# Safe Routes to School

# Local Press Release Template

The following template news release can be tailored to officially engage the media surrounding your Safe Routes event. The template can be further modified to alert the media about other Safe Routes event being organized throughout the year.

## Using the Template

* Fill in the bracketed areas with your organization/event information.
* Logo: We encourage you to use your school’s logo and add the Virginia SRTS logo, if there is space.
* Contact Information: It is important to choose a point person for the news release who will be available both once the release is distributed and throughout the event. Use the contact phone number that has the greatest likelihood of reaching the person.
* Length: The ideal news release is no longer than one page in length.
* Identify Media Contacts: Use these [tips](https://www.walkbiketoschool.org/plan/get-media-attention/press-releases/) from the National Center for SRTS to help identify local contacts.
* Distribution: A few days or the day before the event, distribute the release to local media contacts (television, radio, and newspaper). Email, fax, mail and hand-delivery are all ways to distribute the release.
* Materials: Have copies of the news release available at the event. You may also want to compile a press kit, including **fact sheets, backgrounders and biographies. Find example press kit materials from the California Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center’s** [website](http://qs1252.pair.com/monarchm/srts/whats-happening-in-california/2012-walk-to-school-day/)**.**

**Scroll down one page for the news release.**

**For immediate Release**

[Release date]

**Contact:**

[Name, number and email]

**[City, County, area] School(s) will Participate in [Safe Routes Event, e.g. Crossing Guard Appreciation Day] on [February 7, 2024]**

[City, State] -- [Name of School, participating organizations, etc.] in [city or county] will join children and adults across Virginia by participating in [Crossing Guard Appreciation Day] on [February 7, 2024]. Approximately [number] of students and their families, along with [teachers] [and names of local officials, community organizations, etc] will thank their crossing guard at school by [description of event].

[Name of school] is one of [dozens of] Virginia schools across the state that participates in national and statewide Safe Routes to School events. [Crossing Guard Appreciation Day] is a Virginia statewide event held each [February] designed to create awareness of the important role crossing guards have in enabling students to safely walk and bike to school. “[quote from school principal, mayor, city council member, SRTS champion, etc.]*”*

[Name of school] has participated in [Crossing Guard Appreciation Day] for the past [X] years.

OR

This is the first year [name of school] has participated in [Crossing Guard Appreciation Day].

[Information about who else will attend and other program details].

For additional local information, please contact [name] at [phone number, if possible, give a cell phone number that allows media to contact the individual during the event.]

**About Crossing Guard Appreciation Day**

Safe Routes to School events like Crossing Guard Appreciation Day promote healthy lifestyles among children by encouraging them to walk or bike to school. More activity means healthier kids. Events like these emphasize ways to make the daily trip to school safe and fun. When children walk or bike to school, they make new friends and become more familiar with their neighborhood. And with more students on foot, traffic around schools is reduced.

**About the Virginia Safe Routes to School Program**

The Virginia Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) assists interested localities and schools in the development of plans, activities, and infrastructure improvements to make bicycling and walking to school a safe and appealing transportation option for students in kindergarten through high school. For more information, visit [www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes](http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes).

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