

Safe Routes to School E-News

Safe Routes to School E-News is a monthly email newsletter published by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, a growing network of more than 230 non-profit organizations, government agencies and professional groups that are working to set goals, share best practices, secure funding, and provide detailed policy input to implementing agencies for advancing the Safe Routes to School national movement.

Please forward Safe Routes to School E-News to others who may be interested!

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- 1. FHWA Appoints National SRTS Task Force**
Deb Hubsmith, SRTSNP Coordinator is selected as a member

The Federal Highway Administration recently announced its appointments to the National Safe Routes to School Task Force, and Deb Hubsmith, Coordinator of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, is one of 17 people who were selected to serve.

The creation of the Task Force, as an advisory body to the U.S. Department of Transportation, was a requirement of section 1404 of SAFETEA-LU, the enabling legislation that created the national SRTS program. The Task Force will study and develop a strategy for advancing Safe Routes to School programs nationwide and will be responsible for submitting to the U.S. DOT Secretary a report for Congress detailing the results of their work.

The Task Force is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act. All Task Force meetings will be open to the public. The Task Force will also accept written comments. To see the list of members and charter for the Task Force see: http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/. To submit comments or be added to the Task Force mailing list, please send an email to SRTS@tooledesign.com. The first meeting has been scheduled for January 11, 2007 in Washington D.C.

2. Diverse Communities Survey: Help us Gather Information

Geared toward learning about SRTS in urban, rural and disabled populations

The traditional Safe Routes to School model uses the 5 "E's"—engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation—to accomplish two main goals: increase the number of students who walk and bicycle to school, and make walking and bicycling to school safer. This widely accepted standard program has its developmental roots in largely suburban settings. However, many schools and communities experience a different set of circumstances related to active transportation that remain unaddressed in many of the widely available resources and guidance.

The SRTS National Partnership has created the Diverse Communities Committee to help identify existing resources and gaps in resources for three populations: large urban school communities, rural school communities, and students with disabilities. The committee, chaired by Melody Geraci of the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, is seeking input from a variety of practitioners, experts, and stakeholders in the three communities to complete a brief survey (<http://bikesbelong.org/page.cfm?PageID=372>) to assist in defining each group. We will hold national conference calls in January to garner additional information. Please forward this survey link to others who may be able to help.

3. New Jersey, Florida, Louisiana and Tennessee release SRTS guidelines

20 states have now developed application processes

Within the past month, New Jersey, Florida, Louisiana and Tennessee have all released application guidelines for Safe Routes to School. Links to these guidelines and other state guidelines may be found on our website at: <http://bikesbelong.org/page.cfm?PageID=342>

Every state develops its own set of application guidelines for Safe Routes to School, within the framework of the federal SRTS legislation. New Jersey, for example, will program \$3.2 million in grants for this round of funding. Their guidelines emphasize the

development of a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan and state, "Ideally, the projects and activities for which funding is being sought are included in a pre-existing SRTS Travel Plan. Applications will be considered, however, regardless of whether or not a SRTS Travel Plan has been completed. Proposals must define a complete, identifiable and usable facility or activity. Funds are not available for partial activities that cannot function as a complete and useful whole or for projects that do not have independent utility. It is anticipated that these projects will not only have a direct impact on the school commute, but that the implementation of these projects and programs will result in other outcomes, serving as a catalyst wherever possible, for the development of other projects and programs that lead to more walkable and bikeable communities supporting active, healthy lifestyles."

4. Alliance for a Healthier Generation's School Program

Resources and recognition help make schools healthier

Formed in May 2005, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation – a joint initiative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association – is working to eliminate childhood obesity and inspire young people in the United States to develop lifelong, healthy habits. The Alliance's overarching goal is to stop the increase in childhood obesity in the United States by 2010 and reduce its prevalence by 2015.

To enhance the health of their school environments, schools can access the Alliance's [Healthy Schools Builder](#) to help them identify what aspects of a healthier school environment they already have in place and where there is room for improvement. Additionally, schools can email Schools@HealthierGeneration.org or call 1-888-KID-HLTH with additional questions or requests. The Alliance also offers all schools the opportunity to be nationally recognized for their overall healthy school environments through improved nutrition in foods sold; increase in physical education and activity before, during and after the school day; nutrition education; and staff wellness programs. Safe Routes to School activities can be applied towards meeting the recognition criteria for physical activity. Any school in the United States can [apply for recognition online](#).

