



**South Carolina Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School Program**

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

**Safe Routes to School Program
SC Department of Transportation
955 Park Street, Room 217
Post Office Box 191
Columbia, SC 29202-0191**



South Carolina Department of Transportation

Safe Routes to School Guidelines and Application

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Explanation of Safe Routes to School

I. Background

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federally funded program authorized by Congress in the 2005 Transportation Reauthorization Bill. That bill was called the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users or “SAFETEA-LU”. Section 1404 of this bill authorized at least \$1 million per year, per state for the duration of the bill (through 2009). South Carolina’s Safe Routes to School Program is administered by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT).

II. Purpose

The purpose of the Safe Routes to School Program in South Carolina is to:

- 1) enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school;
- 2) provide funding and support to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
- 3) facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce motor vehicle traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

III. Funding

Safe Routes to School plans to use the remaining SAFETEA-LU funds for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and programs until said funds are exhausted. At this time, SCDOT will **not** require a match. The SRTS Program is a reimbursement program for costs incurred, meaning that this is not a “cash up front” or block grant program. Costs incurred prior to contract execution are not eligible for reimbursement. Each selected school is eligible to receive up to a **maximum of \$400,000 (this includes Preliminary Engineering, potential Right of Way costs, Inspection and Construction costs)** for funding Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects. The selected school must be at least a bronze level partner of the SRTS Resource Center in order to even be considered for funding.

IV. Infrastructure

Funding implementations are required to address both infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements. Why make improvements to the infrastructure if students do not properly know how to utilize them? And why would we educate and encourage students to walk and bicycle to school when facilities are inadequate? The Safe Routes to School Program is, by nature, comprehensive.

Safe Routes to School allocations of 70% to 90% of the SAFETEA-LU funds must be utilized for infrastructure projects: planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school.

V. Non-infrastructure

The remaining 10% to 30% of the funding must support non-infrastructure programs: activities to educate children, their parents, educators, and the public about walking and bicycling, to encourage students to do it regularly, to enforce safe conditions, and to evaluate the results.

This is done through the SC SRTS Resource Center. Awarded school(s) will continue to receive technical support and encouragement from the SC SRTS Resource Center.

VI. Uses of Funds

Funds must **only** be used for projects that specifically serve the stated purposes of the Safe Routes to School Program. Funds **may not** be used for recurring costs. For example, program funds may not be used to pay crossing guard salaries, as these are recurring costs. However, funds may be used for crossing guard training programs. Funds **may not** be used to match other federal funds (i.e. Enhancement Program Grants.) However, SRTS funds may be leveraged with other funds available concurrently. For example, if funds are available through the county government for an infrastructure project, the Safe Routes to School funds may supplement those funds.

Funds **may not** be used for projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off primarily for the convenience of drivers rather than to improve child safety and/or walking and bicycling access.

Program funds **may not** be spent on education programs that are primarily focused on bus safety. Improvements to bus stops are **not** eligible for this funding.

For additional information on non-eligible uses of funds, please go to

<http://www.scdot.org/getting/saferoutes.aspx>. Click on Materials and Resources tab, then Use of Funds.

VII. Timeline (EXAMPLE ONLY)

March 2014	Applications available
June 2014	Application deadline
July 2014	Selection Scoring
August – Sept. 2014	Finalist Interviews
October 2014	Funded programs announced
Fall 2014	Planning Meetings held at each funded school (Conducted by SRTS and consultant)
Fall 2014–Spring 2015	SRTS Plans designed by school's SRTS committee
Spring - Fall 2015	SCDOT review and approve SRTS Plans
Spring 2015	Contract agreements signed

Projects must commence within six months after completely executed contract agreement and notice to proceed. Projects should be complete 24 months after completely executed contract agreement. After the completion of the infrastructure components of these projects, the city/town/school district will assume all responsibilities and liabilities for the improvements unless the project is on SCDOT Right of Way. The city/town/school district will also assume the maintenance responsibilities of these improvements unless the project is on SCDOT Right of Way. Contracts will be drafted to the specifications of each project. All parties must comply with federal and state procurement policies.

