Safe Routes Partnership
Active Paths for Equity & Health

Safe Routes to School Program Census Project

AGENDA

1. Overview of the Safe Routes to School Census Project
2. Safe Routes to School Programs: Why Do They Matter?
3. How We Conducted the Census
4. Results
5. Conclusions & Recommendations

Overview:
Safe Routes to School Program Census Project

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM CENSUS PROJECT

In a nutshell:

- Aim was to inventory & gather information on local Safe Routes to School programs across the country through an online survey

Goal:

- Develop better understanding of scope, nature & effects of these programs
- Identify needs from the field, research gaps, etc.

Results:

- Hundreds of surveys from 44 states plus DC provided new learnings & insights

Safe Routes to School Program Census Respondents

Why Do Safe Routes to School Programs Matter?

Benefits of Safe Routes to School

COST SAVINGS
- Household savings from reduced gas & car use
- Education budget savings through reduced student busing costs

$$

TRAFFIC SAFETY
- Reduced traffic injuries & dangers for students and community members at arrival & dismissal through street improvements near schools
- More chances to learn & practice road safety for students

CLIMATE BENEFITS AND CLEANER AIR
- Fewer student asthma attacks due to less driving & reduced air pollution results
- Cleaner air & reduced greenhouse gas emissions

SAFETY FROM CRIME
- Increased safety from crime & violence due to more people on the streets, good lighting & better street design
- Less harassment, bullying, or violence when students walk or bike together or with adults

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS
- Stronger student friendships & relationships through walking & biking together
- Positive social connections for families & neighbors

HEALTHIER STUDENTS
- Better health & stronger bones, muscles & joints through more walking & biking
- Reduced risk of chronic disease, diabetes, & obesity

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION FIXES
- Solutions to reduced or non-existent bus service through Safe Routes to School
- Reduced traffic congestion at pick-up/drop-off times

BETTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
- Better focus, improved concentration & less distraction for students who are active before school
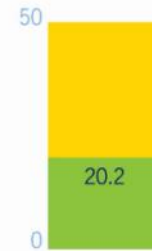- Fewer absences and less tardiness when students walk or bike in groups

SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School increases the number of kids getting healthy exercise on the way to school

50

32.4

0
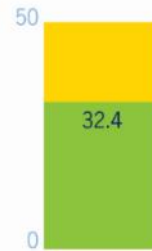
In schools participating
in Safe Routes
to School programs

32.4%
of students walked or biked

50

20.2

0

In schools **NOT** participating
in Safe Routes
to School programs

20.2%
of students walked or biked

The 6 E's

Education

Engineering

Evaluation

Encouragement
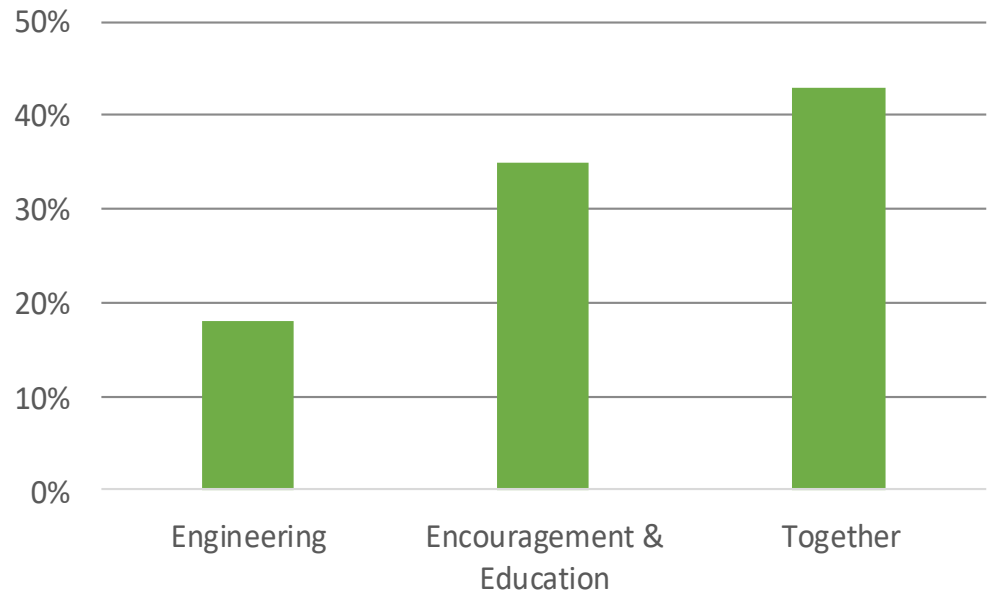
Enforcement

Equity

Why the Six E's?

Comprehensive approaches are effective

Increases in Walking & Biking to School

How We Conducted the Census

HOW WE CONDUCTED THE CENSUS

- Inventoried and gathered information on local Safe Routes to School programs across the country through an **online survey**
- Collected survey info on national basis, & dug deep in 4 states (New York, Nevada, Illinois and Michigan)
- Developed reports (national & for 4 focus states)
  - Safe Routes to School policy environment
  - Snapshot of local programming
  - Observations and recommendations

Safe Routes to School Census

1. Community Identity

First Name *

Last Name *

Title *

Email *

Name of Safe Routes to School Program *

Organization *

City *

State *

Please select... ▼

2. Does your Safe Routes to School program serve students directly? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know/not sure

3. Our Safe Routes to School program has the following staff: *(check all that apply)*

☐ Full time paid coordinator/lead
☐ Additional paid staff
☐ Unpaid staff (people working for free more than 4 hours/week)

☐ Part time paid coordinator/lead
☐ Unpaid coordinator/lead
☐ We do not have a Safe Routes to School coordinator, lead, or staff

4. Where is your program housed?

☐ Planning department
☐ Health department
☐ Parks and recreation/community services

☐ Police department
☐ Transportation department/public works department
☐ Nonprofit

Snapshot of Survey

SURVEY OUTREACH

- Round 1: Safe Routes Partnership direct email to contacts in our national database
- Round 2: Asked national partners + state partners (Ys, nonprofits, associations, state DOT staff, state health staff) to disseminate link, our website, social media, e-newsletters, and listserv posts
- Round 3: Direct emails/calls to known programs
- Round 4: Additional broad outreach using map
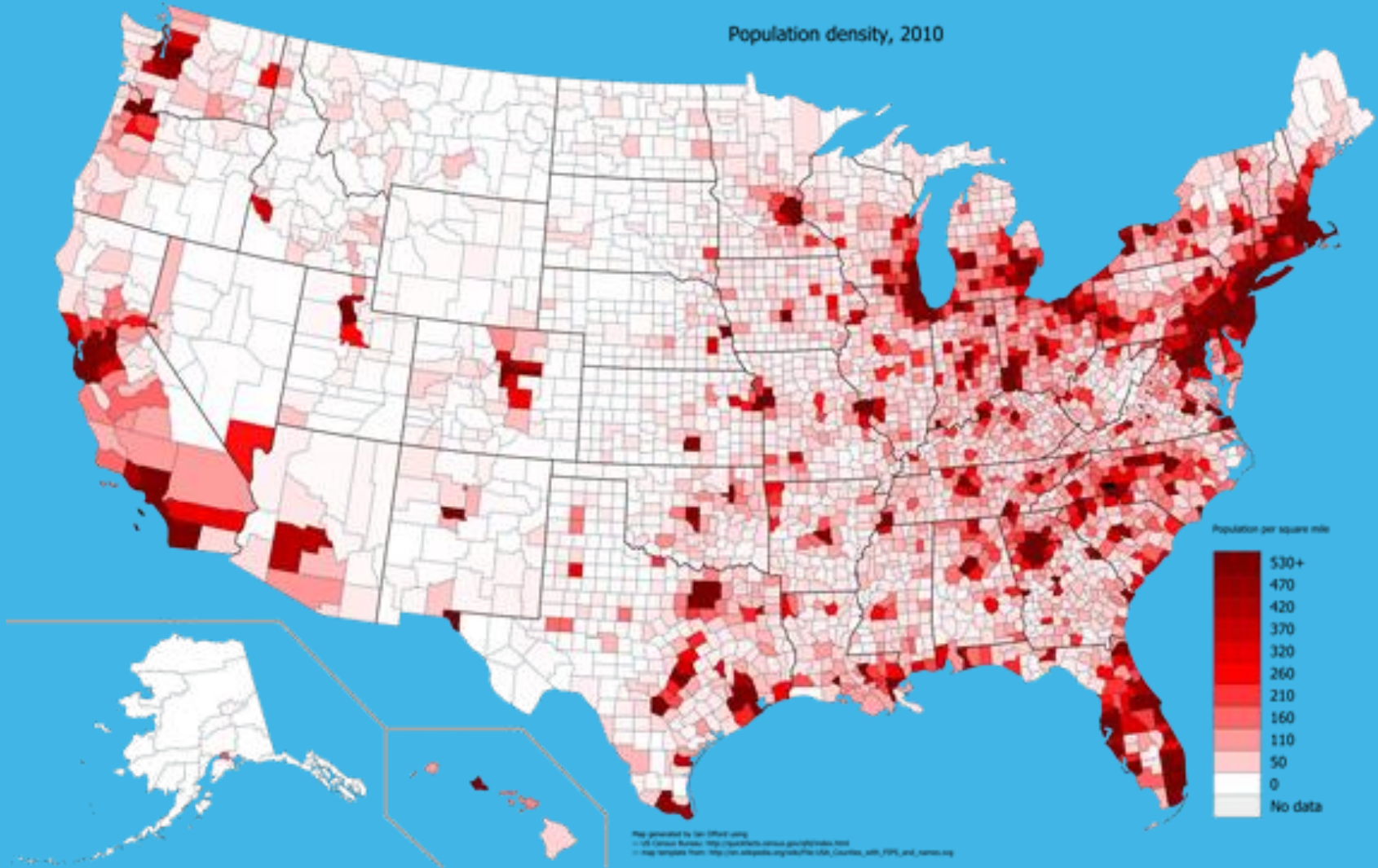
Results

