

Safe Routes To Schools (SRTS)

§ 1404

Program Purpose

To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school safe and more appealing; and to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects that will improve safety, and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Statutory References

SAFETEA-LU Sections: 1101(a)(17), 1404

Program Features

Overview -- The SRTS Program is funded at \$612 million and provides Federal-aid highway funds to State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) over five Federal fiscal years in accordance with a formula specified in the legislation. These funds are available for infrastructure and noninfrastructure projects, and to administer SRTS programs that benefit elementary and middle school children in grades K – 8.

The SRTS legislation requires three major initiatives:

- *Implement SRTS Program nationwide.* This section also requires that each State DOT and the District of Columbia use a sufficient amount of its annual SRTS apportionment to fund a full-time position of coordinator of the State's safe routes to school program.
- *Create Clearinghouse.* Make grants to a national nonprofit organization engaged in promoting safe routes to school to operate a national safe routes to school clearinghouse, develop information and educational programs on safe routes to school, and provide technical assistance and disseminate techniques and strategies used for successful safe routes to school programs
- *Establish Task Force and submit report to Congress.* The FHWA will form a national SRTS Task Force composed of leaders in health, transportation, and education. The goal of the Task Force will be to develop a strategy for advancing safe routes to school programs nationwide. A report detailing the results of the study and a description of the strategy established is to be submitted to Congress.

Funding

Funded by contract authority, to remain available until expended. Contract authority is not subject to transfer and is subject to the overall Federal-aid obligation limitation. Each year after deducting \$3 million for the administrative expenses of the program, the Secretary shall apportion the funds to States based on their relative shares of total enrollment in primary and middle schools (kindergarten through eighth grade), but no State will receive less than \$1 million. Funds are to be administered by State departments of transportation to provide financial assistance to State, local, and regional agencies, including non-profit organizations, that demonstrate the ability to meet the requirements of the program.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Authorization	\$54 M	\$100 M	\$125 M	\$150 M	\$183 M

Eligible Use of Funds

Infrastructure - Eligible infrastructure-related projects include the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including:

- sidewalk improvements,
- traffic calming and speed reduction improvements,
- pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements,
- on-street bicycle facilities,
- off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities,
- secure bicycle parking facilities, and
- traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

Construction and capital improvement projects must be located within approximately two miles of a primary or middle school (grades K – 8). The State SRTS Coordinator position in each State is funded from the infrastructure portion of the State's SRTS Program apportionment.

Noninfrastructure - Each State must set aside from its SRTS annual apportionment not less than 10 percent and not more than 30 percent of the funds for noninfrastructure-related activities to encourage walking and bicycling to school, including:

- public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders,
- traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools (within approximately 2 miles)
- student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and
- funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs.

Federal Share

The Federal share is 100%

Implementation

The administration of this program has been assigned to FHWA's Office of Safety, which is working in collaboration with FHWA's Offices of Planning and Environment (Bicycle and Pedestrian Program) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to establish and guide the program.

FHWA Office of Safety requested in September 2005 that a SRTS Coordinator be named in each State, and additional Q&A about the Coordinator was published in October. On January 3, 2006 the Office of Safety published its Program Guidance for implementing this new program. In February 2006 the Office of Safety hosted two national web conferences with State DOTs and FHWA field staff regarding program guidance and implementation.

See Also

The Office of Safety has established a SRTS web site with all memoranda, program guidance, state contact information, Q&A, and other useful resources. All this information can be found at: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/index.htm>

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