



**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
COMMITTEE (STSC) AGENDA
February 28, 2024 - 9:00 a.m.**

**310 Court Street, 1st Floor Conf. Room
Clearwater, FL 33756**

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- 4. WELCOME NEW MEMBERS/MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**
- 5. SCHOOL DISTRICT RELATED ITEMS**
 - A. Hazardous Walking Conditions Update**
 - B. School Transportation Update**
- 6. SCHOOL BUS STOP PRIORITIZATION UPDATE**
- 7. ADVANTAGE PINELLAS 2050**
- 8. OTHER BUSINESS**
 - A. SPOTLight Emphasis Area Update**
 - B. STEPS Program – Minutes**
 - C. Pinellas County Update – Solar Installation on RRFBs**
 - D. Camera Enforcement in School Zones/on Buses**
 - E. “Bike to School Day” Poster Contest (Deadline March 15th)**
 - F. Future Agenda Topics**
- 9. ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: JUNE 5, 2024

Join Zoom Meeting for Public viewing and comment only

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82533086834?pwd=Rk0vcG1OOS9tRFpXaXF2VVN4ZU4wZz09>

Meeting ID: 825 3308 6834

Passcode: 233071

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SUMMARY

Anyone wishing to provide public comment may do so at this time. Each speaker will be given a maximum of three minutes.

ACTION: None required; informational item only

3. Approval of Minutes

SUMMARY

The meeting summary for the October 4, 2023, meetings are attached for review and approval.

ATTACHMENT(S): STSC Meeting Summary – October 4, 2023

ACTION: Approval of Meeting Summary

**SUMMARY OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
COMMITTEE OF OCTOBER 4, 2023**

The meeting was held on Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., at 310 Court Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Clearwater, FL.

Members Present:

Carol Cook, Vice-Chair	Pinellas County School Board
Matt Atwell	Pinellas County School Board/Transportation
Nancy Besore	Commissioner, Safety Harbor
Mark Bunker	Councilmember, City of Clearwater
Mike Eisner	Commissioner, City of Tarpon Springs
Jeff Gow	Commissioner, City of Dunedin
Lisset Hanewicz	Councilmember, City of St. Petersburg
T. Mark Hagewood	Pinellas County School Board/Transportation
Chris Latvala	Commissioner Pinellas County
Casey Morse	Pinellas County Public Works
Joshua Shulman	PSTA Representative

Members Absent:

Roger Edelman	Councilmember, City of Seminole
Katie Gannon	Councilmember, City of Oldsmar
Cookie Kennedy	Beaches Representative, Mayor Indian Rocks Beach
Stephanie Meyer, Chair	Pinellas County School Board
Doug Mullis	Citizen Representative
Keith Sabiel	Councilmember, City of Pinellas Park
Scott Swearngen	Pinellas County Long Range Planning
Marshall Touchton	Pinellas County School Board

Others Present:

Tom Shelly	Town of Belleair
Kathy Gademer	City of Dunedin
Tyler Bonneau	Pinellas County
Ofc. Tony Boone	Tarpon Springs PD
Valerie Brookens	Forward Pinellas Staff
Chelsea Favero	Forward Pinellas Staff
Maria Kelly	Forward Pinellas Staff

1. CALL TO ORDER

Carol Cook, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Mike Eisner received two emails from citizens who asked that he read them into the minutes for public comment. The first email is from Ms. Kathy Costenbader who praises the crossing guards and their bravery for having to deal with rude and uneducated motorists. She also would like to see school pick-up/drop-off car lines moved to safer and less congested areas around the school. The second email is from Ms. Sharon Landrum who commented that school bus pickup areas are not lighted and there are no visible cross walk markings on the west side of West Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Banana Street and there are no school bus stop signs, yet children stand at this intersection every morning waiting for the school bus. She has contacted the City of Tarpon Springs about this, but nothing has been done yet.

9:05 - Commissioner Jeff Gow arrived and reminded attendees that today is Walk to School Day. He suggests possibly moving the time of the October meeting to accommodate members who participate in this event.

Councilmember Lisset Hanewicz arrived.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for May 24, 2023, were approved with one correction, Councilmember Eisner was changed to Commissioner Eisner page 3, item 6F of the minutes.

4. SCHOOL DISTRICT RELATED ITEMS 8:41

1 – Bus Stop Information Cards – T. Mark Hagewood, Pinellas County Schools, shared that each year, Pinellas County Schools (PCS) sends out post cards to each student with information regarding their bus stops. In August 25,000 cards were mailed out to every school bus rider's parent. This year, a QR code was placed on the cards linking to safety tips for students walking or riding. The students school bus stop location was texted and emailed to each parent twice.

