



Safe Routes to School

Moving into the Future



Presented by Deb Hubsmith, Director
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Reviewing SRTS in SAFETEA-LU

- Congress created the federal Safe Routes to School program in 2005 through the federal transportation bill via section 1404
 - \$612 million is authorized over 5 years
 - Each state receives a portion based on their population of children grades K-8
- Each state has a SRTS coordinator who administers the program
 - 70-90% of funds are for infrastructure
 - Remaining portion is for non-infrastructure (i.e. enforcement, encouragement, and education)
- National SRTS Task Force
- National SRTS Clearinghouse





Transportation Bill Issues

- ✦ It's a "New Authorization" due September 30, 2009
- ✦ Highway Trust Fund is broke
- ✦ Policy Commission recommended collapsing program categories
- ✦ Emphasis on performance based outcomes
- ✦ Bike/ped received only 1.25% of SAFETEA-LU funding but bike/ped represents nearly 10% of trips, and 13% of fatalities
- ✦ Bills originate in House T&I and Senate EPW. House bill desired in Committee for May, on floor by June.
- ✦ We're working collaboratively with America Bikes and T4America on SRTS.

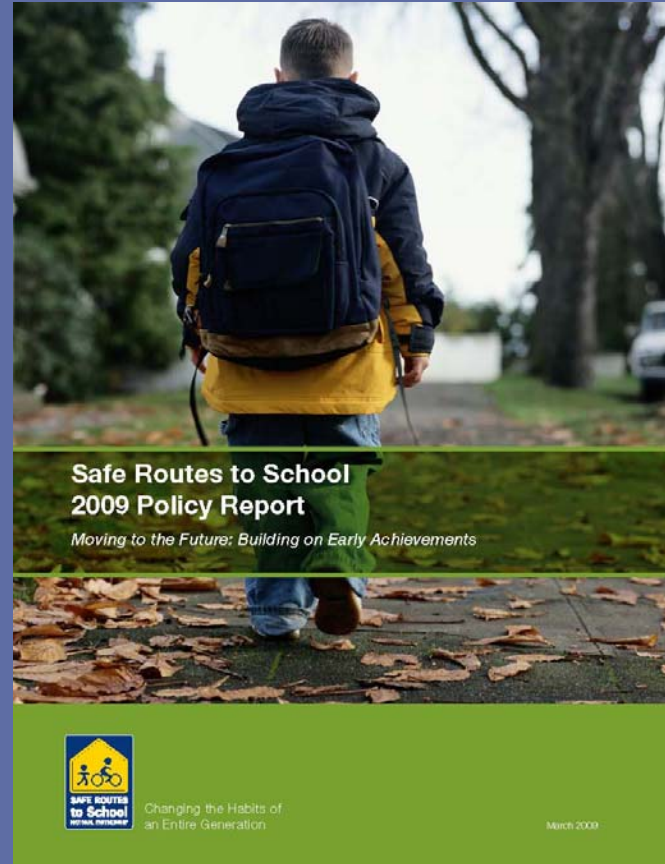




SRTS 2009 Policy Report

5 Key Policy Observations:

- Funding
- Local Program Managers
- Implementation/ Application Process
- Data
- Grade Levels





Funding

- ✦ Only 7.5% of schools will get SRTS grants
- ✦ Only part of the school will be served through that grant
- ✦ Nationally, requests are three times greater than available funds
- ✦ Our ask: \$3 billion over 5 years





Local Program Managers

- ★ Are permitted under 1404
- ★ However, some states like IL are prohibiting
- ★ Program Managers are cost effective and can manage volunteers for whole cities or school districts
- ★ Many work for non-profits
- ★ Our ask: explicitly allow Program Managers in the legislation





Implementation Process

- ★ Grantees must comply with Title 23
- ★ Leads to high overhead costs and delays for projects within the existing built environment and NI projects
- ★ Report coming out in April to present to Congress
- ★ Our ask: Reduce the implementation burdens through the federal legislation





Data Collection

- ✦ Not required under 1404
- ✦ Congress is moving toward performance based outcomes: SRTS can't compete well without data
- ✦ NCSRTS has parent/student forms
- ✦ NHTS has questions on SRTS
- ✦ Our ask: Require evaluation for future grants





Grade Levels Served

- ✦ 1404 only serves grades K-8
- ✦ Many requests and needs for High School programs
- ✦ Students already participating are moving on to High Schools
- ✦ Our ask: Allow SRTS to serve grades K-12.





Supporting Policies Needed

- ✦ **School Siting** – state and local policies should encourage community centered schools
- ✦ **Complete Streets** - legislation was introduced this week (proactive approach to safe routes everywhere)
- ✦ If there are **Bus Cuts**, pair with SRTS
- ✦ Connect SRTS with **health/wellness** policies and programs
- ✦ Use **traffic safety funds** to supplement SRTS needs – HSIP has 10 times more funding





School Bus Cuts

- School districts all across the country are cutting back bus routes and trimming bus stops:
 - In summer of 2008, high fuel costs caused one-third of schools to consolidate bus routes.
 - Due to the worsening economy and state budget crises, 20 states have implemented or proposed budget cuts to K-12 education per-pupil funding and local education grants.
- Based on nationwide averages, a school district saves approximately \$37,000 per bus route eliminated.





School Bus Cuts

- When bus routes are eliminated, parents often react with anger and concern:
 - Lack of safe infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, crosswalks) for students to walk or bicycle
 - Perceived lack of safety from “stranger danger”
- **The likely result?** Parents with the means to do so substitute the family car for the bus:
 - Shifts transportation costs & time burden to parents
 - Increases traffic congestion and air pollution around the school
 - Missed opportunity for physical activity
 - For families without the means to drive, an increase in children walking/bicycling in potentially unsafe conditions





Changing the Paradigm

- Safe Routes to School can help school districts manage and address parent concerns when bus routes are consolidated or eliminated.
 - Focus is on making it safe for children to walk and bicycle
 - Key is collaborative approach engaging parents and children along with school and city officials to productively solve parent safety concerns
 - Schools can start immediately with small, simple steps and plan for longer-term, grant-funded improvements
 - Resources available at www.saferoutespartnership.org





We Need Your Help!

- ✦ Report back to margo@saferoutespartnership.org on your Lobby Day experience for SRTS
- ✦ Tell us your SRTS success stories and challenges
- ✦ Plan a SRTS site visit for your Congressional member (Guidebook available on the national section of our website).





For More Information

- Questions or comments? Contact:
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- Go to www.saferoutespartnership.org and become a partner affiliate (more than 400 strong) or sign up for our e-news!

