2017
Way to Go! School Challenge
September 25 – October 6

Final Summary Report
Submitted by Place Creative Company
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Background:
Since the early 90’s, use of more efficient travel choices (i.e., walking, biking, carpooling and taking transit) has been promoted to businesses, institutions and schools through the Way to Go! Challenge program. The Challenge is an annual program encouraging the use of cheaper, healthier, and more earth-friendly transportation alternatives. The program, originally called Curb Your Car Day, began in 1993 out of a partnership between the Lake Champlain Committee and the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (now Green Mountain Transit) to get people out of their cars to reduce auto-derived pollutants from entering Lake Champlain.

In 2004, the event became the Way to Go! Commuter Challenge, a broad promotional campaign that encourages Vermonters to commute another way than driving solo, which benefits air quality, traffic congestion, fuel consumption and expenditures, public health, and pollutant runoff. Way to Go! grew from a Chittenden County-based event to a statewide program beginning in 2010, organized and funded by local, regional and state partners.

In addition to the Way to Go! Challenge, the Vermont Safe Routes to Schools (SRS), a national program with the goal of ending traffic deaths on roads, was ramping up encouraging about 100 K-12 schools to make safe places for everyone, including children on their trip to school. Community groups and school officials worked together to encourage safe places for everyone to walk and bike.

The Way to Go! Challenge has become a popular spring one-week event. A few years later it expanded to two weeks, and was promoted by a growing number of groups and entities across Vermont. As participation numbers leveled, organizers shifted the event to the Fall, thinking that may spur interest and boost overall participation.

Today, participation in Way to Go! is evident in all regions of the state, and even became institutionalized, as referenced in several local and regional plans to help slow the rate of growth of greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. Today, Vermont continues to work to decarbonize its transportation system to help address the global climate crisis and in particular the single largest contributor to Vermont’s carbon problem – transportation (47%).

Each year, the State of Vermont and CCRPC invest at least $75K to the Way to Go! Challenge to support a robust public education and engagement program. In addition, for the last two years, Way to Go! organizers have successfully secured significant business sponsorships, adding $50K+ in incentives, both cash and in-kind contributions. For the last two years, Way to Go! has enjoyed a significant donation from one sponsor, AllEarth Renewables, a solar tracker raffled to one qualifying school.

The decision to focus on the school sector in 2017 was in response to flat growth in the business sector, as well as other factors including sustained low gas prices and the interest of students to opt out of expensive car ownership and to locate within easy access to public transportation. In 2016, the program leveraged nearly 40% of its budget to expand its media effort, the biggest in its program history. When focused on schools exclusively, however, directing media dollars through conventional print and television was not as beneficial. While the survey response was limited, it indicates that personal calls and establishing a network of school coordinators is a wiser investment.
This year’s program outreach officially kicked off in late May, following completion of back office web and resource upgrades. The focus of this year’s multi-layered marketing program involved partners to assist with education, outreach and engagement. While outreach efforts continued over the Summer, the bulk of the marketing (emails, social media, press, phone calls and other media) took place just before the Challenge, in September.

This is the second year that Place Creative Company hosted the full program, with help from several partners, including Ecostrategies, Deb Sachs and Vermont Energy Education Program, Cara Robechek, and with additional support from Local Motion. Place Creative Company developed all of the creative resources, including updates to the website, a variety of informational materials, a video, print and online ads. Several web improvements sought to ease the sign up process and perception of complexity.

Forces at Work

• Families are struggling to manage daily transportation demands (i.e., before and after school sports and special programs).
• Mergers of K-12 Schools, and the driving/commuting longer distances.
• Vermont is a rural, low-density state.
• Bus ridership, on average, is at or less than 50% capacity.
• Sustained low gas prices. Fossil fuel experts note that the investments in shale oil in the U.S. have kept fuel prices artificially low. Investments, however, have dropped in half, possibly effecting pump prices in the near future (e.g., reports by Chris Martensen and Peak Oil Institute).
• A growing number of millennials do not want to own vehicles and prefer to live in transit-oriented neighborhoods with good access to regional transportation services.
• Federal tax laws repealed commuter choice benefits for employer-provided public transportation and bicycles.

