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## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Westminster Celebrates National Walk & Roll to School Day**

Westminster, Calif. – The City of Westminster, in collaboration with the Westminster School District and Garden Grove Unified School District, is excited to participate in National Walk & Roll to School Day on October 9, 2024. This annual event celebrated by local schools encourages students, families, and community members to walk or bike to school, highlighting the benefits of active transportation and promoting road safety.

“Westminster is committed to improving the quality of life of its residents through the implementation of active transportation projects that improve safety on city streets,” said Assistant City Manager Adolfo Ozaeta. “Recently, the Mayor and City Council adopted the city’s first ever Safe Routes to School Plan prepared in collaboration with our local school districts and stakeholders.”

Walking or biking to school offers many advantages for students and the community, including increased physical fitness, reduced traffic congestion, and lower carbon emissions. Additionally, studies have also shown that students who walk or bike to school arrive more alert and ready to learn, while fostering greater independence and boosting mental health.

According to the [National Center for Safe Routes to School](#), the number of children walking and biking to school has seen a significant decline over the past few decades. In 1969, nearly half of all students walked or biked to school; today, less than 11% walk or bike to school. National Walk & Roll to School Day aims to reverse this trend by making walking and biking safer options.

In an effort to improve pedestrian safety near schools, the City of Westminster has established Safe Routes to School Plan which provides recommendations on the safer routes of pedestrian travel to schools

within Westminster. Maps were created to assist families as they navigate to their school; this information is available on the city and school district websites. These maps will be available at school sites as well on the week of National Walk & Roll to School.

While National Walk & Roll to School Day is just one day out of the year, it serves as a reminder of the long-term impact that safe, active transportation can have on traffic and road safety. Families are encouraged to plan their routes to school in advance, teaching children pedestrian and bike safety along the way. Drivers, in turn, are reminded to be extra vigilant, especially around school zones, looking out for the increased activity of children crossing streets or biking along the road.

This year, the City is expanding its efforts to support National Walk & Roll to School Day. The Westminster School District, Garden Grove Unified School District, and PTSA volunteers will be joined by Westminster City staff, including members of the police department, on October 9 at local schools to support those who walk to school on a regular basis and encourage others to consider doing so.

“National Walk and Roll to School Day offers an amazing opportunity for families to build stronger community bonds,” Westminster Police Department Deputy Chief Ron Weber said. “This event not only promotes pedestrian safety and advocates for safer routes for walking and biking to school but also underscores the importance of boosting physical activity among children and prioritizing their safety. It's a wonderful way to come together and make a positive impact on our children's well-being.”

For more information on National Walk & Roll to School Day and to see how you can get involved, visit [walkbiketoschool.org](http://walkbiketoschool.org) or contact your local school district. For additional information on Safe Routes to School Plan please contact Veronica Johnson at (714) 548-3463.

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