



**PA-TSA Ride The Bus To School Project**  
***PA-TSA Green Initiative***

*Prepared by the PA-TSA Environmental Committee*

**Goal(s)**

- Promote environmental activism through an insightful project.
- Spread environmental awareness on the dangers of carbon emissions.
- Reduce carbon emissions Pennsylvania state-wide for one day.

**Explanation**

The invention of the internal combustion engine by Samuel Brown in 1823 ultimately lead to a long-standing and significant problem of increasing carbon emissions in our atmosphere. Chemicals emitted by this engine, such as carbon monoxide, are toxic to humans and animals. Climatologists widely accept that these emissions impose an irregularity to the Earth's climate by trapping the sun's heat waves in our atmosphere that would have otherwise "bounced" back into space. This principle, named Climate Change, has, in the last 30 years, been widely accredited as a serious threat to humanity due to its researched implications of extreme higher/lower global temperatures.

Most Americans own an automobile, most of which operate on gasoline, which, in combustion, produces carbon monoxide as a byproduct. Technologies that would allow one's car to emit "zero emissions" are in development, but until manufacturers start building vehicles that release no carbon emissions and until such vehicles become economically feasible for the consumer, the average citizen will continue emitting large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Students, advisors, and all those affiliated with TSA travel long distances each year to attend TSA conferences and meetings. As a result, those who participate in these events inadvertently increase their carbon footprint. TSA members generally cannot reduce the amount that they travel for TSA-related functions without sacrificing their involvement in this forward-thinking organization. Still, TSA members can make an environmentally-conscience difference in their communities by implementing strategies to reduce transportation emissions, and more importantly, spread awareness on the environmental hindrance of carbon emissions.

**Implementation**

The Ride The Bus To School Day project encourages students to use public or school transportation that is provided to them, rather than commissioning their parents or guardians to drive them to school in a personal vehicle, on a given day. A school bus, township vehicle, or school-contracted vehicle (that is designated to pick up and drop off students) is going to cover a similar distance and release a similar amount of emissions regardless of the number of passengers. When a student's parent drives him or her to school, it puts an additional, unnecessary vehicle on the road, which in turn releases a substantial amount of additional carbon emissions.

Ride the Bus To School Day cumulates TSA chapter and student-body involvement at the school at which it is implemented. Leading up to the event, the TSA



chapter publicizes the event via video, flyers, announcements, and website, encouraging the student-body to ride the bus to school on a given date.

The TSA chapters can chose to tabulate their results by counting the amount of passenger cars that are used to drop students off at school on a typical school day versus how many passenger cars are used on the Ride The Bus To School Day.

The Welsh Valley Middle School Environmental Challenge Team devised this project in 2008 and successfully implemented it on a single school-level and ultimately a district-level. After extensive calculations, it was determined that 2000+ pounds of emissions were prevented from being released during the district-wide event. The chapter also spread awareness of the global carbon emissions problem to thousands of students in the district and promoted the presence of their TSA chapter in their school, school district, and community.

This same project can be swiftly implemented at TSA-affiliated schools across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, resulting in a considerable reduction in emissions for one day and a significant impact on the long-standing awareness in communities across the state. This project has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 2010.

The Environmental Committee may include a follow-up petition (will need to be approved by the Environmental Committee Advisors and State Officer President), which we will ask participating chapters to conduct at their schools. If conducted, the collected petitions may be delivered to a legislative figure, such as a United States Congressman. The most likely topic for the petition will be transportation emissions control legislation.

#### **Tentative “To Do” List for Chapters**

- Watch the “Ride the Bus Day” informational video.
- Download promotional materials from the PA-TSA Green Webpage including a letter to present to your administrator and materials to promote the event to your school community.
- Seek administration approval at your school to hold a Ride The Bus To School Day event on March 16, 2010.
- Distribute promotional materials to your community. Encourage teachers to inform students of the event and the spotlighted problem of carbon emissions.
- OPTIONAL: Tabulate the amount of passenger vehicles that are used to drop students off at school on an typical school day.
- OPTIONAL: On Ride the Bus To School Day, tabulate the amount of passenger vehicles that are used to drop students off at school.
- Thank your school community for participating in the event and report results to the community and PA-TSA Environmental Committee at [green@patsa.org](mailto:green@patsa.org) (if tabulated).

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