With commuter choice benefits eliminated, the continued merger of Vermont’s K-12 schools to larger districts, fewer people riding the bus, more parents opting to bring their children to school and low gas prices, Vermont can expect to continue spending a significant chunk of their household budgets on high carbon-based transportation options.

The infrastructure this year took great effort to nurture and develop, however, the W2G team managed to more than double the number of schools that registered. The two-week event captured the attention of youth, parents, faculty and staff to compete for recognition and a chance to win a big prize – an AllEarth Renewables Solar Tracker. Where possible, partnerships (like VEEP, VSBIT, VPA, Local Motion, and others) were leveraged to help spread the word more widely across Vermont. The report that follows summarizes the 2017 Challenge, including a summary of participation and results, website data, outreach and other marketing efforts, as well as winner information. As with last year, some changes to the program are recommended for future Way to Go! Challenges.
2017 Way to Go! School Challenge
September 25 – October 6

2017 Performance Criteria

Based on general interest to encourage more than one day of participation, and participation from the entire school community, new criteria and awards were established to provide further recognition.

All schools were encouraged to achieve in the following ways:
• Highest percentage of students on the bus
• Highest percentage of students, staff, and teachers walking, rolling or biking
• Best photo or video promoting the Way to Go! School Challenge shared to our Facebook or Twitter page.
• Best city school (the highest participation of any transportation mode)
• Best rural school (the highest participation of any transportation mode)

As a way to encourage broader savings, organizers established more stringent criteria for eligibility of the big prize (50% of entire school population). To qualify for the AllEarth Renewables Solar Tracker, 50% of students, teachers, and staff from the school needed to bus, walk, bike, roll, or carpool for at least one morning. The winner is chosen through random selection of all schools reporting at the 50% level.
• Get one extra credit point by having 50% participation for at least three mornings.
• Get one extra credit point by having 75% participation for at least one morning.
• Get two extra credit points by achieving both of these goals.

Before the challenge, the team supplied school coordinators with the choice of paper sheets or an online Google form to tally up the school’s results. Classroom tallies were to be turned in to the school coordinator, who then submitted the school’s results to the Way to Go! team.
OVERALL RESULTS
Final Participation Results:

With 8,984 total reported participants this year, school participation increased by 23% (when compared to 2017).

Note: School participation was not always segmented from individual participation. School numbers were separated in the reporting starting in 2012. The numbers above from 2012-2017 reflect school participation only.
Reported Transportation Modes:

Of the 49 schools that participated, 35 achieved at least a 50% participation rate to be eligible to win this year’s big prize. 17 schools reported participation on 5 or more days, with 5 schools participating on every single day of the two-week Challenge! Not all schools reported their transportation modes, but of the schools that did provide the selected modes, the breakdown was as follows.

Mode Use Comparison by County:

Addison

Bennington

Caledonia
PARTICIPATION SUMMARY
Participation was highest in Chittenden County, followed by Washington, Franklin and Windsor Counties. Participation was lowest in Orange County (which had no school participation), followed by Grand Isle and Essex Counties. However, population density was a factor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Bikers</th>
<th>Walkers</th>
<th>Rollers</th>
<th>Carpoolers</th>
<th>Bus Riders</th>
<th>Total participants</th>
<th>Percentage of school</th>
<th>Total days participation</th>
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PARTICIPATION SUMMARY
Vermont Participation - Summary by County Map

Vermont School Results
Total Schools: 49
Total Participants: 8,984

Rollers: 67
Carpoolers: 860
Bikers: 874
Walkers: 2,264
Bus Riders: 3,815
WEBSITE DATA / ANALYTICS
Website Analytics

May 1 – October 31, 2017

As the chart above indicates, the most of the large spikes in traffic coincided with media, email blasts, social media and press as we led up to the event. A lot of outreach was happening at this time as well, so it is difficult to attribute success to any one tactic.

