



Upper Valley Lake Sunapee  
Regional Planning Commission

## Memorandum

TO: Lebanon Safe Routes to School Task Force  
FROM: Michael McCrory, Senior Planner  
DATE: September 12, 2012  
RE: **Lebanon Middle School Safe Routes to School Travel Plan – Parent Survey  
Summary Report**

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The Parent Survey is a principal source of information for a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Travel Plan. It provides insight into the opinions and perceived barriers to active transportation (a.k.a. walking and biking) to and from school. With this knowledge the SRTS Task Force can target actions and messaging to address those issues and perceptions.

The typical SRTS Parent Survey is designed to ask respondents about an existing school with well-established operational and travel patterns to and from the school. Since the Lebanon Middle School (LMS) opened its doors to students the fall of 2012 parents and school administration are still learning about, and addressing, issues around travel patterns to/from the school as they arise. It may take the entire school year to ‘work-out the kinks’ of travel patterns in and around the school site.

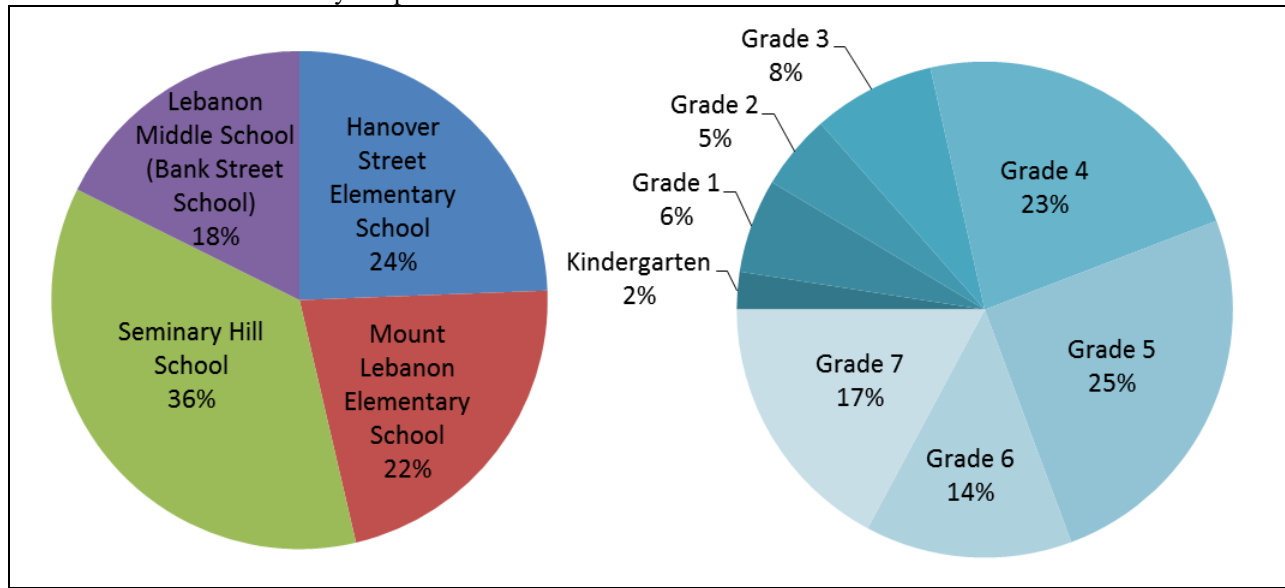
Because of the timing of this planning study it was necessary to administer the parent survey at the end of the 2011-2012 school year and during the summer of 2012 prior to the opening of the Lebanon Middle School. This survey evaluated travel practices during the 2011-2012 school year, then asked about anticipated transportation preferences to and from LMS for the 2012-2013 school year. The following text briefly summarizes the survey responses. Detailed hardcopy and digital copies of the survey responses can be provided upon request for further analysis.