VIII. Comprehensive Safe Routes to School Plan

Selected schools and their partners will be required to design a comprehensive Safe Routes to School Plan specific to that school and surrounding community. This plan must incorporate the **Five E's of Safe Routes to School**:

Engineering: Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossing, walkways, trails, and bikeways. Document any existing problems and supplement your application with any documentation (i.e. Travel plans, walk audits).

Education: Teaching children and the public about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and pedestrian safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.

Encouragement: Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.

Enforcement: Partnering with law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.

Evaluation: Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s). *Safe Routes to School Plans must be sustainable.*

IX. Who may apply?

In South Carolina, any school with grades K – 8, school district, municipality or other government entity may apply. An application for funding must represent only one eligible school. Eligible schools are any school with any grades K-8 (traditionally elementary or middle schools). Eligible schools must have been in operation for at least two years prior to application deadline. Previous SRTS infrastructure awardees and schools built within the last two years are ineligible. Only one application per school per funding cycle is eligible. Evidence of school and school district support and involvement must be provided as indicated in Section 1 of the application. Government agencies or organizations may apply on behalf of a school. The applicant organization will contract with SCDOT to implement the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure project.

NOTE: SCDOT will administer and oversee the infrastructure project and the SC SRTS Resource Center will oversee the non-infrastructure portion.

X. SRTS Planning Meeting

Each applicant selected for Safe Routes to School funding must organize a Safe Routes to School Committee that may consist of, but is not limited to, educators, school officials, parents, local law enforcement, advocates, local engineers and local policy-makers. For additional information on how your school can create a SRTS committee, please go to <http://www.scdot.org/getting/saferoutes.aspx>. Click on Materials and Resources tab, then Strategies Manual. You may also consult your SRTS Resource Center School Outreach Coordinator <http://www.scsaferoutes.org/partnership/find-coordinator>.

After your SRTS Committee has been assembled, SRTS personnel will then assist in scheduling a Safe Routes to School Planning Meeting specific to the awarded school. **Attendance by that school's entire Safe Routes to School Committee is required.** This SRTS Planning Meeting will help determine the best solutions for a comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan may include strategies that will promote a sustainable SRTS program and compliment the proposed infrastructure improvements. *Registration is recommended to secure attendance. Space is limited.*

General Application Information

XI. Application Process

South Carolina's SRTS Application Process is a multi-stage process. Applicants will apply for funding via the application. Applications are due May 16, 2014. Application criteria focus on the need for SRTS improvements at and around the school. Applications do not ask for specific projects, programs, or plans. However, a general outline of a comprehensive plan and vision helps panelists visualize the needs of the applicant school. A selection panel will score the applications. The top scoring applicants will then be notified for an interview. A school official and an applicant organization representative must attend. Interviews will determine commitment and provide clarification.

Schools will be selected in Fall 2014. Selected schools will then work with SRTS to organize and tailor a SRTS Planning Meeting specific to their school and community. Applicant schools will then work with SCDOT and the SC SRTS Resource Center to design a SRTS Plan. The SRTS Plans will encompass all Five E's: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation. Once the specific SRTS Plans are approved and awarded by SCDOT, construction contract agreements will be signed and work may begin.

XII. Application Deadline

Applications must be postmarked by May 16, 2014, or delivered in person to the address below by May 16, 2014, at 5:00 PM (EST). Applications delivered or postmarked after May 16, 2014 will not be considered and will not roll over to future application cycles. Previous SRTS infrastructure awardees will not be considered. Submit applications to:

**Safe Routes to School Program
SC Department of Transportation
Room 217
Post Office Box 191
Columbia, SC 29202-0191**

**DO NOT FAX OR E-MAIL APPLICATIONS.
ONLY MAILED OR HAND DELIVERED APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

XIII. Application Format

Submit original application plus 7 photo copies of the application and all supporting documents in a 3-ring binder (any size.) Please use dividers to separate each application copy. Include cover page as first page. Do not include guidelines as part of the application. Applicants must also provide one electronic copy of the application and support documents submitted on a compact disc (CD.) Clearly label and attach the CD to the binder.