Safe Routes to School Program Census Respondents
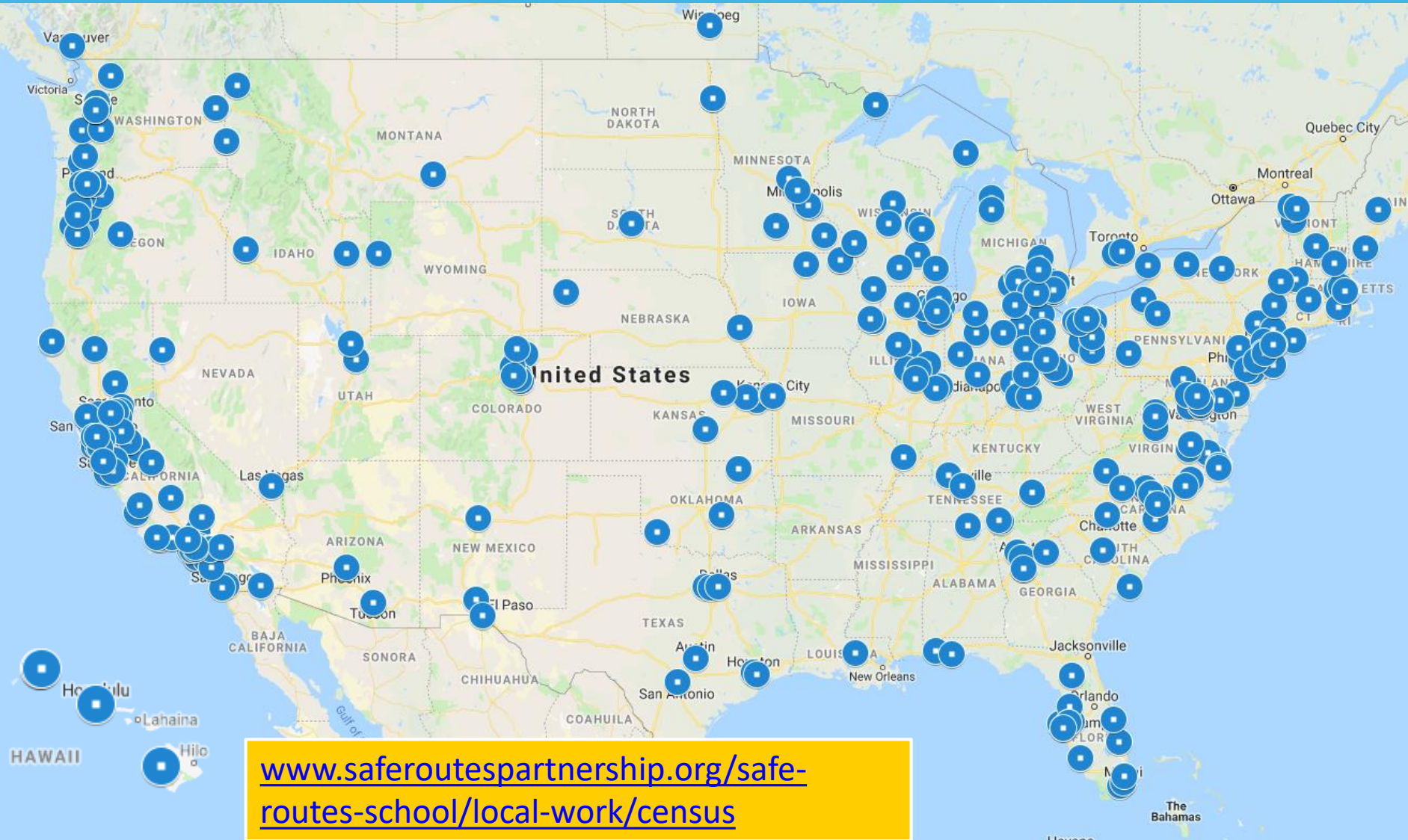
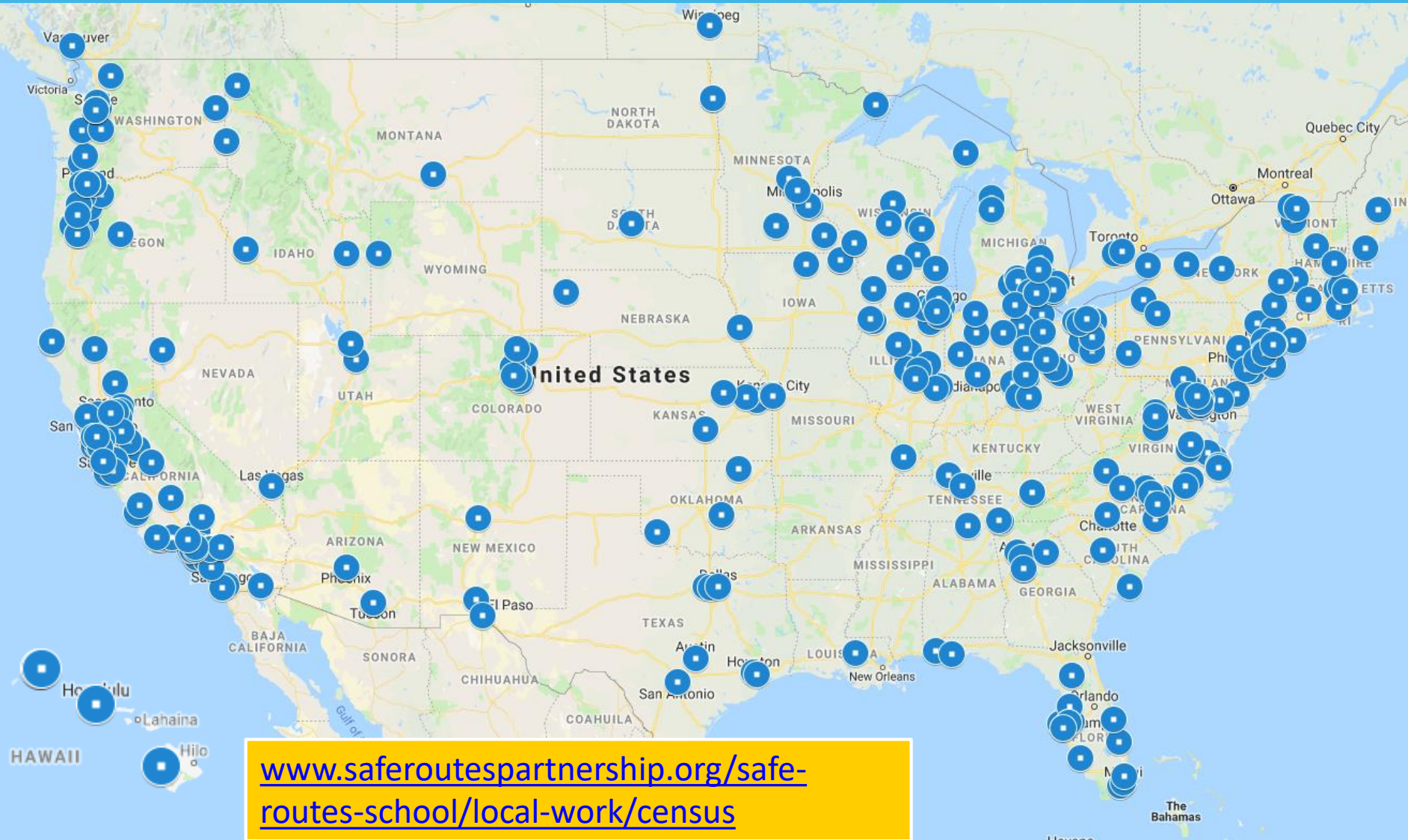www.saferoutespartnership.org/safe-routes-school/local-work/census