2 – School Transportation Update – Mr. Hagewood also shared a ridership campaign was conducted asking parents if their school child would be riding the bus this next school year. Arterial stops were consolidated from 300 arterial stops to 70, with several located at schools, library's, churches, well-lit areas where children can wait, and parents can park. Consolidating the routes has helped with bus driver shortages and arrival times. At the time of the meeting, they were 15 bus drivers short which is a significant improvement from last year. There were 22,000 students transported in February of 2023. State counts of student riders are currently being conducted and will be presented at the next meeting.

3 – Transportation Safety Public Service Announcements – Valerie Brookens, Forward Pinellas staff, shared that October 16 – 20, 2023 is National School Bus Safety week and shared some free resources that are available to share on social media to increase awareness and promote school bus safety. Forward Pinellas staff indicated that they

would share these resources on their social media and coordinate with PCS communication team

5. SCHOOL BUS STOP PRIORITIZATION

Ms. Brookens shared that since receiving direction from the STSC in March, Forward Pinellas staff has been working with the School District, Pinellas County and the local governments to develop a methodology to prioritize school bus stop enhancements and to identify a funding source for safety improvements. Meetings have been held with planners, engineers and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) staff to develop a process that would include an initial screening process and then further evaluate school bus stops to identify those that could potentially benefit the most from evaluation and investment. Due to some unforeseen challenges in working with the bus stop data, the process to prioritize is still underway. Once this data has been received, staff hopes to have a prioritization list by the next meeting. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

6. CAMERA ENFORCEMENT IN SCHOOL ZONES AND ON BUSES

Ms. Brookens shared the Florida Legislature passed 2 bills that became effective July 1, 2023 related to the enforcement of school zone speed limits (HB 657) and enforcement of bus stopping laws (SB 766) through the use of cameras. Staff has researched jurisdictions in Florida that are taking steps toward implementing the use of cameras for enforcement. The City of Eustis was shown to have implemented this law and use a service provider to monitor and relay information to law enforcement. A suggestion was made to enact a 30-day campaign on this new law to educate drivers, in an effort of making people aware this new law will be enforced in hopes of slowing drivers down through school zones and stopping drivers from running the bus stop arms. It was suggested to discuss these laws with law enforcement and get their input. It was asked that committee members discuss with their municipalities law enforcement and bring information back to the next meeting in March 2024. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. SCHOOL District Related Items Update

For Hazardous Walking Conditions, Ms. Brookens shared the review of walking paths is wrapping up. Needed sidewalks are being reviewed as some sidewalk hazards have been completed and will come off the Hazard Walking list, and new sidewalk hazards are being added on. Vice-Chair Cook asked if this review may be ready for an update at the next meeting. Mr. Hagewood shared that in May a committee was formed to review school bus stops beginning with arterial stops. There are 2800 bus stops and approximately 400 have been evaluated to date. An update will be brought back to the committee in March.

B. Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update

Chelsea Favero, Forward Pinellas staff, shared information regarding the SPOTLight emphasis areas. In regard to A Vision for US19, US19 is under construction from north of SR580 to Curlew Road. This construction is anticipated to be a seven-year project. When completed, they will begin construction on interchanges and overpasses around

the Tampa-Nebraska interchanges. A meeting with FDOT has been set to discuss what the plans are north of this interchange.

C. STEPS Program

Minutes and Agendas for July through September were provided in the agenda packets.

D. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Ms. Favero shared the LRTP is one of the pivotal documents for Forward Pinellas. If a project is not included in this plan, it is not eligible for state and federal funding. To develop the long-range transportation plan, we look at future projected growth and travel trends in the region and conduct outreach with the public to identify what transportation projects should be funded to meet our county's needs. An interactive website, [Advantage Pinellas Participation Challenge](#) has been launched as a tool to gather feedback from the public. Staff is also setting up a table at public events to get more public feedback about the LRTP. Please share with staff any public events in your community where a table can be set up.