### Survey Response Overview

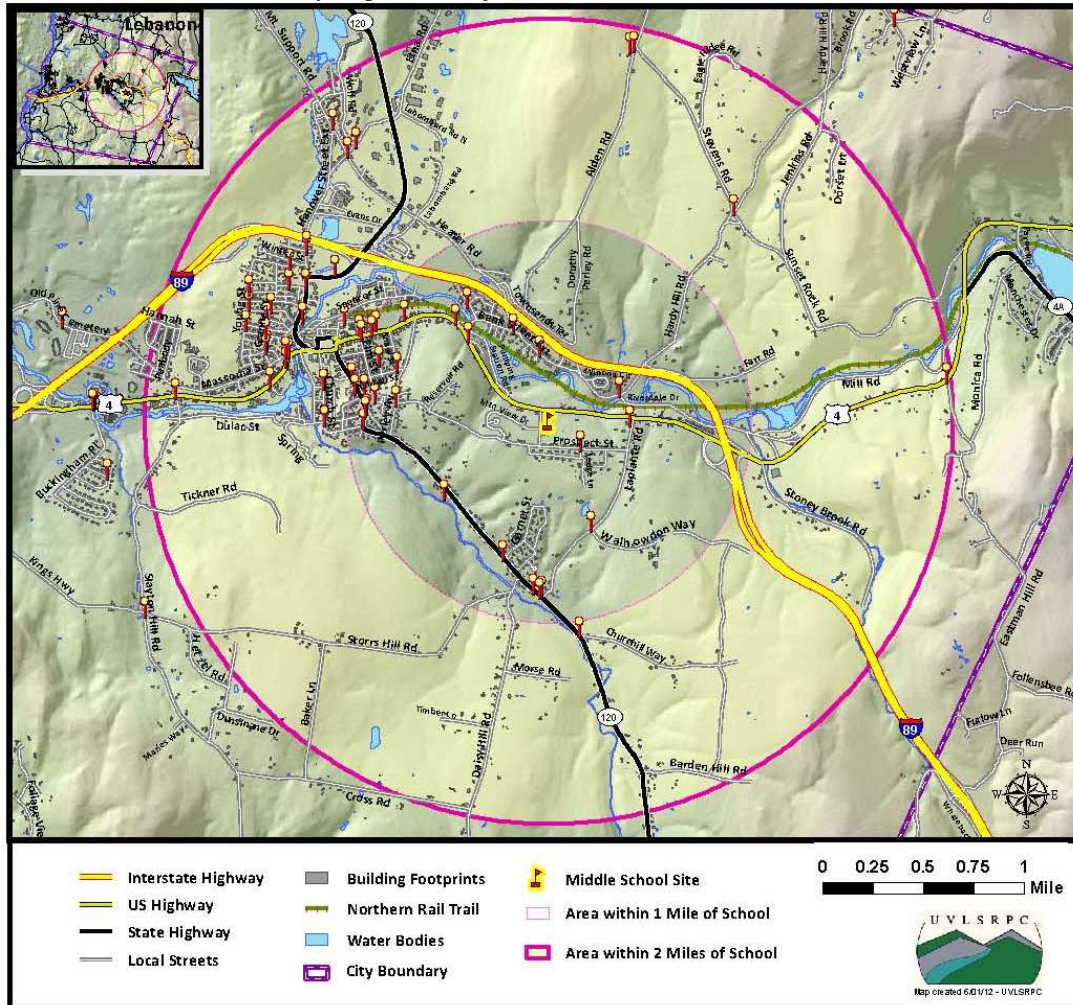
The Parent Survey targeted households with students entering LMS in the 2012-2013 school year, which required 2011-2012 grades 4-7. Parents of younger students were also allowed to take the survey, which would cover future student attendance and accounted for approximately 21% of the survey responses. There were 174 survey responses.

