



BIKESAFE TO SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR MAST ACADEMY
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE: 2017 -2018
FLORIDA GREEN SCHOOLS DESIGNATION:TRANSPORTATION

Date: August 11, 2017

Subject: Safe bike routes from Key Biscayne to MAST Academy

This letter serves as a request for MDCPS to support a safe bike to school program from Key Biscayne to MAST Academy. In June of this year, Miami-Dade County's Bike305 Program Coordinator, Sue Kawalerski, and the University of Miami's BikeSafe Program Manager, Jonathan Hooshmand, participated in a bike ride from the Key Biscayne Community Center to MAST Academy. The ride was attended by five students ranging in ages from 11 to 17 and eight adults. The ride was filmed with a GoPro.

Bike305 and the University of Miami's BikeSafe program assessed that there are no prohibitive cycling risks associated with this bike route. It is a completely off-road bike path with almost no interaction with traffic. A portion of the off-road path, from the Bear Cut Bridge to Mast Academy was specifically installed and paved by Miami-Dade County so that Key Biscayne students would have a safe, connected bicycle and pedestrian path from the Village of Key Biscayne to the school.

Bike305 and UM BikeSafe agreed that rides chaperoned by certified Bikesafe cyclists would ensure added safety. Parents and MAST high school volunteers will be recruited to accompany the students. The high school students will be offered community service hours for completing the 8 hour Traffic 101 bike safety course administered by UM BikeSafe's Jonathan Hooshmand. Those students will also accrue service hours by accompanying students to and from MAST from Key Biscayne before and after school.

Bike305 and UM BikeSafe will provide safe-cycling clinics for MAST students. These clinics will teach safe-cycling skills and rules of riding on both paths and roads, and provide free bicycle helmets custom-fitted to each participating student who does not have a helmet. Students can also bring their own helmets to be adjusted by a certified bicycle helmet fitter.

This bike to school program is part of a broader campaign to become a green ribbon school. In June of this year, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection accepted MAST's application for admission to become a Designated Florida Green School. Alternative transportation is a component of this certification process.

Biking and walking to school is a fundamental pillar of the green ribbon schools program as it promotes healthy habits for life for children. Biking and walking are excellent forms of low impact exercise that can help manage a healthy body weight. Biking can also reduce traffic congestion and long wait times at student drop off.

We are asking that you support this program for biking to MAST Academy. Thank you in advance and we look forward to your robust support of this program.

Sincerely yours,



Michele Drucker
Chair, MAST PTA Sustainability Committee



Sue Kawalerski
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