Overall Traffic:
- 2.16 pages viewed per session (on average)
- the average session duration was 1:36
- the bounce rate was 64%

Traffic reports state this year's reach with the site was to 3,500 users across the entire period. The final reporting places the number of participants near 9,000. More than half of Way to Go participants never visited the website. This reflects the transition in promotional strategy from direct to individuals to promoting only to influencers—school officials, teachers, etc. On average, each site visitor was responsible for 2.5 participants. In 2016, the number of visitors was slightly above the number of participants.

On average, users spent 1:36 on site and viewed 2.16 pages. Since the site itself was fairly thin, this is a reasonable and understandable figure. Users largely got to the site, completed a task quickly, and then moved on. Since the process did not require data entry to happen on site, traffic that would have been captured there was routed elsewhere and not recorded.

Compared to the previous year, most site metrics declined. This is a direct result of individuals/businesses not having been invited to be part of the Challenge. There was a 69% decline in users. The signup process was shorter and simpler, the site had less in-depth information (such as a leaderboard) to review and explore, and users were not asked to return to the site to complete data entry. This resulted in a 30% pages/session decrease, and a 45% decline in average session duration. The percentage of users who were first-time visitors increased by 19 points.

Site Access:
Users accessed the site via:
- Desktop (82%)
- Mobile Device (14%)
- Tablet (4%)

There was a strong shift away from mobile toward desktop traffic. This also reflects the outreach methods used. Those interacting with the site would have done so much more frequently at work, than at home.
Website Analytics

May 1 – October 31, 2017

Traffic to the website arrived via:
• Direct Traffic (31%)
• Other (BFP) (23%)
• Social (1.3%)
• Organic Search (17%)
• Referral (email) (8%)
• Email (0.6%)
• Display (18%)

Display ads played a much larger role this year, and organic search drove a higher percentage of traffic. The reduced e-mail campaign and social media outreach caused traffic from those sources to drop off. These methods were not of use in reaching the target audience this year.

Traffic from Social Media arrived via:
• Facebook (80%)
• Twitter (18%)
Facebook brought 50 site visits, while Twitter brought only 11. The average time spent on page from referrals was 25 seconds.

Traffic Location:
Most of the website traffic (88%) came from the U.S., primarily from:
• Vermont (61%)
• Virginia (7%)
• Massachusetts (5%)
• Texas (4%)
• New York (4%)
• California (2%)
• Florida (2%)
• New Jersey (2%)
• New Hampshire (2%)
• DC (1%)

Within VT, traffic primarily came from:
• Burlington (28%)
• South Burlington (7%)
• Montpelier (7%)
• Essex (9%)
• Colchester (4%)
• Richmond (3%)
• Stowe (2%)
• Rutland (2%)
• Jericho (2%)
• St. Albans City (2%)

Geographically, there was a more even distribution this year that followed population less closely. This may be because school administrators are spread more evenly across the state vs. the general population.
The Top Web Pages

1. Home Page:
   - Total Pageviews: 33% (2,839)
   - Average Time on Page: 1:46
   - Bounce Rate: 61%

2. /sign-up/school:
   - Total Pageviews: 32% (2,731)
   - Average Time on Page: 0:45
   - Bounce Rate: 69%

3. /promotion-kit/
   - Total Pageviews: 10% (882)
   - Average Time on Page: 2:08
   - Bounce Rate: 63%

4. /way-go-school-challenge-works/
   - Total Pageviews: 6% (475)
   - Average Time on Page: 1:34
   - Bounce Rate: 60%

5. /awards/
   - Total Pageviews: 5% (465)
   - Average Time on Page: 2:19
   - Bounce Rate: 57%

6. /ways-to-go/
   - Total Pageviews: 4% (369)
   - Average Time on Page: 1:28
   - Bounce Rate: 87%

7. /list-schools/
   - Total Pageviews: 3% (277)
   - Average Time on Page: 2:17
   - Bounce Rate: 60%

8. /contact/
   - Total Pageviews: 2% (136)
   - Average Time on Page: 1:23
   - Bounce Rate: 87%