As with the standard Parent Survey this survey asked the respondent to identify the nearest intersection to the student’s residence. These data were plotted on a map to evaluate the general geographic distribution of student residences in the City. The following map illustrates a clustering of residences in neighborhoods around downtown Lebanon, which is within a 1-mile radius of LMS, with an even distribution of students in the more rural areas. Survey questions about the estimated distance between student residences and LMS are discussed later in this document.

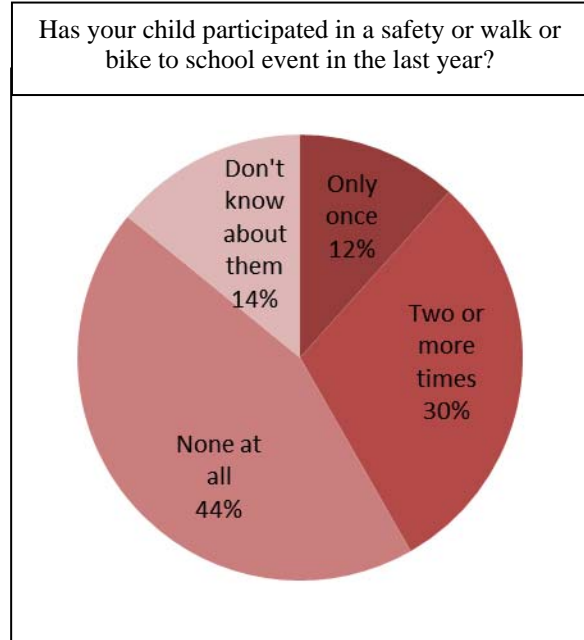
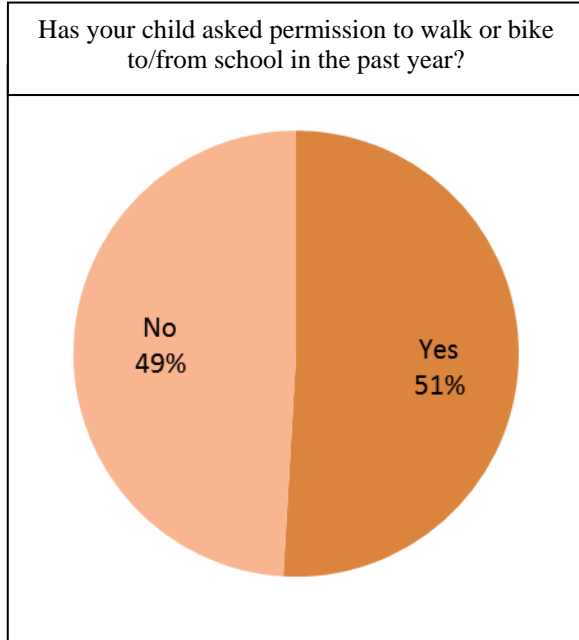
Parent Survey Responses: Student School and Grade for the 2011-2012 School Year