E. Comments

Councilmember Mike Eisner shared over the last couple of meeting, he requested to have a proposed RFP on at least how much it would cost to put solar lights at unlit bus stops. It was noted in the comments that research would be conducted this summer and an update brought to the fall meeting and inquired if this has been done. Ms. Favero shared that research has been done. First, as of today, the County still cannot put solar lighting on roadways because this has not been approved by FDOT. The County is currently testing some of the systems, FDOT is testing the systems, but until FDOT approves it, they cannot be used. Second, staff does not know where those bus stops are yet because of the delay in getting the prioritization data due to the changes in the bus stop locations and the data issues. Third, an RFP cannot be issued without a minimum number of pieces of equipment needed. Staff is still working on this request but cannot confirm an answer at this time. Forward Pinellas cannot issue an RFP as we are not an implementing agency, it must be through one of the local governments. Through this prioritization process, it will identify a number of stops that could benefit from lighting. FDOT is currently testing the equipment. Pinellas County has been given Road Safety funding dollars and some of the funding will be used to attach solar lighting to for rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) that are in County ROW. Forward Pinellas will continue to follow up with this item.

Josh Shulman inquired as to whether or not reflective paint can be used around bus stops. Ms. Favero noted that once the list of priority stops has been identified, more suggestions can be offered to make the bus stop safer.

Casey Morse made note that County roads that already has street lighting that is not attached to a street lighting district, the County may be able to work with Duke Energy to be able to relocate a portable solar lighting pole closer to a bus stop. If the bus stop is moved, the poles are portable.

Vice-Chair Cook commented that with the new laws that came into effect, the new bus stops pick-up times for high school and some middle schools, bus stop locations may change, and the signage needed will need to be moved to the new stop location.

F. **Requests for Future Agenda Topics**

Mr. Shulman followed up on a previous request to add Pinellas County Schools (PCS) to “See-Click-Fix” so that parents and people in the community can report issues or school related items with school buses and walk-to-school routes to the “See-Click-Fix” platform so that Pinellas County Schools will see it and possibly respond sooner/quicker. It was indicated that PSC use “Let’s Talk” for issues such as these.

A suggestion has been made to move the October meeting in 2024 to the first Wednesday in November to allow members to attend Walk to School, held on the first Wednesday in October.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee adjourned at 10:43 am. The next meeting will be held in March, TBD.

SUMMARY

Welcoming new members to the School Transportation Safety Committee.

Staff will give a brief overview of the mission of the committee and welcome new members.

ATTACHMENT(S): Membership Roster

ACTION: None required; informational item only

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

School Board

Stephanie Meyer - Chair
Carol Cook – Vice Chair

Pinellas County

Commissioner Rene Robinson- Flowers

Clearwater

Councilmember Mark Bunker

Citizen

Doug Mullis

Dunedin

Commissioner Jeff Gow

PSTA

Josh Shulman

Gulfport

Vacant

Largo

Commissioner Eric Gerard

Oldsmar

Councilmember Katie Gannon

Gulf Beaches

Vacant

Pinellas Park

To Be Appointed

Tarpon Springs

Commissioner Mike Eisner

Seminole

Vacant

Safety Harbor

Commissioner Cliff Merz
Vice Mayor Nancy Besore (Alternate)

St. Petersburg

Councilmember Ed Montanari

Non-Voting Tech Support Members

Pinellas County School Board/Transportation

Matthew Atwell
T. Mark Hagewood, Transportation

Pinellas County Long Range Planning

Scott Swearingen

Pinellas County Public Works

Casey Morse / Jeff Thompson

Pinellas County School Board

Marshall Touchton, Demographic Specialist

Pinellas County School Board

Joseph Camera, Customer Service Analyst
Autumn, Westermann, Customer Service Analyst (Alt.)

SUMMARY

A. Hazardous Walking Conditions Update

The Hazardous Walking Conditions are periodically re-evaluated to determine if a hazard exists. School District staff will provide an update to the committee on where they are in the process.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None required; informational item only

B. School Transportation Update

The School District will provide an update on topics relating to bus service for the new school year which will include topics such as, reduction of arterial stops, bus ridership, and the availability of bus drivers, and how it compares to last school year.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None required; informational item only

SUMMARY

Since receiving direction from the STSC in March 2023, Forward Pinellas staff has been working with the School District, Pinellas County and the local governments to develop a methodology to prioritize school bus stop enhancements and to identify a funding source for improvements. Meetings have been held with planners, engineers and Florida Department of Transportation staff to develop a process that would include an initial screening process and then further evaluate school bus stops to identify those that could potentially benefit the most from evaluation and investment.

Due to some unforeseen challenges in working with the bus stop data, the process to prioritize stops is still underway, but has made some progress. Staff will provide the committee with an overview of the work completed to date and highlight how the prioritization will move forward.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None required; informational item only

SUMMARY

Advantage Pinellas is the long-range transportation plan for the Forward Pinellas MPO. Last adopted in 2019 with a horizon year of 2045, agency staff has been working with local government partners to create a new plan with a horizon year of 2050.

