



Three Sample Letters to the Editor

These sample letters to the editor have been provided to help get you started, along with a “slogan” or title to frame your message - *Short on bucks? Lost the bus? Come walk and bike with us!* You can use these verbatim or edit if you want to include more information about your unique situation. You will want to keep your letter brief (200 words maximum) for the best chance of seeing it published. Include your name, address, and daytime phone number, and make sure you follow up after submission. If your letter gets printed, immediately send it to everyone you know to show you got into the local papers. It can really help generate momentum and excitement!

Short on bucks? Lost the bus? Come walk and bike with us!

Option One:

Reducing school buses can save money for teaching and learning and it can reduce fuel consumption and air pollution. But if we leave families holding the bag for getting their children to school safely, these savings will not materialize. We must provide families with a smart neighborhood plan for safe walking and bicycling to school, or most children will be driven in a family car, resulting in traffic, congestion, accidents, and pollution – especially around our schools. Fortunately, *(local SRTS program name)* has the expertise necessary to help our *(district, town, state)* design and implement an affordable and safe plan that will get more kids on their feet and bicycles and out of their cars, that has proven successful elsewhere. This is an opportunity to choose a new path for our children and town that we can't afford to miss.

Option Two:

Our town is acting as if buses and cars are the only means of getting kids to school. Have we so soon forgotten our own walking and bicycling experiences? Many say that these are not safe or practical options, but towns across the nation are proving that wrong. How? By creating walking and bicycling plans, assessing and investing in safety, educating drivers, and encouraging everyone to get active. Many municipalities are finding that when they build safe routes to school, kids and parents come—on their feet and bicycles. Our *(local SRTS program)* has the tools and expertise to create a customized plan for our own school neighborhoods. Let's not drive our families to drive more by missing this opportunity to choose a better future for our town and children.

Option Three:

Saving on bus costs without creating a plan for walking and bicycling to school will end up costing us more. We'll soon be facing traffic congestion, more pollution, more accidents, and higher gas costs for all of us – because we'll leave families few safe options besides driving to school. Many children and families could walk and bicycle if provided with a plan and a safe route for getting to school. *(local SRTS program name)* has the expertise and tools for assessing our neighborhoods and working with us to create a low-cost, safe, and practical plan so that families can choose walking and bicycling over driving. That will keep the bus savings in our schools' classrooms, gas savings in our families' wallets, give our town a break in traffic and air quality, and get our children up and active each day – all at a low cost. It is a future we can choose – so let's do it.