

## Request for Proposals: Walking School Bus Pilot Programs

### Project Overview:

The 2021 Community Health Assessment identified Mental Health as one of the top priority areas for Rock County. In the 2022-2024 Community Health Improvement Plan, Rock County Public Health Department (RCPHD) and the Health Equity Alliance of Rock County (HEAR) are working to implement programs and policies that will positively impact our community. To carry out these initiatives, we have grant funds from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services. One initiative we are requesting proposals for is to fund walking school bus pilot programs in Rock County elementary and secondary schools.

**A walking school bus** is a program that allows a group of children to walk with one or more adults to/from school. Each 'bus' walks along a set route with trusted volunteers, parents, or a school employee to serve as route leaders and ensure students arrive safely to school. Children can be picked up at designated stops along a predetermined route. Benefits include:

- **Increased daily physical activity**, forming healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Helps children to build strong bones, muscles, and joints and decreases the risk of chronic disease and obesity.
- **Increased family and community engagement**, providing positive social opportunities for students, families, volunteers that gives all involved a sense of community and increases social connections.
- **Improved traffic safety habits and increased confidence** for students through opportunities to learn about and practice road safety, inspiring confidence and independence.
- **Improved student school readiness to learn.** Students who are healthy, awake, and alert with better focus and concentration can improve academic performance.
- **Provides a solution to transportation issues and provides a cleaner environment.** Reduces traffic congestion at schools, student absences and tardiness due to transportation issues. Reduces air pollution from car emissions and leads to fewer student asthma attacks.
- **Peace of mind for families** that their child can get to school safely.
- **It's fun!** Walking is a great stress reliever and can bring a sense of joy and independence.

**Our goal** is to create more opportunities for youth to connect with older students or adults while building healthy habits of walking to school which has been shown to increase academic achievement and health outcomes. Walking school buses have also shown benefits for volunteers including increased physical activity, having an improved sense of community, and mental health benefits of volunteering with youth.



HEARCOORDINATOR@CO.ROCK.WI.US

[HTTPS://WWW.CO.ROCK.WI.US/DEPARTMENTS/PUBLIC-HEALTH/HEALTH-EQUITY-ALLIANCE-OF-ROCK-COUNTY-HEAR](https://www.co.rock.wi.us/departments/public-health/health-equity-alliance-of-rock-county-hear)

**Eligible Applicants:**

Applicants must be based in Rock County, conduct their proposed project in Rock County and can be one of the following:

- School or School Staff
- Community Groups
- Parents or Parent Groups (e.g., PTA)
- High School Organizations

**Project Timeline:**

- January 12<sup>th</sup>: Question & Answer Session via Zoom from 3:00-4:30pm (optional)
- January 26<sup>th</sup>: Proposals due by 5pm
- February 1<sup>st</sup>: Grant award notices sent out
- February: Awardees meet with Walking School Bus team to approve program plans (TBD)
- May 26<sup>th</sup>: Program activities need to be completed
- May: Post-Award Meeting: – TBD

**Funding Available:**

RCPHD and HEAR intends to issue awards of up to \$1,000 to approximately 5 organizations. Applicants must review the list of allowable and unallowable uses of these funds while considering their grant budget items.

**Applicants will be awarded based on** available funding, capacity, and application scores as determined by the review panel. Strong applications will have a plan that uses an equity lens and a sustainability plan to continue the program after the award is complete. Other items that will be reviewed:

- School demographics
- Program capacity and feasibility
- Safety plans
- Project reach
- Compliance with grant requirements
- Community input included in planning
- Program is aligned with grant goals
- Policy plans within the organization

**To complete an application**, organizations can submit responses via email in a Word or PDF document or through a survey link (<https://forms.office.com/g/MqsF54hPyc>) by 5:00pm on January 26th. Note: Applications submitted through survey link are not able to be saved and returned to later. All the application questions are listed below to review.

A Question & Answer Session will be provided by the Walking School Bus Team on January 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm-4:30pm via Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4664951759>). This is optional for those who want to ask questions about the process or program. Additional questions can be submitted to the email listed below.