Population Density Map (2010)

Population density, 2010

Safe Routes to School Program Census Respondents

www.saferoutespartnership.org/safe-routes-school/local-work/census

Big picture:
- 511 total submissions
- 427 that weren't duplicates & met our criteria
- 15 from statewide programs
- Final results included DC & 44 states (every state except Alaska, Arkansas, Mississippi, Kentucky, West Virginia, Connecticut)
- States with the most respondents included: California, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia
- Limitation: quantitative results not representative

Basic Characteristics of Programs

Program Structure: What Area Do Programs Serve?

- Other (multiple/portion) 19%
- A single city/town 29%
- A single county 13%
- A single school district 26%
- A single school 13%
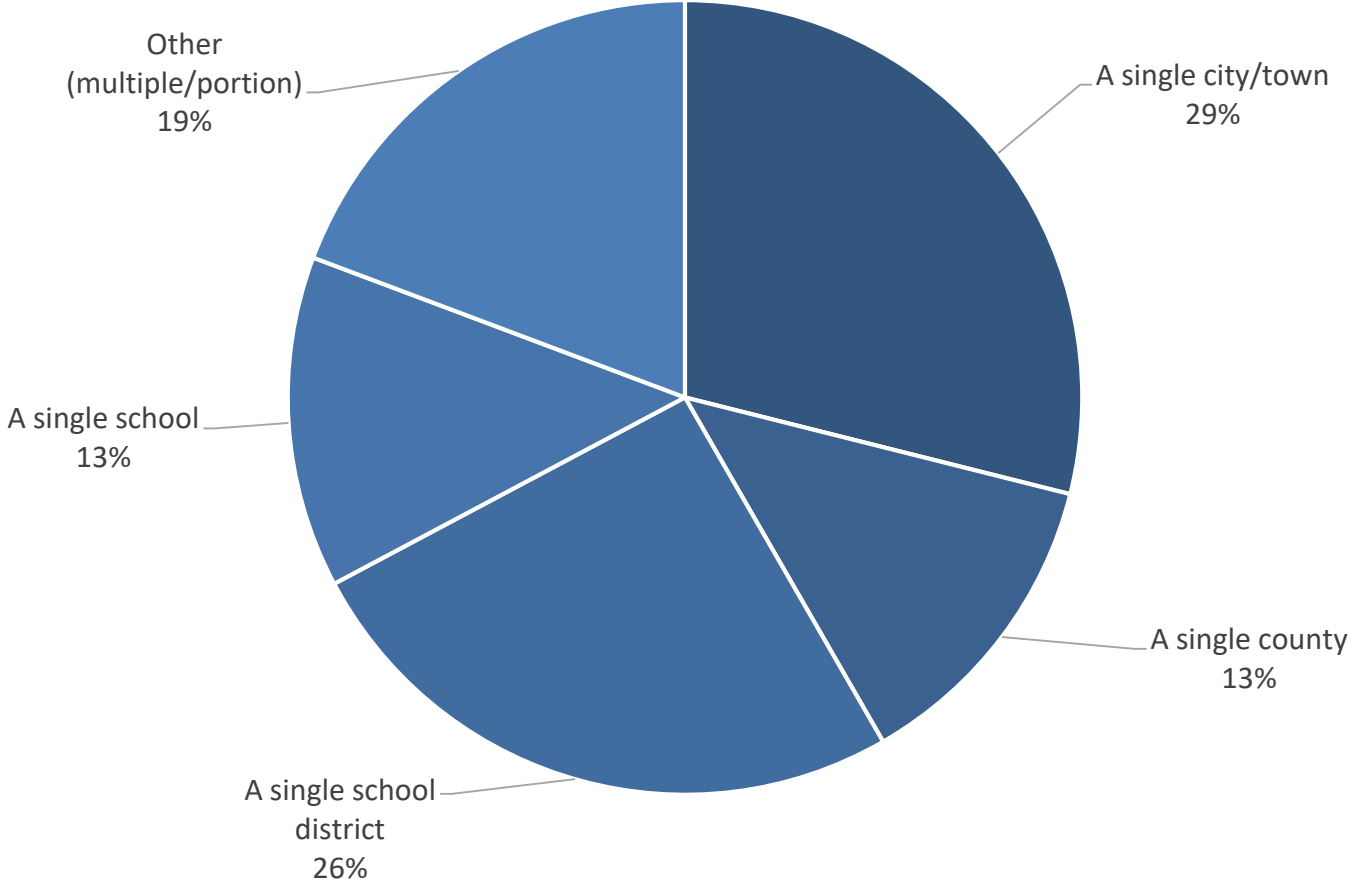
Host or Sponsoring Agency (Multi-School Programs)

- State DOT — 1%
- Police department — 1%
- Parks & rec/community services — 3%
- MPO or regional planning — 5%
- Planning department — 7%
- Health department — 12%
- Transportation department/public works department — 16%
- Other — 10%
- School district/school — 26%
- Nonprofit — 19%