5. Arizona Passes Double-Fine School Zone Legislation

Drivers in violation to pay at least \$200

A new law that recently went into effect doubles the fines for traffic violations in the State of Arizona when the "Stop When Children in Crosswalk" signs are present. School zone signs around the state will be modified to add the words "Fines Double" by the end of the year. Under the new law, drivers will pay a minimum of \$200, depending on the jurisdiction.

"Doubling of school zone fines is a valuable enforcement tool in the 'Safe Routes To School' toolkit," says Safe Routes to School Coordinator Brian Fellows from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). "As the traffic safety community works to make walking and bicycling to school a safer and more convenient option for elementary and

middle school students, double fines will send a message to drivers that Arizona is serious about protecting our children by reducing traffic danger.”

6. Illinois DOT Issues SRTS Contract to Non-Profit Team

For training, outreach and program development

The Illinois Department of Transportation is partnering with a group of non-profit organizations to help launch its statewide SRTS program. A team comprised of the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the League of Illinois Bicyclists has been contracted through 2009 to provide training, outreach and program development services for IDOT. The contracted work includes web site development, communication and promotional work and training sessions throughout the state. The team will also assist in development of the state's School Travel Plan template and application.

For more information, contact the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation's Melody Geraci at (312) 427-3325 ext. 240 or at melody@biketraffic.org.

7. SRTS Training at New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

February 8-10 in Los Angeles, www.NewPartners.org

The 6th annual *New Partners for Smart Growth* Conference has grown significantly since it began several years ago - increasing in scope, attendance, and prestige - and is now considered to be the "premier" smart growth conference held each year. The strength of this conference comes from the variety of participants and speakers who cross disciplines to share experiences and insights, and valuable tools and strategies to encourage smart growth implementation and "get it done."

The 2007 program will span three days and feature cutting-edge smart growth issues, the latest research, implementation tools and strategies, successful case studies, interactive learning experiences, new partners, new projects and new policies. The agenda also features a special training session titled Safe Routes to School: The Key to Walkable Communities. This focused half-day training will feature national experts including Paul Zykofsky (Local Government Commission), Wendi Kallins (Marin County Bicycle Coalition), Deb Hubsmith (SRTS National Partnership) and Diane Wigle (NHTSA). Come learn more about the 5 E's (engineering, encouragement, education, enforcement, and evaluation), and find out about the \$612 million SAFETEA-LU federal funding program and how you can make the program work in your state.

Plan to join us, and others, from across the U.S. next February for the smart growth event of the year! Visit www.NewPartners.org to register and get more event details.

8. Rep. James L. Oberstar Safe Routes to School Award

To be developed by the National Center for SRTS

The National Center for Safe Routes to School has announced it will establish an annual award in the name of Congressman James L. Oberstar to honor his dedication to America's school children. The James L. Oberstar Safe Routes to School Award will be presented each year to an outstanding Safe Routes to School Program.

An avid bicyclist, Congressman Oberstar is recognized as the leading bike advocate in Congress. As the senior Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee who is about to step into the role as Chairman, Congressman Oberstar has led the way in promoting legislation that is bicycle-friendly. During his 32 years in Congress, he has shaped the nation's surface transportation policies to encourage bicycling as an important alternative to travel by car or other motorized conveyance. He championed the Safe Routes to School program and built bipartisan support to secure its inclusion in the final version of a massive highway and transit bill last year. SAFETEA-LU, which was signed into law in 2005, included \$612 million for grants over five years for communities in all 50 states to build bike lanes, sidewalks, and trails that will make it safer and easier for children to bike and walk to school.

Help Expand the Partnership!

Joining the Partnership is free. Please encourage other organizations, schools, businesses and government agencies to affiliate with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership at: <http://bikesbelong.org/site/page.cfm?PageID=252>

Primary funding for the Safe Routes to School National Partnership has been generously provided by the Bikes Belong Coalition.

For More Information Contact

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