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SEATTLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

October 28, 2019

Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Chair, Select Budget Committee

Councilmember Mike O'Brien
Chair, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

Dear Councilmembers,

On behalf of Seattle Public Schools, I want to thank the City of Seattle for being a constructive partner with regard to students' safe travel to and from school. This partnership manifests itself in many ways, including the Safe Routes to Schools program, the ORCA Opportunity Youth program and the work of the School Traffic Safety Committee.

The School Traffic Safety Committee, created by the Council in 1975, has presented recommendations to the Council in its 2019 report and in an Oct. 15 letter (attached). In this letter, the committee recommends the creation of an Active Transportation Coordinator position to better coordinate programs such as the School Crossing Guard program and Walking and Biking School Bus programs.

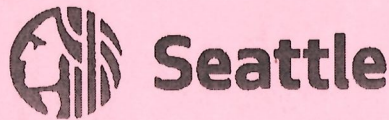
While we understand that the Council must balance many priorities during its budget deliberations, we appreciate the committee's recommendation and want to assure the Council that the district would support a City of Seattle funded Active Transportation Coordinator and that such a position would in turn support students' safe travel to and from neighborhood schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise Juneau
Superintendent
Seattle Public Schools

Attachment: School Traffic Safety Committee letter Oct. 15, 2019



School Traffic Safety Committee

October 15, 2019

To Seattle City Council Members:

Bruce Harrell, Sally Bagshaw, Lorena Gonzalez, Lisa Herbold, Debora Juarez, Teresa Mosqueda, Mike O'Brien, Abel Pacheco, and Kshama Sawant

Regarding: Supporting Safe Routes to School and Active Transportation for students in the 2020 Seattle City Budget

The School Traffic Safety Committee (STSC), a commission appointed by City Council to work with Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Police Department, and members of the community to improve traffic safety for kids and families throughout the city, urges City Council members to support Safe Routes to School in the 2020 City Budget.

The School Traffic Safety Committee strongly supports two requests in the 2020 City Budget:
Restore revenue from red light traffic cameras to the Safe Routes to School program and Fund an Active Transportation Coordinator.

In 2018, revenue from red light traffic cameras was siphoned off into the general fund, a move that was out of step with the City's Vision Zero commitment, and out of touch with the reality that many families struggle to get their children safely to and from school through streets with aging or missing sidewalks and increasing traffic. The Safe Routes to School program provides critical safety infrastructure to help children at schools across Seattle walk to class safely. **Restoring revenue from red light traffic cameras to the Safe Routes to School program** is an important step to make Seattle's streets safer for kids and families.

Half of the students in Seattle Public Schools do not receive busing. These kids are expected to make their own way to school each day through streets that are increasingly congested and often dangerous. Many parents who have the means to do so make the decision to drive their kids to school every day, resulting in heavy traffic around Seattle schools. This leaves those kids whose families do not have the option to drive, disproportionately low-income kids and people of color, in even more dangerous conditions.

An Active Transportation Coordinator is needed support families and students walking and biking to school. This coordinator will help to improve programs such as the School Crossing Guard program, which currently has vacancies in one of three positions, and Walking School Bus and Biking School Bus programs, which are inequitably spread around the city.

Funding an Active Transportation Coordinator will have multiple benefits for families and communities in Seattle. More kids walking and biking reduces traffic, making the streets around schools safer for all kids on the street. More walking and biking also reduces air pollution around schools, making a tangible



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difference for students with asthma and other respiratory ailments. And studies show that walking and biking to school increases students' ability to learn at school.

On behalf of the School Traffic Safety Committee, I am encouraged to see the leadership coming from City Council members supporting pedestrian safety. Restoring revenue from red light traffic cameras to the Safe Routes to School program and Funding an Active Transportation Coordinator are investments in Seattle's children and future. Please vote to include these items in the 2020 budget!

Thank you for your work making our streets safer for kids and families.

On behalf of School Traffic Safety Committee volunteers,

Mary Ellen Russell, PLA
Chairperson, School Traffic Safety Committee
stsc@seattle.gov