Parent Survey Responses: Adjacent Intersection to Student Residence

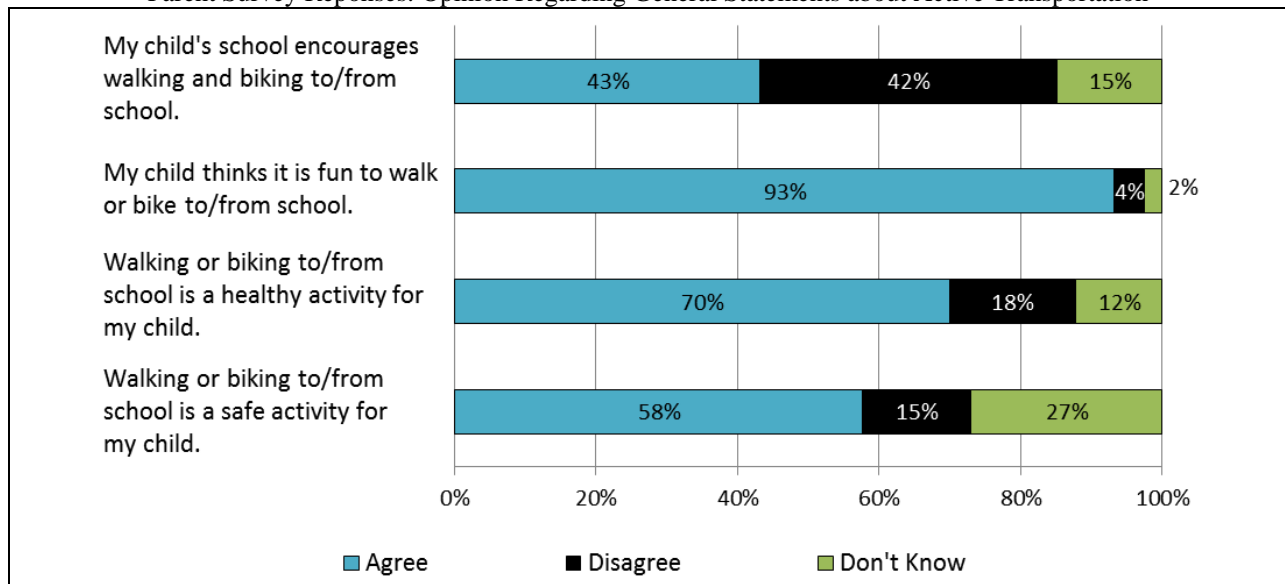


Parent responses to general statements about active transportation indicate strong support for the concept of active transportation. While about half the parents reported their child asking permission to walk or bike to/from school approximately a third reported their child participated in a safety event or an organized walk or bike to school event.



As many parents agree as disagree that their child’s school encourages walking and biking to/from school. The majority of parents agree that walking and biking is healthy and safe, though fewer are confident about safety.

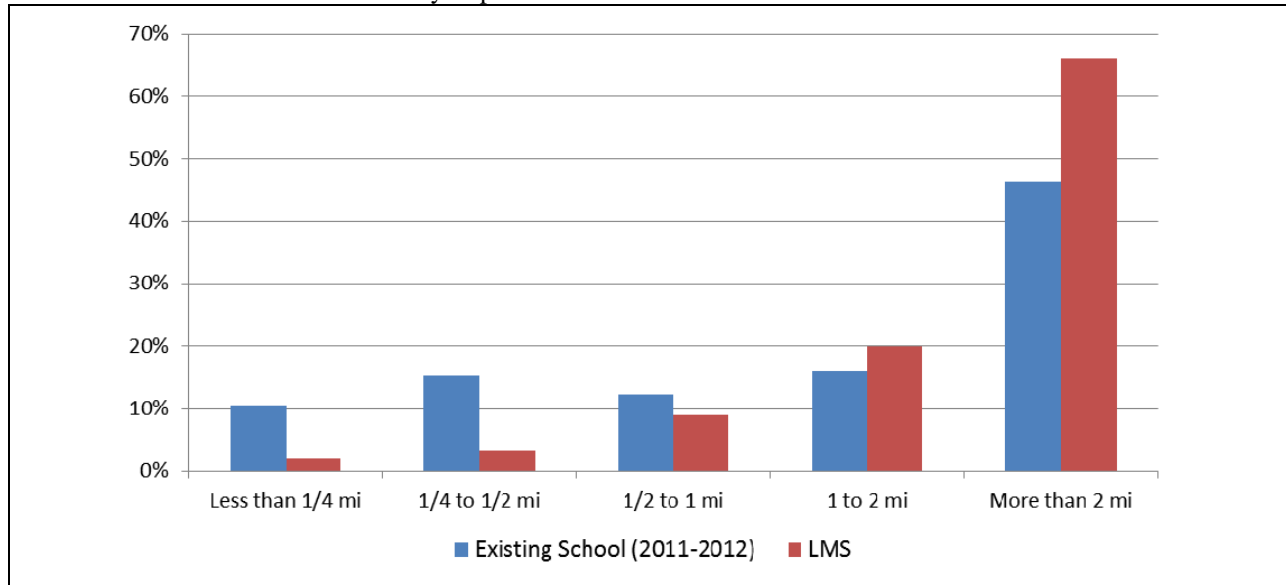
Parent Survey Responses: Opinion Regarding General Statements about Active Transportation