The most important pages this year were the Home page and School Signup, followed by the Promotion Kit. How the Challenge Works and the Awards page, were also viewed by about 10% of users.
MARKETING OUTREACH
MARKETING OUTREACH
Prizes, Sponsors and Partners

Prizes:
• AllEarth Solar Tracker
• Two Ten-Bike Indoor Bike Rack System
• Reflective Bands
• Color-Changing Pencils
• Visa Gift Cards
• Carbon Cup
• Carbon-Cutting Trophies

Sponsors:
• AllEarth Renewables
• Local Motion
• UVM Medical Center
• City Market
• VSECU
• National Life Group
• Free Press Media

Partners:
• Go! Vermont
• Young Writer’s Project
• Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)
• Vermont Principal’s Association
• Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust
• Net Zero Vermont
• EcoStrategies, LLC
• Vermont Energy Education Program
• Place Creative Company
MARKETING OUTREACH
Website Improvements

The following changes/improvements were made to the site:

• Streamlined sign-up / simplified online tools
• Multiple contacts per organization allowed
• Primary contact required independent confirmation
• Site did not collect or display any data
• Simplified site structure and pages (ex. built jump links for Ways to Go)
• Pre-filled schools with state data (names, address, student population)
• Approval system for submitting new listings
• Map shows locations and status of registered and unregistered schools
• Privacy policy allowed publishing and sharing of primary contact information
• Updated list of school resources

Marketing Outreach

In 2017, Way to Go! focused on K-12 schools, exclusively. Initial strategies, outreach and engagement efforts began in February 2017 with:

• Initial school coordinator survey--purpose: strategic guidance to Team
• Results shared at subsequent Partner Strategy meeting (cross department relevant state officials, previous SRS coordinators, core Way to Go! team and K-12 school trade associations)
• Strengthened alliances (Department of Education and Vermont Principal’s Association)
• Network/capacity building: online visual map of participating schools w/coordinator contact names, the number of coordinators grew significantly (118 individuals registered)
• New improved reporting methods
• Sponsorships--supporting a variety of coordinator/student incentives
• Public Relations--Burlington Media and Young Writers Project, VEEP and Local Motion
• Recognition Awards Ceremony--Vermont Statehouse
• Post school coordinator survey
• Personal phone calls were made
MARKETING OUTREACH
Creative

While the School Challenge outreach relied heavily on personal communications (through email, phone calls, partner groups, etc), there were several creative and informational marketing assets developed for the promotion of this year’s event. The Viking concept from 2016 continued to be leveraged, but we softened the concept for the school audience using a friendly Viking girl, and added a school bus.

Creative deliverables included:
- Updated stand-up banners & school banner (used at events)
- Info Sheets
  - Save the Date
  - Event One-Sheeter
  - Solar Tracker One-Sheeter
  - Event Overview
- School Resources
  - School Challenge Overview
  - How to Track and Submit Student Participation
  - Classroom Tracking Sheet
  - Captain Directory
  - Helpful Resources
  - How They Did It sheet
  - Sample Email
  - Sample Letter to Families
- Postcards
- Posters
- Social Media Posts
- School Logo
- Videos (:15 & :30)
Press releases went out to a list of 180 media contacts prior to the event, and to announce winners once completed. A Media Advisory went out to the same list to announce the Award Ceremony.

Publicity was received via partners, as well:
The objective of the Way to Go media campaign was to heighten awareness and to ultimately drive sign-ups for the Fall 2017 Way to Go! Campaign.

The campaign was targeted to Women/Moms/Men between the ages of 30-45 within Vermont. Video impressions were targeted to categories of interest, such as education (Primary & Secondary schools). Video channels included burlingtonfreepress.com, their ad network, and YouTube.

Two BFP email blasts went out to a list of 20k contacts. The 2nd eblast went out 30 days after the first, as a ‘Reminder.’

There were 4 online ad sizes with a target of 100k impressions. There were more than 269k impressions. Print went out in 2 Sunday and 3 Daily issues, as well as in the Hometown Weekly Newspaper.