Title 1 Schools

Don't know/not sure
21%

Mostly or all (over 50%)
Title I (low income)
schools
39%

A few (1 to 10%) Title I
schools
9%

None of our schools are
Title I schools
11%

Some (11-50%) Title I
schools
20%

Predominant Student Race/Ethnicity

Rural/Suburban/Urban

- Don't know/not sure 3%
- Rural 21%
- Urban 39%
- Suburban 37%

Age of Program

Over 15 years old
1%

11 to 15 years old
19%

5 years old or less
49%

6 to 10 years old
31%
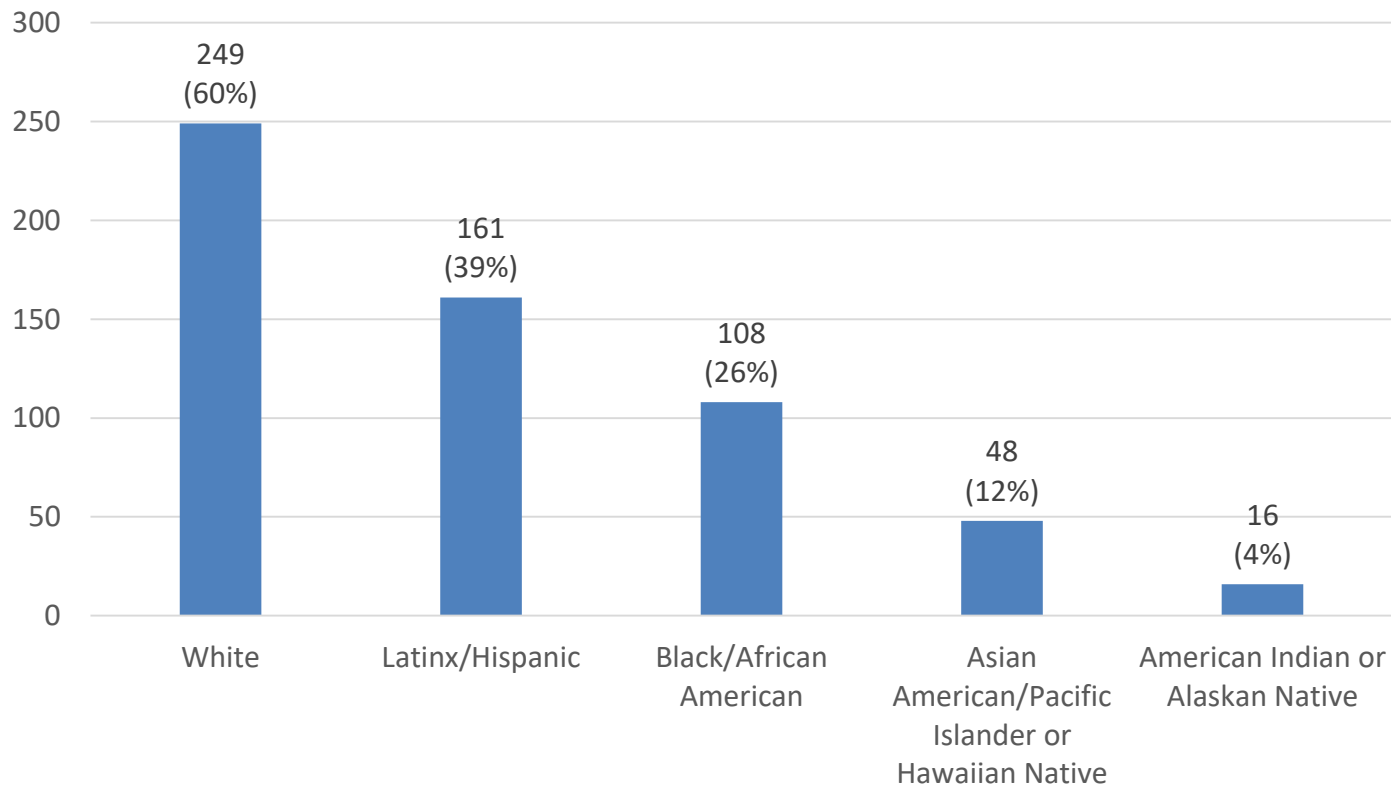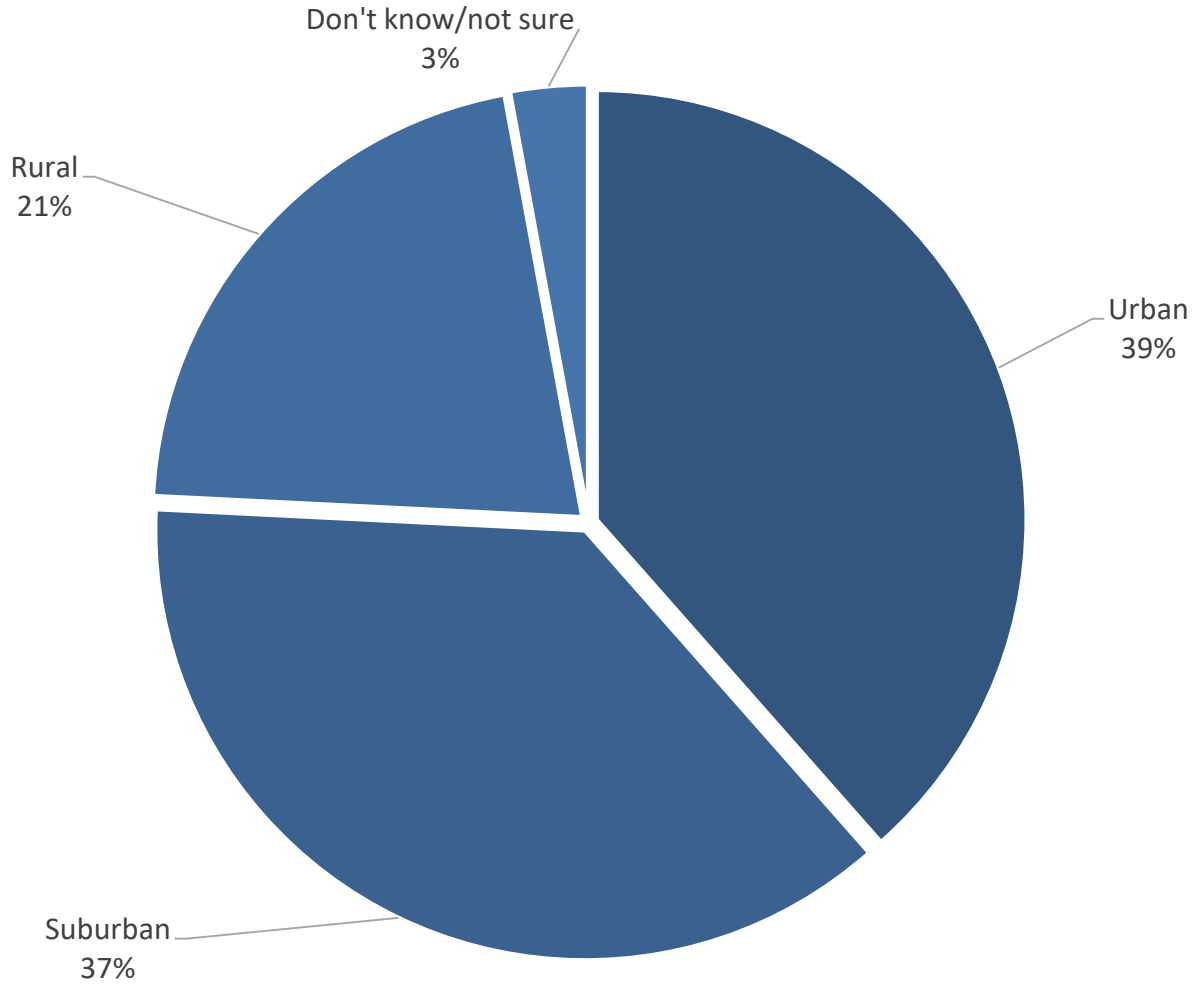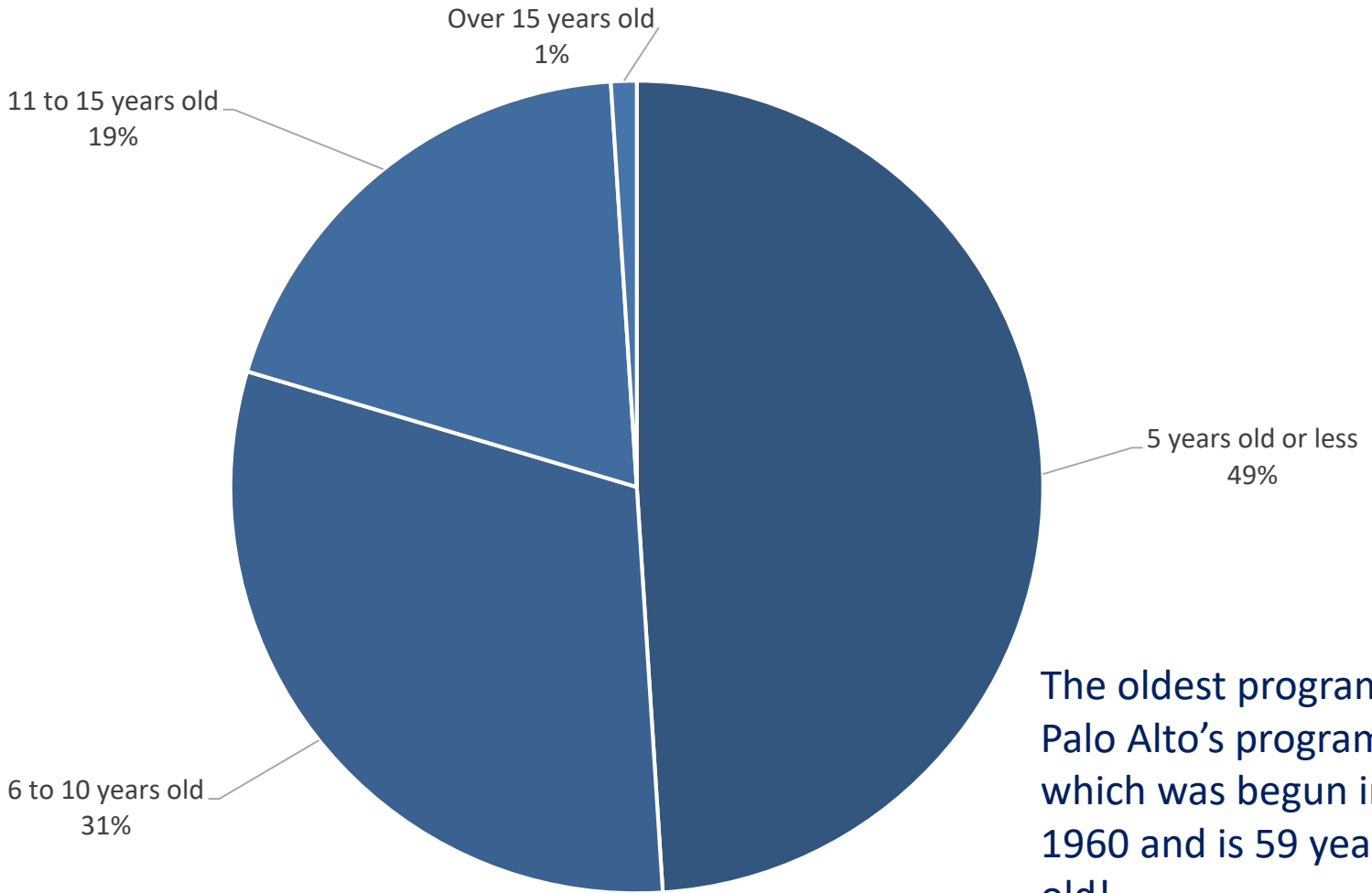
The oldest program was Palo Alto's program, which was begun in 1960 and is 59 years old!

