License Suspensions

Habitual truants may have their driving privileges suspended.

Habitual truants may have their driver licenses suspended by either the municipal or the circuit court. In communities with municipal ordinances against habitual truancy, the municipal court may suspend a habitual truant's driver license, while the circuit court may suspend the licenses of habitual truants referred to the county. In both cases, licenses can be suspended for a period of between 30 days and one year. If a

habitual truant is not old enough to drive, the courts have the option of postponing the date by which the truant may obtain a license.

The number of driver license suspensions for truancy is small compared to the number of habitual truants. As shown in Table 6, there were 1,617 driver license suspensions for truancy in calendar year 1999, compared to 74,569 habitual truants in the 1998-99 academic year. Although there is increased emphasis on addressing truant behavior, the number of driver license suspensions for truancy has decreased from 2,353 in 1996 to 1,617 in 1999, or by 31.3 percent. The reason for the decline in the use of license suspensions as punishment for truancy is not clear.

Table 6

Driver License Suspensions for Truancy
1996 to 1999

Year*	License Suspensions for Habitual Truancy	Habitual Truants
1996	2,353	57,553
1997	1,662	57,094
1998	1,834	59,304
1999	1,617	74,569

* License suspensions are recorded by calendar year and truancy figures by academic year. Calendar year 1996 corresponds to the 1995-96 school year.

Simple Truancy Ordinances

Milwaukee, Madison, Appleton, and Eau Claire are among the communities that have enacted simple truancy ordinances since 1997 Wisconsin Act 239 became effective in 1998, and many of the communities we spoke with are considering such ordinances. As with habitual truancy ordinances, we were not able to determine how many Wisconsin municipalities have simple truancy ordinances.

Municipalities may now fine students for the first instance of truancy.

As noted, simple truancy ordinances allow for earlier intervention because a student can be cited for even a single instance of truancy. Municipal sanctions for simple truancy may include an order for the truant student to attend school and a fine of up to $50 plus court costs for the first violation. Subsequent violations committed within 12 months may result in a fine of up to $100 plus costs, for a maximum of $500 per semester. The fines may be assessed against the student, the parent or guardian, or both, but in practice they are usually assessed against the student.

Advantages of Municipal Truancy Ordinances

Municipal ordinances offer greater local control and more timely sanctions for truant students.

Municipal ordinances against simple or habitual truancy have two primary advantages: speed of enforcement and greater community control. For example, local ordinances can allow truants to be cited more quickly by local law enforcement, and some municipal courts hear cases in a matter of weeks. In contrast, when habitual truancy cases are referred to counties for prosecution in circuit court, sanctions may be applied months after the truancy or not at all, depending on the county's willingness or ability to prosecute truancy violations.

Administrators in the Racine Unified School District found that up to six months passed between the time a habitual truant was referred to the county for prosecution and the time sanctions were applied. Meanwhile, the student continued to miss school. In contrast, Racine's ordinance allows law enforcement officers to cite truants relatively quickly and results in more timely appearances before a judge. Administrators in the Tomah School District indicated that by using the municipal court system, they are able to bring habitual truants before a judge in approximately three weeks, while prosecuting habitual truants in circuit court takes five to seven weeks.

Because of competing priorities for county resources, some counties limit the number of habitual truant referrals they accept from schools. In these cases, a municipal ordinance may be the only means of ensuring court-ordered sanctions for habitual truants. For example, the Dane County Human Services Department is able to handle only a small number of habitual truancy referrals each year and accepted 14 referrals in the 1999 calendar year. In contrast, in the 1998-99 academic year, there were over 3,800 habitual truants in Dane County public schools. In response, the Stoughton Area School District has moved to sanction habitual truants under a municipal habitual truancy ordinance rather than attempt to work through the county.