**Digital Display**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Impressions</th>
<th>Clicks</th>
<th>CTR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Display – BFP.com</td>
<td>90,003</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Roll /video</td>
<td>63,757</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Display - Ad Network</td>
<td>115,664</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>269,424</strong></td>
<td><strong>554</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.20%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Email Blast**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Emails Sent</th>
<th>Opens</th>
<th>Open Rate</th>
<th>Clicks</th>
<th>CTR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/20/17</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>2,809</td>
<td>14.05%</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>1.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/05/17</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>2,901</td>
<td>14.51%</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40,000</strong></td>
<td>5,710</td>
<td>14.32%</td>
<td><strong>552</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.38%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attention Metrics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Total Exposure Time (Hours)</th>
<th>Total Interactions</th>
<th>Time Spent Engaging with Ad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Display – BFP.com</td>
<td>128 Hours</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>84.5 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARKETING OUTREACH
Social Media

Social media engagement was lower overall this year, when compared to 2016. However, that was expected given the shift away from individual/business participants.

Engagement with Facebook has consistently been greater than with Twitter.

Facebook:

From May 1 – October 31, 2017, Way to Go! Tweets earned 3k impressions.

Twitter:

From May 1 – October 31, 2017, Way to Go! Tweets earned 3k impressions.
This year, emails went out to a much smaller audience – our partners and previous year subscribers at each school. The subscriber list grew as we gained participants. Email blasts also went out through the BFP. But a number of communications also went out as individual emails.

Email Blasts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email Subject</th>
<th>Mail List</th>
<th>Send Date</th>
<th>Total Recipients</th>
<th>Open Rate</th>
<th>Click Rate</th>
<th>Total Clicks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please Send Us Your Feedback</td>
<td>Final Participants</td>
<td>12/13/17 9:57</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>21.30%</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 Way to Go! School Challenge - We Value Your Feedback!</td>
<td>Final Participants</td>
<td>12/7/17 12:46</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>36.70%</td>
<td>9.17%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Battle Has Begun!</td>
<td>Final Outreach</td>
<td>9/25/17 14:57</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>27.47%</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It Only Takes One Day To Win...</td>
<td>WTG List_AllSubscribed_Unsigned</td>
<td>9/14/17 13:38</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>77.55%</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are You Ready To Win?</td>
<td>Participants 8-28</td>
<td>9/7/17 15:21</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>41.89%</td>
<td>6.76%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Your School Signed Up?</td>
<td>WTG List_AllSubscribed_Unsigned</td>
<td>8/28/17 16:51</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>30.77%</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join the Way to Go! School Challenge Sept 25th - Oct 6th</td>
<td>VTN List</td>
<td>7/25/17 6:30</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>35.62%</td>
<td>5.48%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Up By 7/4 To Win</td>
<td>Way to Go! Principals List</td>
<td>6/19/17 10:05</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>28.10%</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Up By 7/4 To Win</td>
<td>Way to Go! Superintendents List</td>
<td>6/19/17 10:04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29.09%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Up By 7/4 To Win</td>
<td>Way to Go! Survey Respondents</td>
<td>6/19/17 10:01</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55.77%</td>
<td>13.46%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s Go Time! Sign up Your School for the Way to Go! School Challenge Today</td>
<td>Way to Go! Principals List</td>
<td>5/24/17 5:30</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>27.96%</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Battle Has Begun!

The Way to Go! School Challenge is here! Remember - your school only needs to participate on one day to be eligible for this year’s big prize, the AllEarth Renewables Solar Tracker. A minimum 50% participation on just one day will qualify your school to win. Other prizes and awards are also up for grabs, based on participation.

If you haven’t signed up yet, it’s not too late! You can still register and participate any day between now and October 6th. See what schools are participating >>

If you’re signed up, but need a little help getting started, don’t forget to take advantage of our Tools For Success.

