



NEWS RELEASE
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Baldwin City Schools Participate in National Bike to School Day for the First Time on May 5

(Baldwin City, KS) – Baldwin Junior High and Baldwin Intermediate Schools will be participating in National Bike to School Day for the first time on Wednesday, May 5. Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health is partnering with schools in Douglas County to encourage students to walk or bike to school on May 5 in celebration of National Bike to School Day and as part of National Bike Month, which is celebrated during the month of May.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that school-aged children get at least one hour of moderate to intense physical activity each day, which includes aerobic activities such as walking, biking, or wheeling. Regular physical activity helps children build strong bones, muscles, and joints; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; strengthens the heart and lungs, and decreases the risk of obesity. Plus, it's fun!

"This is a new activity for Baldwin Junior High School this year, and we are excited to participate," Principal Derek Bland said. "My hope is that students can discover the freedom riding a bicycle can bring, which helps build confidence and muscles at the same time."

Biking to school is an opportunity for students to gain a sense of independence and to learn the rules of the road. These are skills that will be useful as they transition to adulthood and possibly driving on the road. An added community benefit is the reduction in traffic congestion around the schools when more children are walking and biking, which increases safety. It also can improve air quality. Biking or walking to school are also an opportunity for parents and children to spend time together, to make new friends, and to feel connected with their community.

Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, Lawrence Public Schools and the City of Lawrence launched a Safe Routes to School program in September 2014. Since then, Eudora and Baldwin City have also adopted the Safe Routes to School program. In 2020, Lawrence, Baldwin City and Eudora approved community-wide Safe Routes to School plans with feedback from the communities. These plans provide ideas of how schools can implement their own aspects of Safe Routes to School. Live Well Douglas County and Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health will work together with schools that want to implement Safe Routes to School activities. Live Well Douglas County, the

Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the City of Lawrence Municipal Services & Operations Department (MSO), Baldwin City Government and City of Eudora are key partners in carrying out the infrastructure and supports to make Safe Routes to School a success in each community.

“Bike to School Day is an opportunity to test out your neighborhood route to school, meet your neighbors, and enjoy the outdoors,” said Laura McCullough, Community Health Planner with Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health.

Several Lawrence schools will participate in Bike to School Day activities as well.