Effectiveness of Municipal Ordinances

School administrators in several cities indicated that municipal ordinances can be effective in reducing truancy rates. For example, the City of Stoughton enacted a habitual truancy ordinance in January 1994, and school district administrators evaluated the effect of the ordinance by examining truancy statistics for the 1996 graduating class. The number of class periods skipped by that group of students decreased by 88.8 percent between the 1993-94 and 1995-96 academic years, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Unexcused Absences Among Stoughton High School Class of 1996

Academic Year	Number of Habitual Truants	Number of Unexcused Class Period Absences
1993-94	32	11,436
1994-95	50	14,403
1995-96	11	1,286
Percentage Change between 1993-94 and 1995-96	-65.6%	-88.8%

School district administrators in Stoughton believe the number of unexcused class period absences did not drop immediately following enactment of the ordinance because students did not understand at first that their unexcused absences could result in an appearance before the municipal court judge and possible loss of a driver license.

Municipalities will have to determine if using the municipal court system to prosecute truants is locally warranted or accepted. For example, some community members have raised concerns about truancy ordinances, particularly those for simple truancy, because they believe:

- truancy is not a serious enough problem to warrant being criminalized with the possibility of fines or other sanctions;

- police time spent enforcing truancy ordinances reduces enforcement time available for more serious crimes;

- students who have legitimate reasons to be absent from school may be stopped by police; and

- fines for truancy will be paid not by the truant but by the parent or guardian, who will therefore be punished while the truant fails to learn from the experience.

School administrators and municipal officials should also consider the additional workload a municipal ordinance will impose on law enforcement agencies and the municipal court. For example, school administrators in Stoughton indicated that during the school year, approximately one-third of the municipal court's time is devoted to truancy, and the municipal court added a half-time clerk in 1999, in part to address increased workload from the municipal truancy ordinance.

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TRUANCY ABATEMENT CENTERS

Some municipalities, law enforcement agencies, and school districts have worked together to organize truancy abatement centers, which provide short- and long-term counseling for juveniles who have been found off school grounds during the school day and which serve primarily truant youth rather than students who have caused disruptions in the classroom or been adjudicated delinquent. Such centers require investments of time and resources, but they have been received positively by communities and are believed to be somewhat effective in reducing daytime crime. However, their effectiveness in reducing overall truancy has not been documented.

Truancy Abatement Center Operations

Five truancy abatement centers are now operating in Wisconsin.

Five truancy abatement centers currently operate in the state:

- Milwaukee's Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression (TABS) Program, which is located in the Boys and Girls Clubs of Milwaukee;
- Sheboygan's Truancy Abatement and Crime Suppression (TACS) Program, which is located in the Boys and Girls Club of Sheboygan;
- Racine's Aggressive Truancy Abatement Program (ATAP), which is located in Safe Haven, a local nonprofit organization for teens;
- Eau Claire's Truancy Abatement Program, which is located in the Professional Services Group, a for-profit counseling center with which Eau Claire County has contracted; and
- Appleton's Truancy and Runaway Assessment Center (TRAC), which is located in the Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley.

As shown in Table 8, the centers vary in size and days of operation during the academic year.

Table 8

Truancy Abatement Centers in Wisconsin

Location of Center	Start Date	Number of Staff	Days of Operation per School Week	Number of Juveniles Counseled in 1998-99
Milwaukee	November 1993	12.0	5	3,778*
Sheboygan	August 1997	3.0	3**	158
Racine	April 1998	2.0	5	449
Eau Claire	September 1999	4.0	5	N/A
Appleton	February 2000	2.5	5	N/A

* Includes juveniles who may have been counseled by TABS staff more than once during the academic year.
** On average.

It is important to note that the centers have somewhat differing goals. For example, centers in Milwaukee and Sheboygan emphasize both truancy abatement and crime reduction, while the centers in Racine and Eau Claire are primarily focused on reducing truant behavior. The Appleton program is focused on the problems of truancy and runaway children. The varying emphases of the programs result from the differing concerns faced by each community.

Truancy Abatement Center Procedures

Local law enforcement officials, schools, municipalities, and truancy abatement center staff all play a role in operating the centers. They follow these general procedures:

1. Law enforcement officers question juveniles seen away from school during regular school hours. If a juvenile is believed to be truant, he or she is transported to the center.

