

Learn it. Do it. Live it!

CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION DAY



Crossing Guards help students cross the street safely throughout the year in all weather conditions. See how your school and community can recognize their hard work by participating in Crossing Guard Appreciation Day, one of Virginia's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) statewide events.

What is Crossing Guard Appreciation Day?

- ✓ Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is a statewide event devoted to saying thank you to those who help students cross the street safely on their way to and from school.
- ✓ The Virginia SRTS program has designated the second Wednesday in February as Crossing Guard Appreciation Day. We encourage your school and community to use this day to show your appreciation for the women and men who help make safe routes to school a reality. If the second Wednesday doesn't work, we encourage you to celebrate Crossing Guard Appreciation Day any day in February.

Who is a Crossing Guard?

- ✓ Crossing guards are any adults who are trained to provide assistance to students crossing the street on their routes to and from school. Crossing Guards can be police officers, teachers, school staff, or volunteers.

How to Participate?

- ✓ Whether simple or elaborate, Crossing Guard Appreciation Day events are a great way to acknowledge the value your crossing guards bring to safe travel to school.
- ✓ Event ideas here include ways to say thank you in person, promote the work of your crossing guard, and ways to support their work. Most important is to offer a heart-felt thank you.
- ✓ Flyers, templates, banners, and other downloads for your Crossing Guard Appreciation Day are at www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes. Find what you're looking for under Special Events Resources.



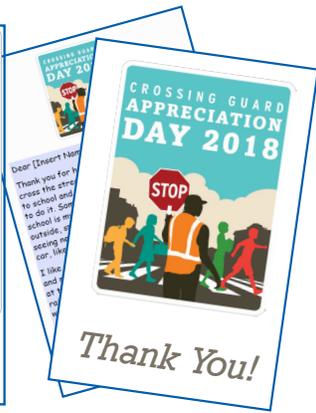
Phyllis Krapf, crossing guard at Armstrong Elementary School in Herdon, was named one of Virginia's Most Outstanding Crossing Guards for 2014.

Event Ideas

Say Thank You, in person!

- ✓ Students, families, and other community members can host a meet and greet with coffee, hot chocolate, and some 'comfort food' after the morning shift on a cold February morning.
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to walk or bike (bundled up appropriately!) and thank their crossing guard in-person.
- ✓ Students can use ready-made thank you cards available on the Virginia SRTS website to give to the crossing guard on their way home. Or they can make their own thank you cards in an art class.
- ✓ Teachers can help students write songs, cheers, or poems thanking the crossing guard for their help. Students can deliver their message during school dismissal.
- ✓ Principals can write official letters of appreciation and deliver them during the afternoon dismissal. Ready-made letters are also available on the Virginia SRTS website.
- ✓ Schools can think up new ideas of their own! Anything that expresses gratitude for their service is an eligible activity.





Ready-to-print materials, such as Thank You cards from students and parents, as well as information posters and flyers are available for download on the Virginia Safe Routes to School website.

Promote their work

- ✓ Contact local media sources to highlight your crossing guard for a personal interest story.
- ✓ Make a video of your crossing guard at work to post on your school website, share with media, or use to help promote your school's SRTS program.

Support their work

- ✓ Schools can apply for a QuickStart Mini-grant to upgrade crossing guard equipment such as stop paddles, reflective vests, flashlights, etc.



Howard Wallace, crossing guard at James River Elementary School in Williamsburg, received an Honorable Mention as Virginia's Most Outstanding Crossing Guard for 2014.

Nominate your Crossing Guard

- ✓ Nominating your school's crossing guards as one of Virginia's Most Outstanding Crossing Guards of 2015 is an extra special way to let them know that their service is valued. You can find the link to the nomination form on the Virginia Safe Routes to School website.

No Crossing Guard at Your School?

- ✓ Not all schools have crossing guards. Schools interested in having a crossing guard at their campus can reach out to the school division's transportation office or the local police department. In some school divisions, school staff can be trained by the local police department as crossing guards. Contact your local police department for more information.

Teaching Opportunity

While the focus of Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is on crossing guards and the work that they do, it can also be a good time to remind students how to cross streets safely, especially when crossing guards are present.

Important Messages for Students

- Cross with the help of an adult or older sibling. And older students to help younger siblings cross the street.
- Wait at least 3 steps away from the edge of the sidewalk or curb.
- Stay on the sidewalk until the crossing guard gives the signal that it is safe to cross.
- Always look left-right-left, as well as behind and then watch the crossing guard to see if the crossing is clear of cars and safe to cross.
- Always cross in front of the crossing guard.
- Only walk in the marked crosswalk when crossing the street. If there is no marked crosswalk, walk directly in front of the crossing guards and make a straight line to the opposite side of the street.
- Obey crossing guards at all times. Students need to follow directions as the crossing guard may see a potential threat that is not clear to students.
- Thank their crossing guards for the work that they do every day. A simple "thanks for your help today" can go a long way towards showing crossing guards that they are valuable members of the community.

Still have questions? Contact our Local Technical Assistance Coordinators at 1-855-601-7787 or email us at info@virginiasrts.org.

