

New Bedford Public Schools Students Celebrate International Walk & Bike to School Day

Dozens of New Bedford Public Schools students, parents and teachers participated in International Walk and Bike to School Day today. The featured event took place at the Hathaway Elementary School on Court Street where Mayor Jon Mitchell, Superintendent Dr. Pia Durkin, Hathaway Principal Richard Leeman, students and parents gathered in front of the school building at 7:40AM to walk together in celebration of Walk and Bike to School Day.

The Hathaway School community used the event to launch its brand new "Walking School Bus" which allows neighborhood students living along a determined route to walk together to school each morning in a safe, chaperoned group. Other participating schools in the District include Betsy B. Winslow Elementary and the Abraham Lincoln Elementary Schools.



Photo by Josh Souza.

Wellness activities have been increasing across New Bedford Public Schools with more physical education and recess time for elementary students in particular. The installation of bicycle racks at every school has also encouraged more students to bike to school.

In the United States, International Walk to School Day is expected to include more than 5,000 events across all 50 states. Walkers from the U.S. will join children and adults in 40 countries around the world.

Walk to School Day events work to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, concern for the environment and building connections between families, schools and the broader community.

Walk and Bike to School Day is a collaboration of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Mass in Motion Program and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's

Safe Routes to School Program, which is federally funded by the Federal Highway Division. The program is designed to create safer streets, promote physical activity, and build sustainable environments in over 170 communities throughout Massachusetts. Mass in Motion works with communities across the Commonwealth to promote healthy eating and active living for youth and adults.

The Safe Routes to School campaign works with cities and other organizations to build infrastructure such as bike paths and sidewalks, and to deliver education and awareness to drivers about driving without distractions, slowing down, and respecting pedestrians and cyclists.

For additional information, please visit these websites:

Mass in Motion: www.mass.gov/massinmotion

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School:
www.mass.gov/massdot/saferoutes

Walk to School Day in the USA: www.walkbiketoschool.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School:
www.saferoutesinfo.org