2. While at the center, juveniles are searched for weapons, drugs, or other illegal items and then counseled briefly by center staff, who attempt to determine the underlying reason for the truancy. Counselors obtain school attendance records before they begin counseling, so that they can use the information during the session. The Milwaukee center has on-line access to student records, while the other centers contact schools by telephone or e-mail to obtain attendance information.

3. The juvenile's parent or guardian is notified and asked to come to the center to speak with the counselor about the truant behavior and any underlying issues that may be troubling the parent or guardian. If a parent or guardian cannot come to the center or cannot be located, centers will generally either require the juvenile to remain on site until the end of the school day or have the police transport the juvenile to school.

4. If a juvenile appears to be at risk of further truancy or has problems underlying the truant behavior, counselors may ask him or her or a parent or guardian if longer-term, more intensive counseling would be helpful. Truancy abatement centers have information and access to services that may help youth and their families address underlying causes of behavioral problems.

The establishment of a centralized truancy abatement center can greatly increase law enforcement agencies' involvement in truancy reduction efforts for two reasons:

- creating a single drop-off point allows officers to transport students quickly without requiring them to determine which school the student attends; and

- center staff are available to address any time-consuming issues that may arise during truant counseling, such as if the truant is a runaway or is experiencing abuse in the home, thus allowing law enforcement officers to return to patrol duty more quickly.

Funding Sources

Funding sources for the five existing truancy abatement centers vary. Federal juvenile justice grants administered by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance provided start-up funding for four of the centers, while the Eau Claire center has been funded by Eau Claire County since its inception. Federal grants typically provide funding for two years, with municipalities required to provide some matching funds.

The Sheboygan program exhausted its funding in 1998-99 and is now supported by the City of Sheboygan and the Sheboygan School District. The Racine program exhausted its funding in April 2000; operations are being continued through the end of the academic year with funds provided by the sheriff's department and the nonprofit organization that operates the program. It is not clear if the program will continue in the future. The Appleton program will exhaust its funding in February 2002

and plans to use funds from the local school district, sheriff's department, and municipalities to continue the program.

Milwaukee Public Schools is mandated by s. 119.55, Wis. Stats., to fund operation of the Milwaukee center. Milwaukee Public Schools assumed funding responsibility in July 1996 after initial federal grant funding expired. Table 9 shows the funding levels and sources for the five centers in Wisconsin.

Table 9

Funding Sources and Amounts for Truancy Abatement Centers
1999-2000 Academic Year *

Center	Funding Amount	Current Funding Source **
Milwaukee	$600,000	Milwaukee Public Schools
Sheboygan	60,000	City of Sheboygan and Sheboygan School District
Racine	123,000	Federal grant and local matching funds
Eau Claire	Not available	Eau Claire County
Appleton	115,000	Federal grant and local matching funds

* Funding year may not correspond to academic year, as some programs began in the middle of an academic year.

** Federal grants typically provide 100 percent of total funding in the first year and require municipalities to provide a 25 percent match in the second year.

Effectiveness of Truancy Abatement Programs

Truancy abatement programs have a primary goal of reducing truant behavior, but a secondary goal for some centers is reducing daytime juvenile crime. Although their methods vary, all centers evaluate changes in students' attendance and daytime crime statistics. In general, the effect of the centers on overall attendance and truancy is small; the effect on daytime crime is somewhat greater.

Effects on Truancy and Attendance

Truancy abatement centers can counsel only a small portion of a school district's habitual truants.

Truancy abatement centers track students' attendance following center visits to determine their effect on attendance rates. As shown in Table 10, the number of juveniles counseled by a truancy abatement center is small in comparison to the number of habitual truants in a district. It should be noted, however, that not all students counseled are already habitually truant.

Table 10

Habitual Truants and Juveniles Counseled by Truancy Abatement Centers
1998-99 Academic Year

Center	Number of Juveniles Counseled	Number of Habitual Truants
Milwaukee	3,778*	30,129
Sheboygan	158	404
Racine	449	5,069

* Includes juveniles who may have been counseled multiple times by TABS staff.

Note: The Eau Claire center did not begin operation until September 1999, and the Appleton center began operation in February 2000.

Evaluations of student attendance completed by centers indicate that there is some short-term effect on attendance for some students, but lasting improvements in truant juveniles' overall attendance rates typically have not occurred.