**Questions should be sent to [HEARCoordinator@co.rock.wi.us](mailto:HEARCoordinator@co.rock.wi.us).**

**Applications due by January 26<sup>th</sup>, 5:00pm.**

## **Walking School Bus Application Questions:**

### Section 1: Applicant Information

1. Name of primary contact for this application.
2. Email address of primary contact.
3. Phone number of primary contact.
4. If you are applying on behalf of an organization, please state what organization you are representing.
5. Name of participating school.
6. Describe your role or connection to this school.
7. Do you have approval from the principal at this school? (Yes, No, Pending)
8. Grantees will be required to meet with the Walking School Bus Team two times to approve the project (February) and evaluation (May/June). Do you agree to meeting with the Walking School Bus Team? (Yes, No)

### Section 2: Program Planning and Structure

Applicants will be awarded based on available funding, capacity, and application scores as determined by the review panel. Strong applications will have a plan that uses an equity lens and a sustainability plan to continue the program after the award is complete. Other items that will be reviewed:

- School demographics
- Program capacity and feasibility
- Safety plans
- Program is aligned with grant goals
- Project reach
- Compliance with grant requirements
- Community input included in planning
- Policy plans within the organization

9. Describe any plans you have for starting a walking school bus program. This can include plans to address safety, behavioral issues, inclement weather, and supervision absences.
10. How many students do you anticipate using the walking school bus program?
11. Who will be walking with the students for the walking school bus events (organization or staff names)? What is your plan to recruit volunteers to supervise these events if you don't have them secured at this time?
12. How do you intend to develop your walking school bus routes?
13. Has your school participated in a Safe Routes to School or Walking School Bus program in the past? If so, how did you incorporate the community and parents input into the program? If not, how do you plan to incorporate their input in the future? How do you plan to sustain the program after the funding period is over?
14. How do you plan to sustain the program after the funding period is over?
15. Do you anticipate any barriers in planning or running the program? If so, what are they?
16. What assistance do you anticipate needing to have a successful walking school bus program?

### Section 3: Budget

Answer the following questions with the estimated amount of dollars you will need (up to \$1,000) to run the pilot walking school bus program. Each grantee will be awarded the funds in two payments: one payment after the February planning meeting and the second payment after the evaluation meeting with the Walking School Bus team.

Please review the allowable and unallowable expenses as set by Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services.

#### **Examples of Allowable Expenses**

- Personnel (compensation)
- Necessary travel for purposes of grant activities
- Supplies (e.g., program supplies, community outreach materials)
- Contractual costs (contract staff, grassroots awareness campaigns)
- Training and professional development of staff
- Translation and production/printing services
- Incentives in the form of Visa, gas, or grocery gift cards for up to \$100 per person

#### **Examples of Unallowable Expenses**

- Promotional items (T-shirts promoting a school)
- Capital leases or purchases
- Reimbursement for costs pre-award
- Funding advocacy or lobbying efforts
- Purchase of vaccines or providing clinical care
- Research
- Supplanting agency funds or other grant awards
- Match for other federal programs

\*It is not required to submit receipts, paystubs, etc. to be reimbursed for this grant. For audit purposes, it is strongly encouraged to keep good records of where the money is spent should you need to reference it in the future.

17. What is the total amount being requested?
18. How much will be spent on personnel costs, if any?
19. How much will be spent on supplies, if any?
20. How much will be spent on marketing materials, if any?
21. Describe any other expenses if the total amount requested is not fully represented in questions 18-20.



HEALTH EQUITY ALLIANCE OF ROCK COUNTY

# Walking School Bus Grant Application

**A walking school bus** is a program that allows a group of children to walk with one or more adults to/from school. Each 'bus' walks along a set route with trusted volunteers, parents, or a school employee to serve as route leaders and ensure students arrive safely to school. Children can be picked up at designated stops along a predetermined route. Benefits include: increased daily physical activity, increased family and community engagement, improved traffic safety habits and increased confidence, improved student school readiness to learn, provides a solution to transportation issues and provides a cleaner environment, peace of mind for families, and it's fun!

RCPHD and HEAR intends to issue awards of up to \$1,000 to approximately 5 organizations.

## **Eligible Applicants:**

Applicants must be based in Rock County, conduct their proposed project in Rock County and can be one of the following: school or school staff, parents or parent groups (e.g., PTA), community groups, high school organizations

## **Project Timeline:**

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**Applicants will be awarded based on** available funding, capacity, and application scores as determined by the review panel. Strong applications will have a plan that uses an equity lens and a sustainability plan to continue the program after the award is complete. Other items that will

be reviewed are school demographics, project reach, support from leadership, safety plans, organizational capacity, grant compliance, community voice embedded into project, policy plans for the organization.

## **Applicant Information**

1. Name of primary contact for this application.

2. Email address of primary contact.

3. Phone number of primary contact.

4. If you are applying on behalf of an organization, please state what organization you are representing.

5. Name of participating school.

6. Describe your role or connection to this school.

7. Do you have approval from the principal at this school?

- Yes
- No
- Pending

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- Yes
- No

# Program Planning and Structure

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