## Shifting Students to LMS

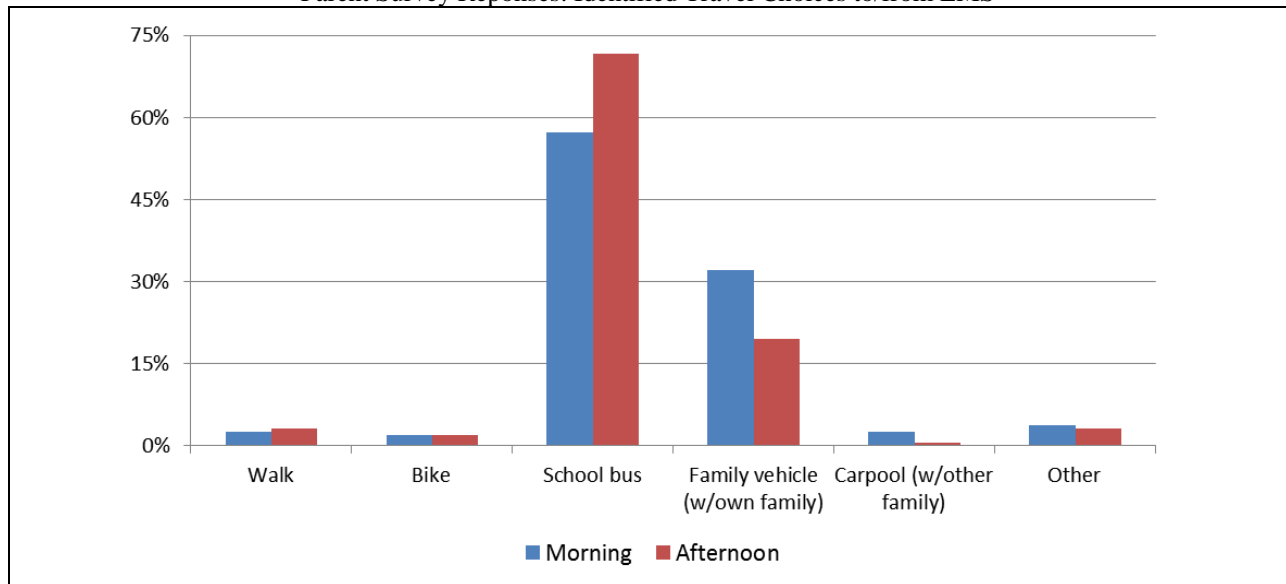
The survey asked similar questions about likely travel patterns to and from the existing schools during the 2011-2012 school year and travel habits to/from LMS in future years. Parents estimated travel distances between their residence and the existing school and LMS. The share of students living more than 2 miles from LMS constituted approximately 66% of the responses.