Milwaukee - Milwaukee's TABS Program tracked attendance for an annual sample of students in elementary, middle, and high school who visited the TABS Center between the 1993-94 and 1997-98 academic years. Table 11 summarizes the attendance information for the first year in which TABS operated and the last for which attendance information was available. As shown in Table 11, attendance in the days following a visit to the TABS Center is generally highest for elementary students and lowest for middle school students.

Table 11

Attendance after Milwaukee TABS Center Contact*
1993-94 and 1997-98 Academic Years

	1993-94 Academic Year	1997-98 Academic Year
First Day after TABS Contact		
Elementary	95%	65%
Middle	77	52
High	57	59
Fifteenth Day after TABS Contact		
Elementary	84	65
Middle	75	53
High	55	55
Thirtieth Day after TABS Contact		
Elementary	84	73
Middle	73	50
High	61	53

* Number of students in sample was 178 in 1993-94 and 667 in 1997-98.

Table 11 also indicates that the effectiveness of TABS intervention may be declining over time. For example, during the 1993-94 academic year, attendance for elementary students was 95 percent on the first day following TABS contact. In the 1997-98 academic year, 65 percent of elementary students attended school the first day following TABS intervention. It is not possible to determine the reasons for the decline in attendance; it may result from the more serious nature of the truancy problem in Milwaukee. Staff and police officers at the center report that the students now being counseled by the program are younger, have more serious individual and family-related problems, and are missing greater amounts of school.

Sheboygan - The TACS program evaluated attendance for 27 students who were counseled by its staff from March 1 through May 31, 1999. During the seven school days immediately preceding to their visits to TACS, these students were truant a total of 181 class periods. During the seven school days following TACS intervention, they were truant for 103 class periods, or 43 percent fewer periods.

Racine - ATAP evaluated students during the first nine weeks after it began operation on April 1, 1998. A total of 356 students were brought to the center a total of 426 times; 85, or 24 percent, were not truant from school for the remainder of the academic year.

Eau Claire - In the two-week period following a visit to the center, 51 percent of students who received counseling improved their attendance by 25 percent or more. Of students that completed or were enrolled in long-term counseling, 85 percent increased their attendance by at least 25 percent during the duration of the program.

Effects on Juvenile Crime

Truancy abatement centers appear to reduce juvenile crime.

Truancy abatement centers' success in reducing daytime juvenile crime is somewhat more clear than their effects on truant behavior. The Milwaukee, Sheboygan, and Racine centers have compared daytime juvenile arrests before and since they began operation. While it is important to note that crime rates in general have been declining throughout the state, there is some evidence to suggest that daytime juvenile arrests have decreased since the centers began operation.

Milwaukee - The TABS program found that the number of burglaries reported to have occurred during the hours in which TABS operates decreased during the period during the 1996-97 and 1997-98 academic years but increased during the 1998-99 academic year, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Number of Burglaries Reported During TABS Operation Hours
1995-1999

Time Period	Number of Reported Burglaries	Percentage Change from Previous Year
August 1995–June 1996	1,587	
August 1996–June 1997	1,447	-8.8
August 1997–June 1998	1,073	-25.8
August 1998–June 1999	1,270	18.4

Although daytime burglaries did increase, TABS staff report several positive effects on crime in the 1998-99 academic year:

- 742 arrests were made as the result of TABS stops by Milwaukee police officers: 650 of those stops resulted from current criminal activity, and 92 resulted from outstanding warrants for previous criminal acts;

- 21 weapons were confiscated from juveniles stopped by TABS officers; and

- 84 missing children were located as a result of TABS stops.

Sheboygan - In order to measure the effectiveness of the TACS program, the Sheboygan Police Department analyzed patterns of juvenile arrests for crimes that occurred during school hours. Arrest data from the academic year before TACS began were compared to data from the 1997-98 and 1998-99 academic years. Sheboygan administrators determined that juvenile arrests for crimes committed during school hours decreased by 2.4 percent in the 1996-97 academic year and 28.7 percent in the year after TACS was established. In addition, Sheboygan administrators examined the number of juvenile arrests for selected crimes—burglary, theft, and vandalism—that occurred during school hours. Table 13 shows the decrease in the number of juvenile arrests for those crimes from 1996-97 through 1998-99.