LEARN MORE
WINNERS & AWARD CEREMONY
WINNERS

The Award Ceremony was held at the Cedar Creek Room in the Vermont Statehouse in Montpelier on December 6th at 1:30 pm. Michelle Boomhower and Secretaries Holcombe and Moore joined the event to distribute the awards.

Super Carbon Cutter Awards
Winner of the AllEarth Renewables Solar Tracker – Hartland Elementary
Winner of two Bike Racks from Local Motion – Twinfield US #33

Carbon Cup Award
Isle La Motte Elementary

Carbon-Cutting Leaders for Best Overall Participation
Best Participation from a Rural School – Isle La Motte Elementary
Best Participation from a City School – Northwest Primary School
Best Bus Ridership – Concord Grade/Middle School
Best Walkers, Bikers & Rollers – Isle La Motte Elementary
Best Photo or Video – Frederick H Tuttle Middle School
2nd Highest Participation – Essex Elementary School
Leadership & Safe Routes Achievement Award – Mary Hogan School
FUTURE CHALLENGES
According to a post event survey of school coordinators, future outreach might spotlight the high cost and environmental impacts of transportation and the need to continue investing in safe routes to Vermont’s K-12 schools and a more effective busing system.

Way to Go! organizers recognize that this is about more than transportation – it is about making short and long-term lifestyle changes, and continuing to address rural transportation needs to the changing school environment. Safety is a major concern for all in their daily travels to school. A good role of Way to Go! is to become the “one stop shop” for all things transportation.

As we look ahead to future challenges, we must reflect on our successes and challenges of previous events. Some questions to consider:

• What are the necessary drivers that will make a significant difference to making more efficient travel choices to schools?
• Review and determine priority program objectives. Health, safety, cost savings, school parking lot congestion, environmental impacts and more efficient travel choice practices.
• What is our goal? Vermonters will have access to more efficient, affordable, and reliable travel choices; the result being, experiencing a higher quality of life.
• What time frame and dates work best? Should it be a 1-day event, 2 weeks, all year?

It is suggested that Way to Go! organizers invite others interested in more sustainable transportation to participate in a one time work session to advise organizers on program changes that would improve and encourage more schools to participate. Below are some general findings from the 2017 event.

**Lessons Learned:**

• It’s all about relationships. Direct engagement with schools is most important in driving participation.
• While we make it really easy with online and downloadable resources, hand-holding is essential. Not budgeted in 2017’s challenge was the SRS level of support to schools. Mapping and other information/support would be even more helpful, including specific data and insights about their school, plus ideas to overcome physical and cultural barriers.
• Initial sign-ups--while still lacking some key data fields (i.e., population and demographic data), increased the demand for follow-up work by field coordinators.
• While somewhat labor intensive, Google sheets reporting docs required the end user to be comfortable and aware of what and how to report at the time it was necessary. It is one thing to require the coordinator to report, and another managing co-workers to report on each classroom. There could be a disconnect between classroom teachers and the central coordinator.
• An outstanding question is bus transportation tracking. School facilities managers track fuel usage and the number of buses operating. What can we draw from this, if anything, to help improve awareness?
• Office hours were offered to school coordinators to call-in, however, no one took advantage of this.
• School leaders - Do we need one person to be the leader? We got hung up on having people sign their school up but not want to be the leader. If the entire leadership team could be equal, we wouldn’t have that issue as anyone who signed-up would automatically be a leader. Alternately the default could be team leader unless they designate someone else at some point in the process.

**Discussions and Suggestions for Future Challenges:**

• Way to Go! could become the motivator and trusted source of information and resources for school officials, teachers and students to learn and practice lower carbon-based travel options and advance shared goals and objectives.
• Downtowns vs rural schools – can we research Vermont’s 16 downtowns and the proximity of K-12 schools?
FUTURE CHALLENGES
Learnings to Consider

