

SRTS CASE STUDY:

Louisburg, Kansas

City Officials and Students Work Together for SRTS

SafeRoutes
National Center for Safe Routes to School



CASE STUDY

Background

The United School District 416 in Louisburg, KS, worked with the city of Louisburg in applying for and receiving \$174,297 in reimbursable funds from Safe Routes to School (SRTS) through the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). This funding will help create a safer community for Louisburg Middle School and Louisburg Elementary School by improving the pedestrian infrastructure. After these improvements are completed, a student group at Louisburg High School will begin SRTS encouragement activities for the elementary and middle school students.

Details

The state of Kansas allows all students, regardless of proximity to school, ride the bus to school. A fall 2006 school survey given to Louisburg Middle and Elementary School parents revealed that 54 percent of students rode the bus to school and 39 percent arrive by private motor vehicle. Four percent of students walk to school, and one percent of students bicycle. In Oct. 2007, the school district received \$174,297 in SRTS funds from KDOT. These funds will be used for infrastructure improvements such as crosswalk striping and signs, new accessible sidewalks, additional crossing guards and crossing guard uniforms.

The planning stage for the districts SRTS activities began in fall 2006 with the help of a \$15,000 SRTS grant from KDOT. With this funding, the city hired a land-planning firm to identify the city areas that needed infrastructure improvements. The STAR Warriors, a group created by and consisting of students from Louisburg High, also helped with the planning stage. The group name is a double acronym, standing for Students Taking Automotive Risks and Slow down, Turn off cells, Always buckle and Reject all drugs. The student group acted as a liaison between the students and the community and helped create encouragement and education activities to be implemented at the elementary and middle schools once the infrastructure improvements are completed.

Results

Work on the infrastructure improvements are slated to begin by spring 2008 in order to complete them by the summer. Plans for the 2008 to 2009 school year include the STAR Warriors organizing Walking Wednesdays and leading the middle and elementary school students to school during the walks. They also want to create parent and student pedestrian safety education lessons and organize bicycle rodeos. In summer 2008, the students of STAR Warriors will throw neighborhood block parties for the elementary and middle school students. At these parties, the STAR Warriors will pass out walking maps detailing routes for the students to take when walking to school.

With the infrastructure improvements in place and the education and encouragement activities being delivered, the hope is that students living close to the school will have a walking environment that is conducive to walking and bicycling to school. Ultimately, schools' objective for the SRTS program is to help reduce childhood obesity rates and transportation expenditures by increasing the number of students walking and bicycling to school.

City Officials and High School Students Work Together for SRTS

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For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org.