Building Blocks

Staffing

Category	Value
Full time paid coordinator/lead	142 (35%)
Part time paid coordinator/lead	139 (34%)
Unpaid coordinator/lead	69 (17%)
We do not have a Safe Routes to School coordinator, lead, or staff	92 (22%)
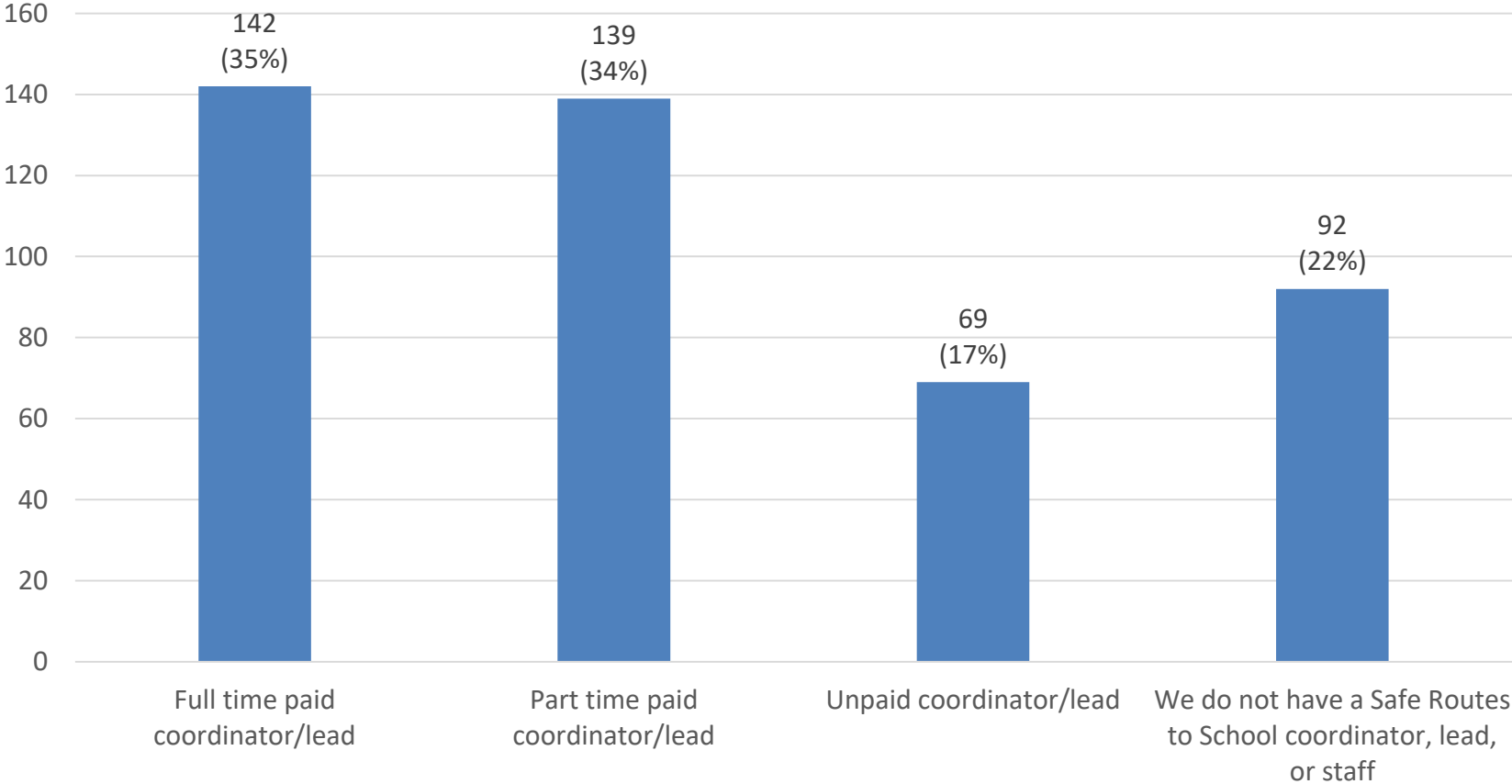
Advisory Team/Task Force

No
36%

Yes
64%
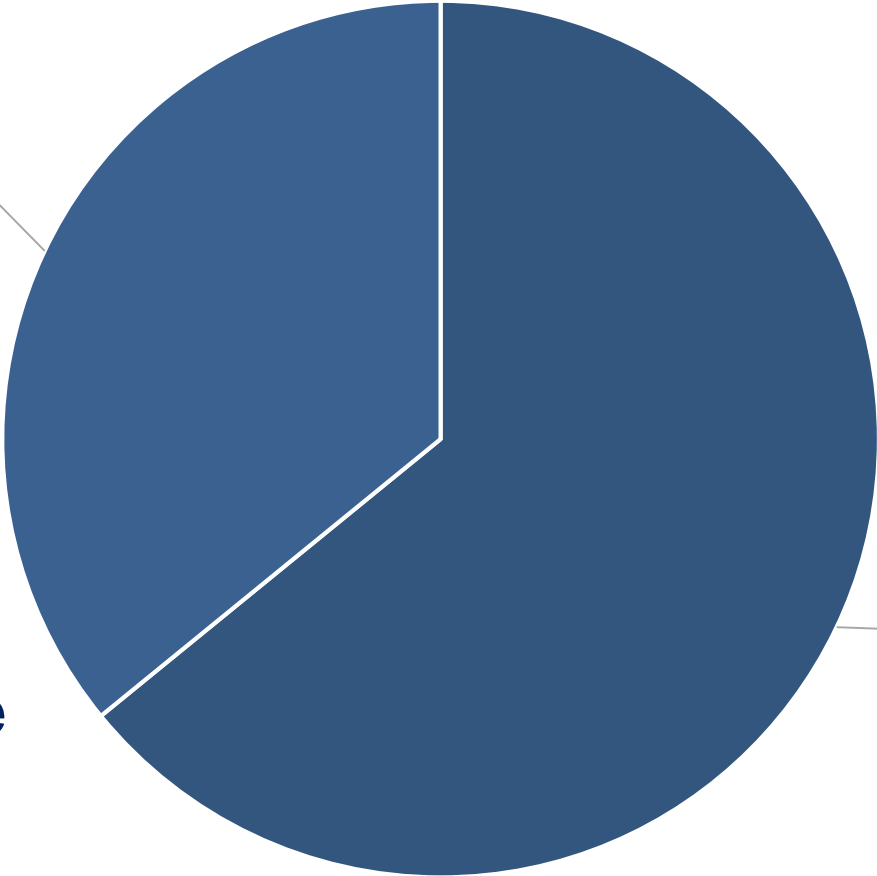
Almost 2/3s of local Safe Routes to School survey respondents have a task force or advisory team