- Can we establish a solid infrastructure, paired with other programs (i.e., Safe Routes to School, Wellness Coordinators) to track baseline travel behaviors?
- Simplify the “contest” rules and make it more of a school “pledge.”
- Win the solar tracker by taking the survey at the end of the Challenge.
- Why shouldn’t we continue to invest in making deeper change within the school sector at all levels? Who are the logical partners for advocacy?
- Local Motion, VEEP, VNRC, VTEN, Transportation for Vermonters, Net Zero Vermont, VPIRG and VT Chapter of the Sierra Club. What other groups including Vermont Principal’s Association, VSBIT, and Vermont Superintendent’s Association who might help? What cross-cutting State agency cooperation might help (i.e., VTRANS, ANR, AOE, and Department of Health)?
- Number of days/extra credit - there were actually a few schools that did participate every day. We might think about extending our extra credits to capture that extra effort?
- As a school based challenge, the highest leverage point is providing a Way to Go outreach support (including those on the 2017 coordinating team) to engage directly with schools providing them with support at all parts of the challenge.
- This program will have it’s maximum impact if it elevates Safe Routes to School programming designed to increase safety and engagement on active commuting, as well as anything that can promote using the existing bus systems.
- Key School Partners
  - Health professionals in the school (School Nurse/PE instructors)
  - Principals
  - Science/ Social Science teachers
  - Environmental Clubs
  - Department of Education

SCHOOL REPORTING and DATA COLLECTION
- Improve the tally system for reporting. Ideally there would be an app that allows the school to really see what other people in their school are adding in and reminds people to add their data.
- At minimum, in addition to paper tallies, we should make Google forms available on request and with training or explanations (but not by default).
- Consider inviting an app design discussion, to determine if an app exists for reporting. (Could students design an app? Could we have an app design challenge with a cash prize?)
- Prep Work: Assess SRS, Local Motion, Department of Education and others who hold baseline data related to busing and transportation. Avoid duplication of data collection if baseline is already reported within the school year.
- What might we glean from school budgets about transportation related expenditures (busing, parking, security)? Determine the true cost of transportation on the school budget and potential savings of behavior change.
- Reporting: Ask each school to report its baseline data within two weeks of the challenge. How refined do we need the numbers? Think about collecting a baseline (in gross numbers) to make it simpler to track. Begin with the below for baseline, then follow-up collect actual estimates during Way to Go?
  - Number of buses serving the school
  - Initial ridership approximate capacity of the buses (50% full)
  - Number of cars traveling to school
  - Number of carpools entering school (could provide a window sticker of true carpool)
  - Improved capacity of parking lots (any visible changes, free parking spaces)
FUTURE CHALLENGES
Learnings to Consider

- If reporting were at a gross level (as suggested above), awareness across the school might improve, and encourage more behavior change.
- Is there a way to obtain baseline and final reporting (made easy and seamless) by embedding into website?
- Demand for information spans more than coordinator level, can we better articulate the specific request. This will come with greater awareness.
- Administration buy-in at the school and state levels
- Big picture--step back and identify advocacy and policy changes that will move the needle in Vermont school transportation. With both sticks and carrots--meaning, Way to Go! could provide the forum (or possibly by another advocacy group) to characterize existing and dated rules, the opportunity for new legislation, integrating and/or reinforcing shared goals with existing high performance schools criteria and Acts relating to same)
- Offer the right incentives (students like the small things: pencils, leg bands, stickers)
- Infrastructure--back office, include teaching aids and learning moments (enlist students to collect data, become transportation detectives, etc).
- It’s the journey, more than results. Connect more strongly with safe routes and health.
- Inform the entire state--Consider returning to a single day, merits of making it a single week or a single day of ditch your car, like Green-up Day!
- Opportunity for Student Leadership! Hand them the problem, design the curriculum and access to understanding the problem (i.e, busing ridership, carpoolers, walkers and bikers, safe routes, school transportation plans.
- Opportunities and make connections to: Climate Crisis, Health, Transforming School Transportation).
- Operate/seek endorsement at the Supervisory Union level. Demonstrate why this is so important, and that their help to craft a project strategic plan might be most beneficial to translate into substantive results.
- Help schools run contest within their own school (ex. classroom vs. classroom).

All of the above must be weighed against the budget parameters and main goals of the program.