Table 13

Juvenile Arrests in Sheboygan for Crimes Committed During School Hours

Type of Crime	1996-97 Academic Year	1998-99 Academic Year	Percentage Change
Burglary	18	4	-77.8%
Theft	98	63	-35.7
Vandalism	38	27	-28.9

Racine - To determine the effectiveness of ATAP, administrators analyzed crime statistics for the period from January through September of 1997 and 1998. As shown in Table 14, administrators found that during the academic year when the center was in operation, the number of daytime burglaries fell by 27.2 percent. During the months that the truancy program did not operate, the number of daytime burglaries fell by 0.9 percent.

Table 14

Racine Daytime Burglaries
1997 and 1998

	1997	1998	Percentage Change
During months program was operating	114	83	-27.2%
During months program was not operating	107	106	-0.9
Total	221	189	-14.5%

Racine law enforcement officials also indicated that officers have twice apprehended truants with guns, and they estimate that one in ten stops finds drugs or alcohol in truants' possession.

Other Measures of Effectiveness

Truancy abatement centers could consider additional analysis to determine their effectiveness.

Truancy abatement centers have developed several measures of effectiveness, and these provide some indication of the centers' effects on reducing truancy and daytime juvenile crime. However, other types of analysis may provide additional meaningful information. Therefore, evaluations of center effectiveness may wish to focus on the following principles:

- determining attendance patterns both before and after a center's intervention;
- determining juvenile crime rates before and after establishment of a center;

- conducting long-term evaluations of students' behavior to determine what, if any, lasting effects center intervention may have; and

- surveying parents and guardians, students, and teachers to determine which aspects of center intervention are the most effective in reducing truant behavior.

Currently, two of the truancy abatement centers evaluate students' attendance at several points (for example, the first, fifteenth, and thirtieth days) following a visit to the center. Although this type of analysis provides information on attendance after an intervention, it does not provide a comparison to behavior before counseling by center staff.

Centers will have more useful information with which to assess their efforts if they use an approach similar to the one used for evaluating their effects on juvenile crime: determine the number of class periods or days students were truant before and after an intervention and compare this information. Because truancy can be defined as a failure to attend school regularly, centers should also consider looking at students' attendance each day after center intervention, rather than choosing points in time at which to evaluate attendance.

Determining the Need for a Truancy Abatement Center

Truancy abatement centers reflect the most aggressive community response to truancy. They are also the costliest. Communities interested in establishing truancy abatement centers as a means of addressing truancy and juvenile crime should consider the following:

- Does the community consider truancy a significant issue? For example, the City of Sheboygan established a truancy abatement center even though its habitual truancy rate in 1997-98—the first year of its program—was 3.0 percent, while the statewide average habitual truancy rate in that year was 6.9 percent.

- Is daytime juvenile crime a significant problem? Have local businesses expressed concern about juveniles loitering near their establishments during school hours?

- Have other attempts to curb truancy resulted in little success?

- Is it likely that the community can continue to fund a program after any initial grant funding is exhausted?

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Appendix I

Best Practices Local Government Advisory Council

Betty Balian, Town Board Chair
Town of Lebanon (Dodge County)

Daniel Elsass, Governmental Affairs Unit
University of Wisconsin-Extension
(Originally Appointed as City Administrator, City of Baraboo)

Anne Spray Kinney, Executive Director
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District
(Originally Appointed as Director of Administration, City of Milwaukee)

Vacant
County Representative

Vacant
County Representative

Appendix II

Municipalities Contacted Regarding Truancy

Appendix III

Truancy Statutes in Selected Midwestern States

State	Definition of Excused Absences	Notification of Unexcused Absences	Definition of Habitual Truant
Wisconsin	Determined by school boards; students are allowed a maximum of ten pre-excused absences	Yes, school must notify parent or guardian within two days	Student with five or more truancies a semester
Illinois	Some excused absences defined in statute	Yes, school must try to call parent or guardian within two hours	Student who is truant 10 percent or more of the previous 180 school days
Indiana	Some excused absences defined in statute	Not required	School boards set the definition of a habitual truant
Iowa	Determined by school boards	Not required	Not defined
Michigan	Determined by school boards	Not required	Not defined
Minnesota	Determined by school boards	Not required	A continuing truant has been truant three or more periods in three days
Ohio	Determined by school boards	Not required	Not defined