Funding Sources

Category	Value	Percentage
State or federal grant	184	(45%)
Local funding	94	(23%)
Other	88	(21%)
No funding	76	(18%)
Other grants	65	(16%)
Donations	59	(14%)
School funds	55	(13%)
Don't know/not sure	26	(6%)
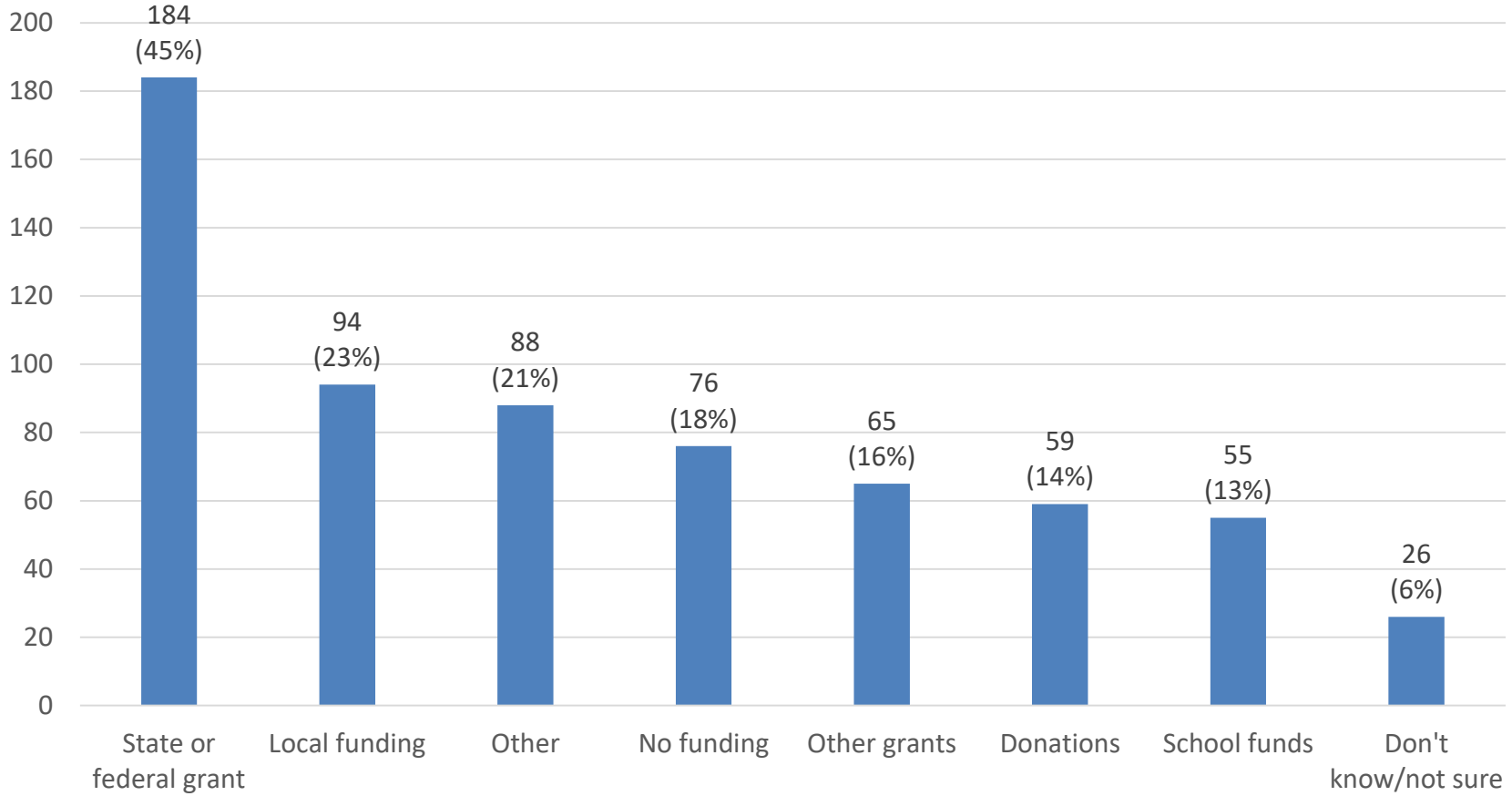
Safe Routes to School Supportive Policy Language

Category	Percentage
None/not sure	39%
In other policies	15%
Comprehensive plan	21%
School district or school board policy	23%
City/county Safe Routes to School policy or resolution	23%
Safe Routes to School/ school travel plan	30%
Other plans (bicycle plan, pedestrian plan. Active transportation plan, etc)	32%
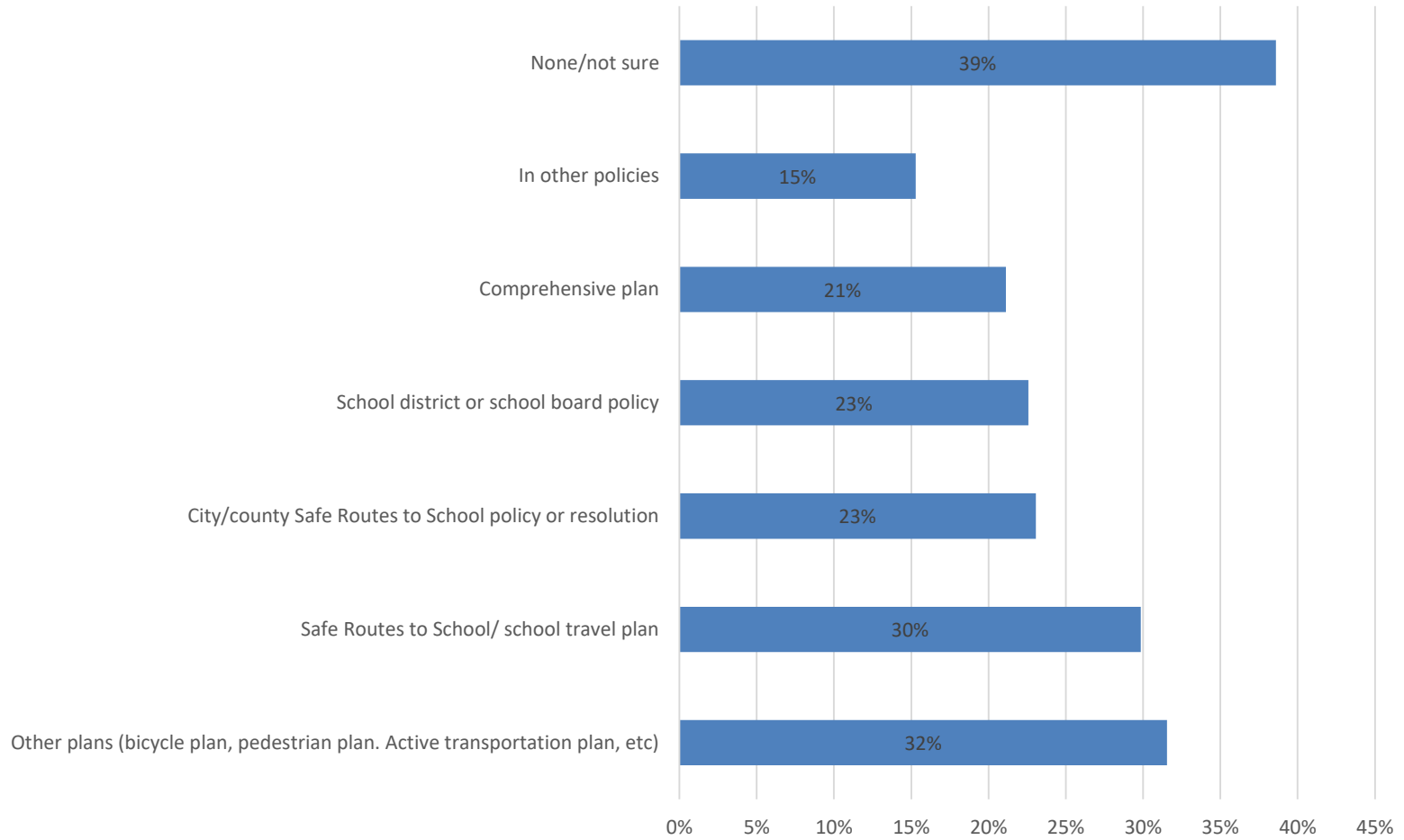
Program Activities

Program Activities

Chart data:
- Walk to school day: 327 (81%)
- Bike to school day: 283 (70%)
- education in and/or outside of school: 244 (61%)
- Bike skills clinics/bike rodeos: 239 (59%)
- Walk audits: 193 (48%)
- Contests and incentives: 160 (40%)
- Walking school buses: 149 (37%)
- Driver awareness: 119 (30%)
- Enforcement activities: 114 (28%)
- Remote drop off/park-and-walk/Safe Routes...: 105 (26%)
- Monthly walk or roll to school days: 83 (21%)
- Weekly walk or roll to school days: 82 (20%)
- Bike trains: 44 (11%)
- Other: 31 (8%)