Forward Pinellas has begun Phase II of the Advantage Pinellas outreach activities, with a focus on prioritizing investments in various transportation projects. Staff will provide an overview of the outreach activities taking place and show the committee the updated outreach website that is gathering feedback that align with this phase of the plan development. Committee members can preview the website in advance of the meeting at www.advantagepinellas2050.org.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None required; informational item only

8. A- F Other Business

A. Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update

Forward Pinellas staff will provide a brief update on the status of activities related to the three SPOTlight emphasis areas.

B. STEPS Program – Minutes

The School Transportation and Enhanced Pedestrian Safety (STEPS) Committee is facilitated by the Pinellas County School Board and was created as a forum to discuss and address traffic safety issues around Pinellas County Schools. The STEPS committee consists of technical planning/engineering staff from the local governments and agencies throughout the County. Attached are meeting summaries and agendas from their meetings since the last STSC.

ATTACHMENT(S): (additional STEPS information will be emailed separately)

- STEPS September Meeting Minutes
- STEPS November Meeting Minutes

C. Pinellas County Update – Solar Installation on RRFB's

D. Camera Enforcement in School Zones/on Buses

E. “Bike to School Day” Poster Contest

Johns Hopkins All Childrens Hospital is sponsoring a Bike to School Day poster contest and would appreciate your help in spreading the word. This year, Bike to School Day is Wednesday, May 8th. On that day schools throughout the US will bring attention to the value and joy of safe walking and rolling. They are asking young bicyclists to send a message to drivers to safely share the roads. Entries are due Friday, March 15th. (Guidelines and required forms are attached)

F. Request for Future Agenda Topics

The STSC members may discuss any suggestions for future agenda topics.

STEPS Meeting Minutes for September 2023

School Transportation & Enhanced Pedestrian Safety Committee

Wednesday, September 20, 2023 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WPSOC or on Microsoft Teams

I. INTRODUCTIONS-ATTENDANCE

Mahshid Arasteh, Valerie Brookens, Renee Cooper, Tim Jacobson, Kelly Jericho, David Lutz, Melissa Mehling, Casey Morse, Dawn Pecora, Ginger Regalado, Jerry Reynolds, Norm Runkles, Hailey Sequeira, Marshall Touchton, Mike Ulbrich and Autumn Westermann

II. APPROVAL OF August 16th, 2023 Meeting Minute

Norm Runkles and Dawn Pecora

III. NEW GENERAL BUSINESS

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS/UPDATES

Construction starting September 25, 2023: all lanes of County Road 1, between Saddle and Wexford Drive, will be closed for emergency sewer pipe replacement. The roadway is expected to be closed for 4 weeks. Will impact sidewalk on the west side of CR-1. Schools effected will be notified. (Elisa Nelson Elementary, Ozona Elementary, Palm Harbor Middle and Palm Harbor University.

Notes: 7am-7pm, small portion of the road and sidewalk affected.

Seminole Elementary Crosswalk: Casey Morse will check the progress on getting side bar moved back on the west bound side.

Madeira Beach Fundamental: Casey Morse received a call from the Fish Market. Due to parents blocking his business entrance a delivery was unable to be made and business was lost. Casey will request a direct patrol-tickets will be issued with no warning. Mike Ulbrich will inform the principal that tickets will start being issued.

V. NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNED

***** October 18th, 2023** at WPSOC located at 11111 Belcher Road South, Largo

or “Microsoft TEAMS” at 10:30a.m.***

All STEPS meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of the month

STEPS Meeting Agenda for November 2023

School Transportation & Enhanced Pedestrian Safety Committee

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WPSC or on Microsoft Teams

I. INTRODUCTIONS-ATTENDANCE

Mahshid Arasteh, Valerie Brookens, Joe Camera, Renee Cooper, Tim Jacobson, Marvin Jefferson, Kelly Jericho, Melissa Mehling, Kaitlyn Nieman, Casey Morse, Dawn Pecora, Norm Runkles, Marshall Touchton, Mike Ulbrich, Jeff Wasilewski and Autumn Westermann

II. APPROVAL OF September 20, 2023 Meeting Minute

Norn Runkles and Jeff Wasilewski

No meeting in October 2023

III. NEW GENERAL BUSINESS

Discovery Academy of Science: Principal called Norm about charter school opening after Christmas Holiday. Confirmed jurisdiction as Clearwater PD. Norm is not able to determine crossing guard positions with current information. Crosswalk needs to be investigated as no one knows who put it there. Casey will reach out to Tom Washburn to confirm all requirements have been met and charter school has an opening date.