Parent Survey Responses: Distance Between Residence and School



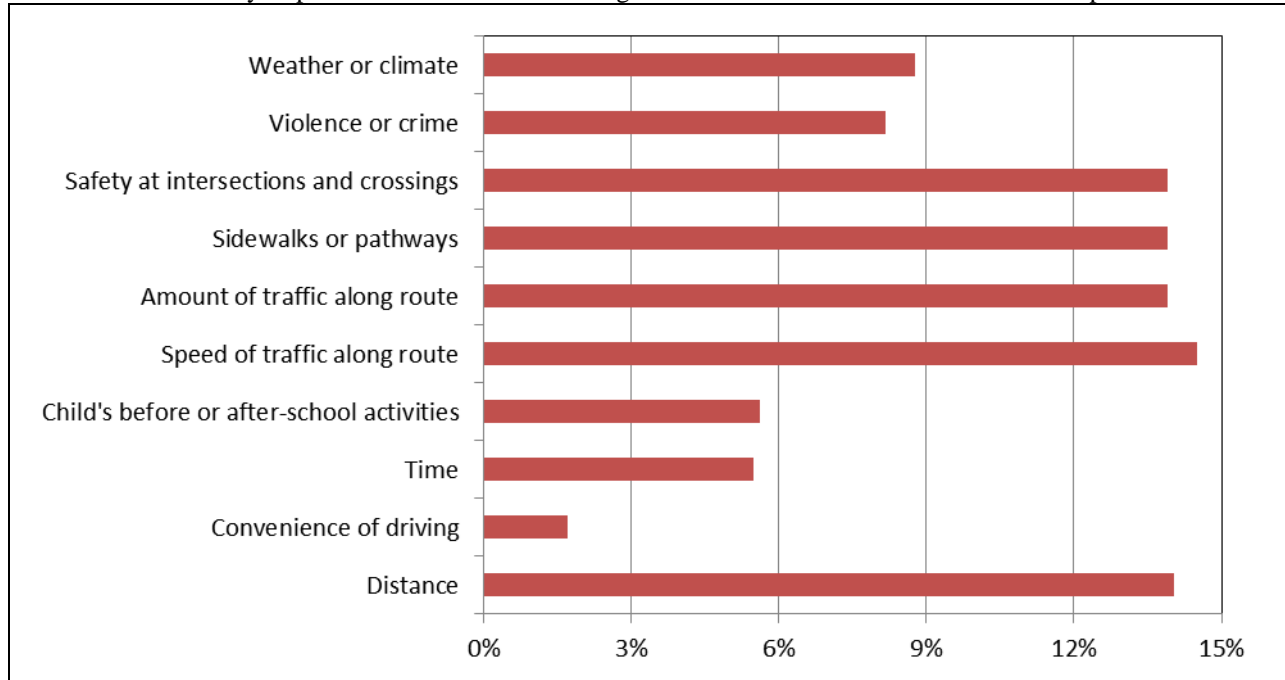
Stated travel choices to and from LMS indicate significant reliance on buses and private vehicles at LMS as compared with other school sites. Very few parents responded that they would expect their child to walk or bike to/from LMS.

Parent Survey Responses: Identified Travel Choices to/from LMS



The Parent Survey also assessed what circumstances would affect a parent’s decision to allow a student to walk or bike to/from LMS. The most popular responses included travel distance, presence of sidewalks or pathways, safety at intersections and road crossings, and the speed and volume of traffic along a travel route. A second question asked whether the parent would reconsider allowing their child to walk or bike to/from LMS if those conditions were improved. The responses indicate the importance of safety and reducing the vehicle traffic volumes and speeds along the route would have a positive influence on allowing their children to walk or bike.

Parent Survey Responses: Conditions Influencing a Parent’s Decision to Allow Active Transportation



### Written Survey Responses

There were many written responses to the survey questions, which indicate a high level of engagement and interest in active transportation by the respondents. Summary bullets of common topics and themes addressed by respondents are listed below in no particular order. All written responses are included in the detailed survey summary data.

- Adult supervision of student walking routes important.
- Crossing guards important along any major travel route.
- Many students go to CCBA after school – transportation between LMS and after school activities important.
- LaPlante Road is too dangerous as a walking or biking route for students.
- There is no safe route between LMS and downtown Lebanon.
- Distance to LMS is a major barrier to allowing students to walk or bike.
- Principal roads around LMS (presumed pedestrian and bike routes) are too busy for students to safely travel.
- Clear communication about student travel choices and opportunities important.