

NEPN/NSBA Code: JLID

### **Biking and Walking to School**

Portland Public Schools supports biking and walking as transportation to and from school where there are adequate facilities to do so safely, including, though not limited to sidewalks, paved shoulders, and/or bike lanes.

The district regards walking or the riding of bicycles to school as an assumption of responsibility by students and their parents – a responsibility in the care of property, in the observation of safety rules, and in the display of courtesy and consideration towards others. The district assumes no liability for injuries occurring outside school property. The School District and its employees are not liable for any equipment or property theft or damage.

The district shall conduct programs to make students aware of walking and biking rules and conditions and the safety reasons for supporting them. Students who walk or bike to and from school should follow all safety laws and guidelines.

While at school, bikers must comply with these rules:

1. Bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds during arrival and dismissal times ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hour before and after school); they must be walked.
2. Whenever possible, bicycles should be parked in racks provided by the school and locked.
3. Helmets must be stored with the bike or in another designated area.
4. Students may not use or tamper with other students' bicycles or equipment.

While at school, walkers must comply with these rules:

1. Use available crosswalks.
2. If crossing guides are available, cross where guides are located.
3. Do not cross the street between parked cars.

The Superintendent is authorized to enter into partnerships with the City of Portland, and other applicable local, state, and federal agencies to address and leverage support for safe walking and biking to school. Schools completing School Travel Plans will be prioritized for walking and biking resources, proposals, projects, and assistance.

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**Biking and Walking to School Administrative Procedures**

Walking and biking rules shall be enforced on school grounds. School employees may intervene if they see a child walking or riding a bike unsafely or not following applicable state laws, such as not wearing a bicycle helmet while riding.

Bikers are encouraged to follow all applicable state laws including:

1. According to Maine State Law, anyone under the age of 16 that rides a bicycle must wear a helmet at all times (29-A MSR, §2323 (1)).
2. In Maine, bicycles are defined as vehicles under the state motor vehicle code contained in 29-A MRS. Parents and students should be aware of these state bicycling laws and follow them at all times. Riders must follow the rules of the road including but not limited to:
  - a. Obeying all traffic lights and signals (29-A MRS §2057)
  - b. Using hand signals before making turns (e.g. left arm extended horizontally to left to indicate a left turn, and similarly with the right arm for right turns) (29-A MRS §2071 (5))
  - c. Only one rider per seat – never let a friend ride on the handlebars or wheel pegs (29-A MRS §2063 (3), (3A), & (4))
  - d. Stopping and looking left, right, then left again before leaving driveways or entering any street
  - e. Riding with traffic (29-A MRS §2063 (5)). Don't ride too close to parked cars – doors can open suddenly.
  - f. Riding in a straight line, where drivers can see you, and not swerving between cars
  - g. Riding as far to the right as practicable except when passing, avoiding hazards, or preparing for a left turn (29-A MSR §2063 (2)) and yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks
  - h. Stopping for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing to receive or discharge passengers – as a vehicle you must stop your bicycle before reaching the school bus, regardless of which direction you are traveling. You may not proceed until the school bus resumes motions or until signaled by the school bus operator to proceed (29-A MRS §2063 (9))
  - i. If you must ride at dawn, dusk, or after dark, you must use a white headlight and be sure your bike is equipped with a rear red light or reflector and foot/ankle/pedal reflectors (29-A MSR §2084(1)). A rear red blinking light is strongly recommended.
3. Bicycles ridden to school should be roadworthy and regularly maintained. It is the responsibility of the student and their parent/guardian to test tires for air before riding and ensure that the brakes work (29-A MSR §2084 (1)).

Pedestrians are encouraged to follow safety practices including:

1. Wherever available, use sidewalks and marked Portland Walkways.

2. Before crossing, look left, right, and left again to make sure the road is clear. Continue looking while you cross and listen for traffic.
3. If you are walking at dawn, dusk, or after dark, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.