Dunedin High School: Deputy educating and giving warnings to the parents parking in the areas with signage present.

Madeira Beach K-8: Walgreens closing 11/16/23. Raising awareness of possible problems with empty parking lot. Principal reached out to manager of Walgreens to ask owners to block the driveway if possible. Lt. Kelly will make Deputy aware of the situation and will stay posted through the school year in the area.

Melrose Elementary: Group contacted media requesting crossing guard to be posted at 19th St S. and 15th Ave S for the group of students attending Melrose Elementary. Guard has been posted at 13th Ave S and 16th St. S which according to school zoning should be students going to Campbell Park Elementary. St. Pete PD would like to remove guard from current spot and move to new location to accommodate the students attending actual zoned school. Proposed changes to start after Thanksgiving Break. Marvin and Melissa will work together with school to move forward with change that will affect 4-5 students at current post.

Agenda Items: Reminder to email Jerichok@pcsb.org meeting agenda items at least 2 days prior to meeting.

School Zones Flashers: Programmed by the county. Casey needs updated active times for crossing guards to be accurate and efficient.

IV. **COMMITTEE BUSINESS/UPDATES**

Add School Zones to agenda to be reviewed continuously.

V. **NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNED**

Meeting scheduled for December has been canceled per anonymously vote.

*** **January 17, 2024** at WPSC located at 11111 Belcher Road South, Largo
or “Microsoft TEAMS” at 10:30a.m.***

All STEPS meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of the month

2024 Bike to School Day Poster Contest

Dear Student Educator,

We would like to invite you to participate in our annual Bike to School Day Poster Contest. This year, Bike to School Day is Wednesday, May 8th and on that day schools throughout the US will bring attention to the value and joy of safe walking and rolling. **This year we are asking young bicyclists to send a message to drivers to safely share the roads.**

Leading up to this day, we would like to ask your help to provide students with important safety information about riding their bikes and to also allow them to get creative. **Please view **BOTH** video links below with your students. Then, have them design an original piece of art based on the information included in the videos as if they are asking drivers to be on look out for them.**

Three winners from each county will be selected. First place receives a Grand Prize (Approx. value \$100) and a high visibility backpack loaded with a set of bike lights and many more items, second and third place receive a reflective drawstring bag also loaded with a set of bike lights and many more items.

Contest Guidelines

- **Art should incorporate a bike safety message from one of these videos:**
 - For **ALL students (K-8)**: <https://vimeo.com/518766248/a1baecc4cd>
 - For **students (K-5)**: https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/bicyclesaferjourney/el_en.html
 - For **students (6-8)**: https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/bicyclesaferjourney/mi_en.html
- **All mediums accepted. Design must be horizontal in orientation.**
- **No student names, school names, photographic images of people, or copyrighted images please.**
- **Each school may select **two** entries only to submit. Each entry must be accompanied by the following **two forms**: “Consent and Release to Use Child Artwork”, and “Contact Information Form”.**
- **Digital entries only. Email a photograph (.jpg file) of your student’s art (no more than 20mbs) to Srainey5@jh.edu . Please identify the student, school and county in the email for each photograph. If your students work is selected as a winner, please have a higher resolution copy of the image available to provide to us (300 dpi preferred).**
- **Entries due Friday, March 15th 2024.**
- **Questions may be directed to Sheila Rainey at Srainey5@jh.edu.**





Consent and Release to Use Child's Artwork

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____
(print)

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name: _____
(print)

I understand that my child's artwork is a gift to Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Inc. or All Children's Hospital Foundation, Inc. in support of the overall mission of the hospital. I understand that the artwork may be used for social media, presentations or other similar purposes. I also understand and agree that it may be reproduced and printed on items that could be used for fundraising and other marketing/recognition purposes on behalf of Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital. I give permission to Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Inc. and All Children's Hospital Foundation, Inc. to use my child's artwork as described in this form.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child Signature (if appropriate): _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Scan to: Consents >> Other >> Other Consent DOCIMG



Child's Artwork Contact Information Form

Child's Name: _____
(print)

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name: _____
(print)

Parent/Legal Guardian's Phone: _____
(print)

Parent/Legal Guardian's Email: _____
(print)

Child's School Name and County: _____
(print)

Child's Teacher: _____
(print)

Brief Description of Artwork: _____
(print)

