**FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation University Course**

**Module: 17 – School Travel**

**Assignment: School Arrival and Departure Field Observations**

**PROMPT**

In small groups, students should observe travel behavior at an elementary, middle, or high school during morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up times (at least 15 minutes before and after arrival or dismissal bell). Take note of:

* Travel modes of students\* (bicycling, walking, carpool, SOV, school buses, activity or daycare buses, scooters, skate board, riding on adult bicycle, public transit, other?)
* Bicycle and pedestrian facilities and infrastructure including bike racks, sidewalks, trails, crossings, etc.
* Presence of crossing guards or law enforcement officers
* Bicyclist and pedestrian behavior (compliance with signs and signals, crossing behavior, other patterns)
* Driver behavior (compliance with signs and signals, especially turning restrictions during school hours)

Compile field notes and observations into a short memo or presentation.

\*All modes may not be visible from the same vantage point (i.e, school buses and family vehicles may use separate driveways, there may be informal drop-offs/pick-ups off school property).

**NOTE: Instructors should coordinate with local schools to obtain approval prior to field observations and ensure that their students follow all school regulations and instructions while on site.**

**GROUND RULES FOR CONDUCTING FIELD WORK**

1. Safety first. Do not put yourself in harm’s way to collect data. Online map imagery may be substituted for photographs from the field as needed to ensure student safety.
2. Travel and collect data in groups of two or more students. Team members must work together to find data collection times that ensure no team member has to collect data alone. Conducting fieldwork alone is not permitted, for reasons of safety, accountability, and accuracy of data.
3. Do not conduct field work after dark. When visibility is poor, you jeopardize your safety and the quality of the data you are collecting.
4. If members of the public are curious about what students are doing, students should inform them they are university students working on a class project. They may engage with neighbors wanting share their thoughts and ideas about mobility in the study area, but not initiate such conversations.
5. Do not block or otherwise interfere with traffic (motorized or not).
6. Students may take photos but must do so respectfully and carefully. Do NOT take photos of people, their homes, or their vehicles without their permission.