- "We walk FROM school - Twice a month all year long."
- "Bike fleet of 40 bikes and helmets."
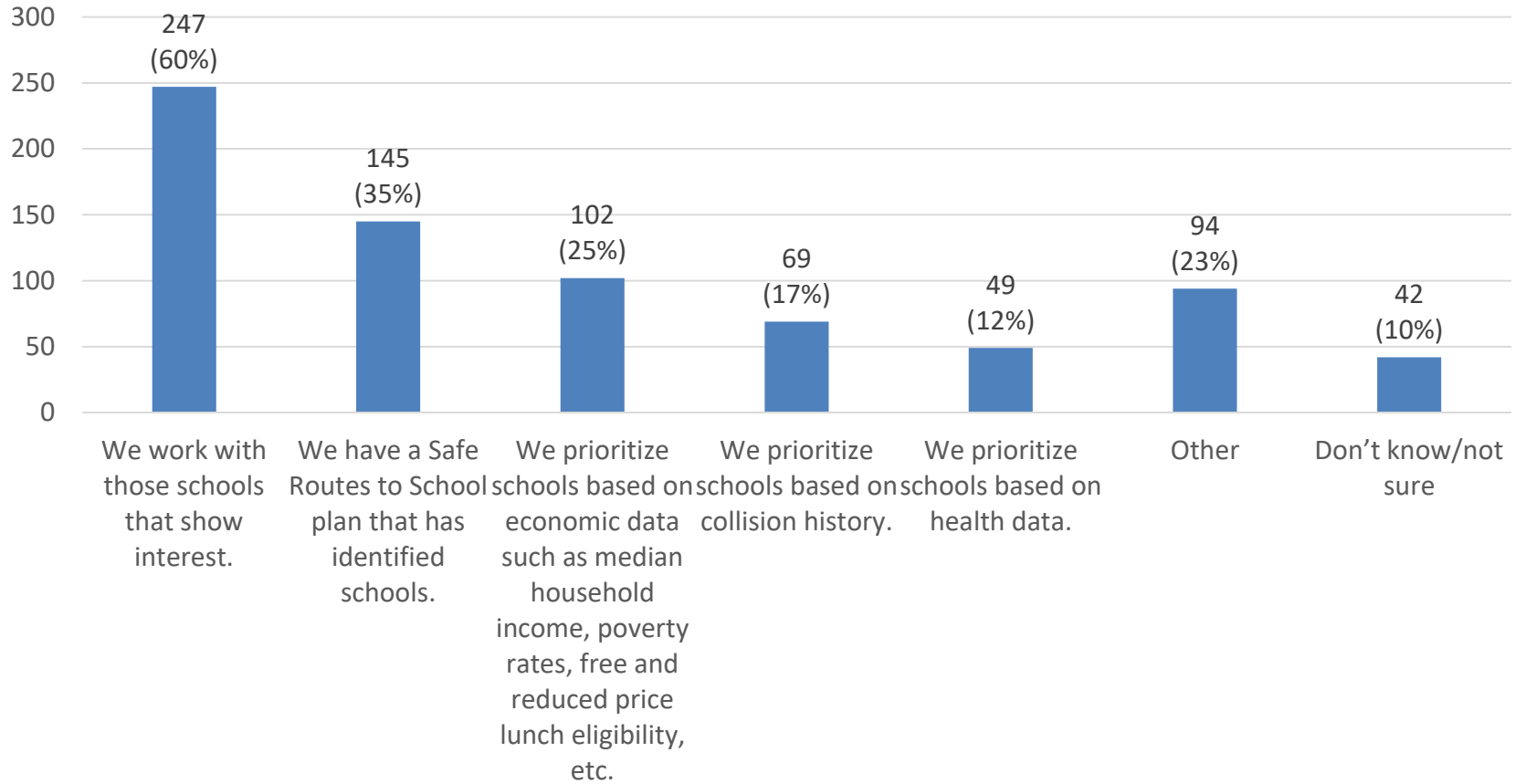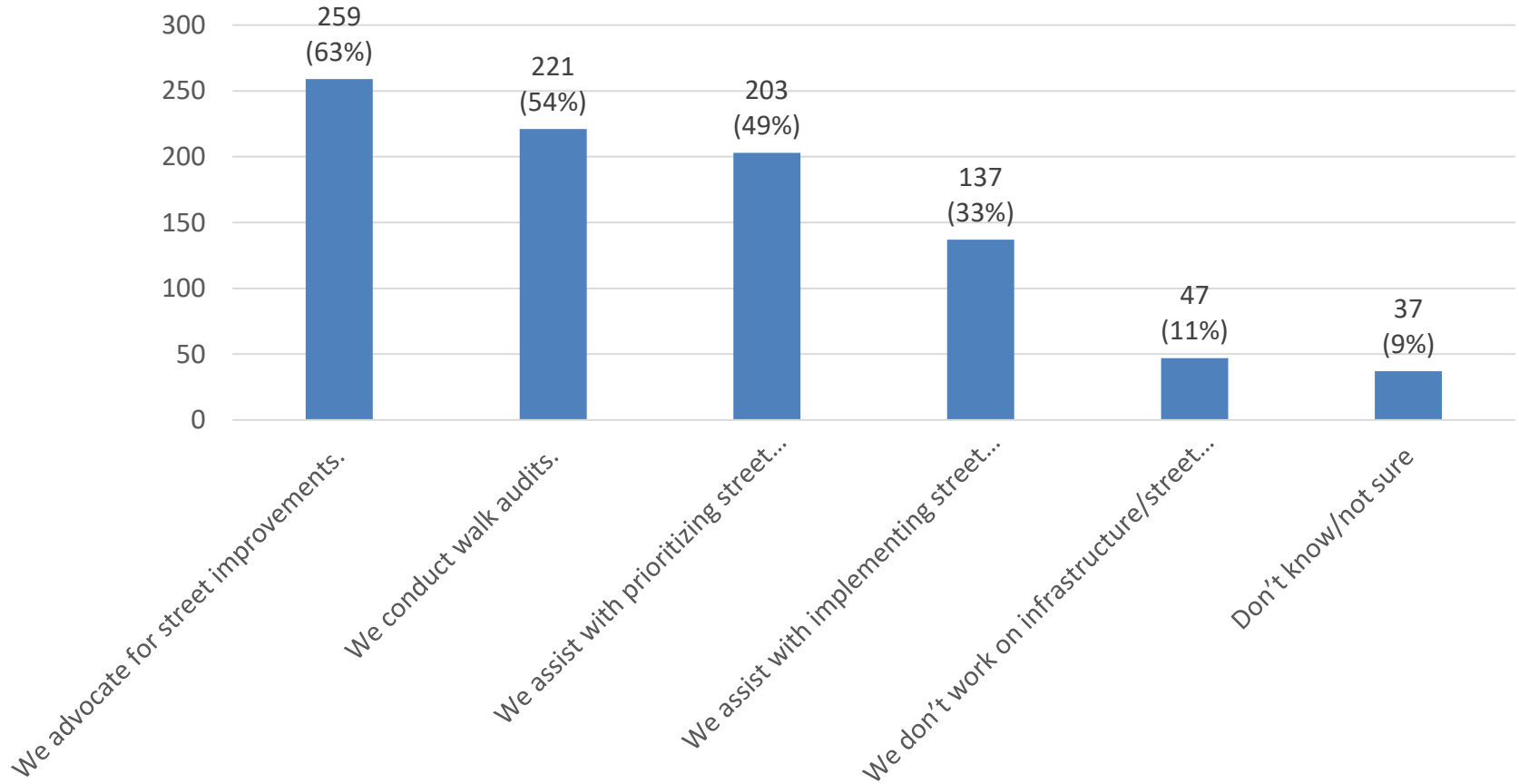- "Training of school staff /bus drivers with bike ped certifications and aiming at integrating bike ped safety for after school programs."
- "Conducted walkability audits with middle school girls."
- "We provide minor bike tune-ups at bike rodeos."