State	Municipal Truancy Ordinances	Compulsory Schooling Age	Sanctions for Truancy
Wisconsin	Allowances for both simple and habitual truancy ordinances	18	For parent or guardian, up to $1,000 fine or 90 days' imprisonment; student may be referred to juvenile court
Illinois	Not specifically permitted	16	For parent or guardian, up to $500 fine and/or 30 days' imprisonment; student may be referred to juvenile court
Indiana	Not specifically permitted	16	Parent or guardian may be charged with a misdemeanor; student may be referred to juvenile court
Iowa	Not specifically permitted	16	For parent or guardian, up to $1,000 fine and/or 30 days' imprisonment; student may be referred to juvenile court
Michigan	Ordinances against truancy specifically permitted	16	For parent or guardian, fine of up to $50 or imprisonment for up to 90 days; student may be referred to juvenile court
Minnesota	Not specifically permitted	16	Parent or guardian may be charged with a misdemeanor; student may be referred to juvenile court
Ohio	Not specifically permitted	18	Parent or guardian may be fined $100; student may be referred to juvenile court

ATTACHMENT G
ADDITIONAL POSSIBLE BANCROFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Bancroft Elementary **School Site and Vicinity Recommendations**
B 1. Create Breakfast Club B 2. Relocate Bicycle Parking B 3. Congestion around school during arrival & dismissal

Issue B 1 Create Breakfast Club

Many parents are not home when the children leave for school, and truancy is a problem. Creating a location where parents can send their kids before being picked up by the school bus for the 8 mile trip to Almond may solve the truancy problem.

Sidewalks exist along parts of Main Street (CTH W). Not many sidewalk ramps exist at intersections. The Walk Audit (Map 4) shows that half of the sidewalks need replacement.

Recommendations:

B1 a. Install pedestrian crossing signs on Main St at Division St.
B1 b. Install bike rack next to community center.
B1 c. Provide supervision at community center, and possibly provide a snack & milk before breakfast at Almond Elementary.
B1 d. Install computers, tables, and chairs to accommodate the students.
B1 e. Reconstruct all sidewalks along Main Street to be at least 5-feet wide with curb ramps at intersections.
B1 f. Install sidewalk on south side of Main Street from Pine Grove Villa to Klondyke Street.
B1 g. Paint the crosswalk on Main St at Division St in the "ladder" style, see Figure 4.

Issue B 2 Relocate Bicycle Parking

Bancroft's bike rack is in the turnaround median at the school, which is difficult to access with all the cars and buses that use the roads. Placing bike racks next to the entrance reinforces that bicycling to school is important, and provides basic security and convenience. The best way to lock a bike is to make 2 points of contact between the bike and bike rack to keep the bike upright, and then to lock the front wheel and bike frame together. With creation of the Breakfast Club at the community center, bike racks will be needed in both locations – community center and Bancroft school.

Recommendations

B2 a. Install new bike rack on paved surface near school entrance. See Figure 7 for a sample bike rack installation. Attachment E shows how to determine what bike racks would work best.
B2 b. Install a bike fixing station in a centrally located public space along Main Street to allow everyone to walk their bike to the fixing station.

Issue B 3 Congestion around school during arrival & dismissal

Many parents are driving their children to school, and therefore cause congestion around the school property.

Recommendations

B3 a. Consider directing family vehicles to remain on the west side of Bancroft School Road.
B3 b. Open the west gym door for additional access.
B3 c. Evaluate the on-site traffic management plan on an annual basis. Use staff monitors to assist with reminding parents and enforcing traffic management plan.
B3 d. Promote carpooling and school bus use for those who live far from school.
B3 e. Promote walking and biking to the community center among Bancroft residents.