How Are Schools Chosen to Receive Services

- We work with those schools that show interest. — 247 (60%)
- We have a Safe Routes to School plan that has identified schools. — 145 (35%)
- We prioritize schools based on economic data such as median household income, poverty rates, free and reduced price lunch eligibility, etc. — 102 (25%)
- We prioritize schools based on collision history. — 69 (17%)
- We prioritize schools based on health data. — 49 (12%)
- Other — 94 (23%)
- Don't know/not sure — 42 (10%)

Targeted Outreach & Programming

Chart values:
- Students with disabilities: 75 (18%)
- Students who are immigrants: 61 (15%)
- Girls (can include trans students and/or nonbinary students): 42 (10%)
- Other: 43 (10%)
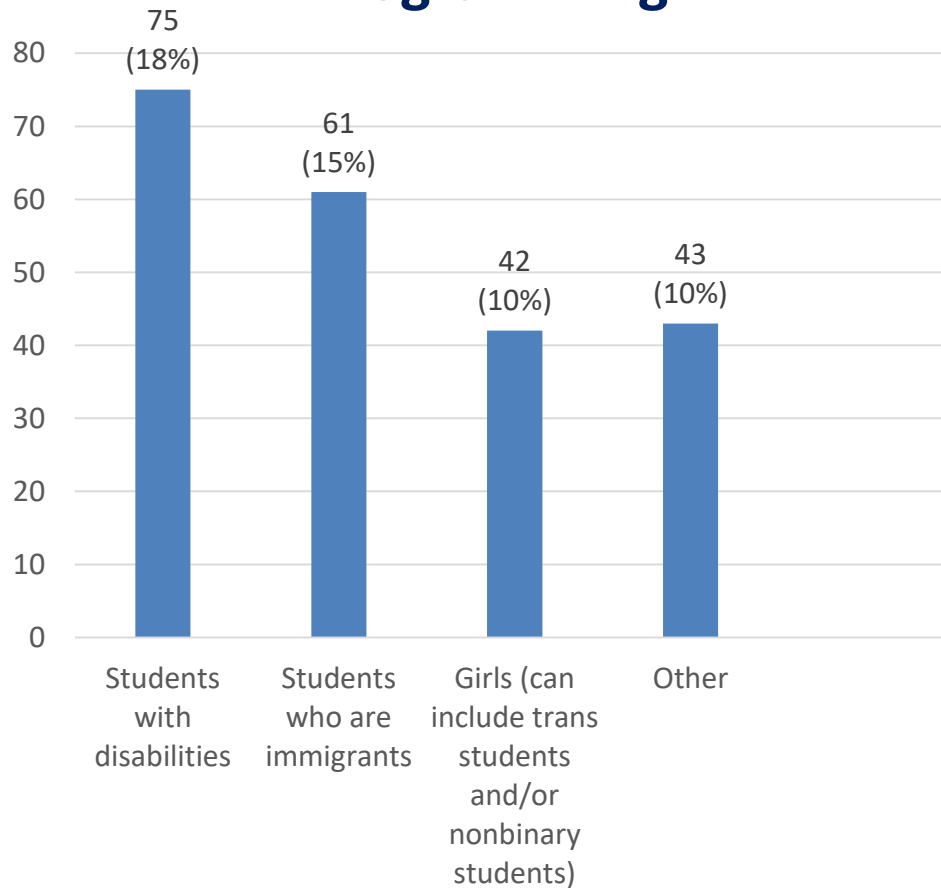
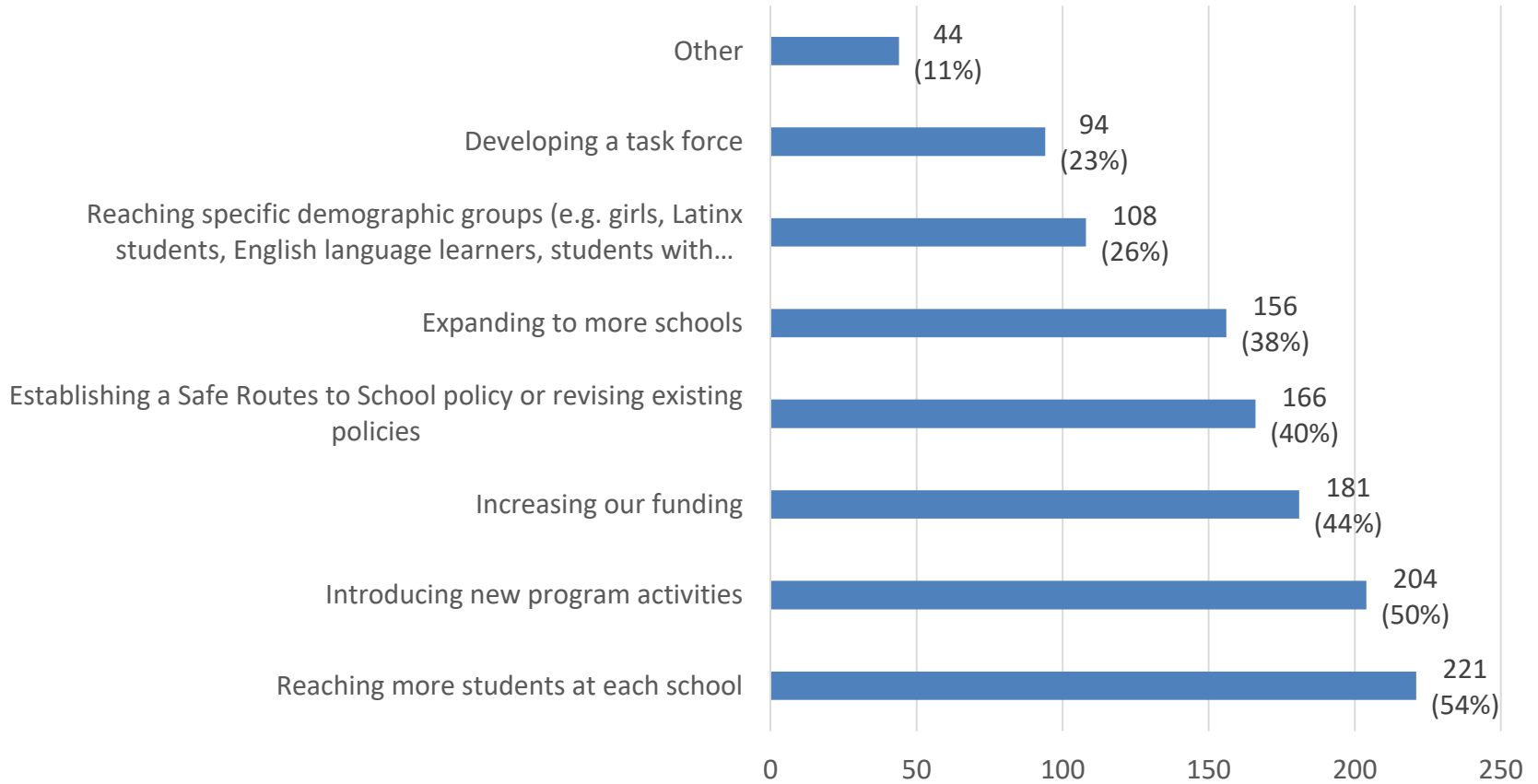- "We promote inclusive active transportation programs, as well as ADA-compliant infrastructure."

- "Providing SRTS outreach materials in multi-language and video."

- "Bike assembly, Girls on the Run, and bicycle safety."

- "We have an ADA adaptive bike and assist with a bike education therapy group for those with disabilities."

- "community partners have Girls Only bike rides, Women/Trans bike repair nights, and adaptive bike opportunities."

Plans for Improvement

Category	Value
Other	44 (11%)
Developing a task force	94 (23%)
Reaching specific demographic groups (e.g. girls, Latinx students, English language learners, students with…	108 (26%)
Expanding to more schools	156 (38%)
Establishing a Safe Routes to School policy or revising existing policies	166 (40%)
Increasing our funding	181 (44%)
Introducing new program activities	204 (50%)
Reaching more students at each school	221 (54%)

Open Ended Questions

Successes

- "Our tremendous partnership with public works, schools, and more have led to site assessments and implementation of short term recommendations at every school."
- "56% of MS students bike and 51% of HS students. 65% alt mode use overall (77% middle, 70% High). Continued growth at a rate of 1% per year."
- "Of our 40 K-8 schools, all participate in walk to school day, and 50% are working on weekly walk to school days."

Challenges

- "When working with a large urban school district it takes almost 5 years to establish a SRTS program."
- "Need more funding for better outcomes."
- "Schools have so much on their plate, Safe Routes to School is always competing for airtime."
- "The process is long and involves many organizations. "
- "The biggest issue is developing the case for change and building the political will for prioritizing walking and biking over the car."
- "Rural schools have barriers due to distances."

Conclusions & Recommendations

LEARNINGS

- Hundreds of great programs around the country
- Uneven geographic spread: variable strength of Safe Routes to School in different places
- Solid rural presence, proportionate to population
- 51% of programs are more than 5 years old
- Many programs without staff or funding
- Programs expressed the desire for a wide range of additional resources: mapping assistance, assistance engaging & connecting with older adults, evaluations, volunteer recruitment, funding, application assistance, more templates, etc.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Some states are doing a great job of using federal money & combining different resources to provide financial & technical support for local programs; others could be doing more
- Many lessons to be learned from incredible programs around the country
- Programs need more funding, more policy support, more technical assistance, and more resources

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