XIV. Criteria for selection

Applications will not be chosen based on proposed Safe Routes to School Plans, programs, or projects. Rather, applying organizations will need to provide compelling evidence of bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns and the need for improved conditions for bicycling, walking and rolling to and from school. The applicant school and applicant organization must show a desire to make the improvements and work with the SC SRTS Resource Center to improve the safety of walking and bicycling children as well as to encourage more walking and bicycling. Document any existing pedestrian and bicycle problems and supplement your application with any documentation (i.e. Travel plans, walk audits).

Selection criteria include: school partnerships, current travel patterns of students, potential for more students to walk or bicycle to school, existing busing patterns, the existing barriers (both physical and perceived), crash data, existing interest and commitment to SRTS, involvement in activities that promote bicycling, walking and rolling to school, and the ability to interpret the comprehensive SRTS program at a local level.

XV. Application Review

A Selection Team will review applications. The Selection Team may consist of representatives from SCDOT, the SC Department of Education, the Federal Highway Administration, the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control and the SC Department of Public Safety. Multiple individuals will review each application.

XVI. Applicant Interviews

The applications will be narrowed down and interviews will be conducted once the finalists are notified. A representative of the applicant school and a representative of the applicant organization must be present.

XVII. Contract Agreement

Once the funded programs are announced, a contract agreement between the awardee and SCDOT will be drawn up. This agreement will be signed by the applicant organization as well as the Applicant School's governing district or governing body. Agreements will be modified for the purposes of each specific school. We encourage you to read this agreement carefully.

NOTE: *The application and its accompanying documents may be revised for future application cycles.*

XVIII. Application Checklist

- The applicant organization and applicant school meet all eligibility requirements.
- The applicant understands the obligations of a selected program. The agreement generally outlines the obligations of the selected school and/or organization.
- The applicant has secured the partnership of an appropriate applicant organization. *Applicant is encouraged to work with their local MPO/COG.*
- The applicant has secured the support certification with a signature of the principal of the applicant school.
- The applicant has provided certification that the school board governing the school in question is aware and supports the application for Safe Routes to School funding.
- A location map with 1.5-mile radius of school clearly marked is included. *All documents should be no larger than 11"x17" (tabloid)*
- Photographs of existing infrastructure conditions and student interaction with those conditions are included and clearly labeled.
- Documentation showing local support (letters, etc.) of partners are included.
- The applicant has identified possibilities for leveraging funds (e.g. Private funds, other grants, local tax dollars, etc.). *Optional but highly encouraged.*
- **All** questions have been answered completely and thoroughly.
- All support documents have been labeled and attached. *All documents should be no larger than 11"x17" (tabloid).*
- Original Application section (do not include the Guidelines section) and all supporting documents plus 7 photo copies of entire application are organized in a 3-ring binder (any size) with dividers separating each copy. A cover page is included as page one of each copy.
- One digital copy of the entire application is included on a clearly labeled compact disc (CD) and attached to the binder.
- **Application is postmarked or hand-delivered by May 16, 2014 to:**

**Safe Routes to School Program
SC Department of Transportation
Room 217
Post Office Box 191
Columbia, SC 29202-0191**

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL 2014 APPLICATION

COVER PAGE

Applicant School Name*

Street Address

City, Zip Code

School District

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

SECTION 1 Applicant Information

1.A Applicant

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Applicant Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

1.B School Information

School _____

School Principal _____

Principal Signature (X) _____ Date _____

School Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ County _____

School Grades _____ (ex. K-5 or 6-8)

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

School District _____ Zip _____

Superintendent of School District _____

Signature (X) _____ Date _____

1.C Applicant Organization

The applicant organization is aware and understands that SCDOT will administer and oversee the project. The applicant organization will assume all responsibilities and liabilities for the improvements and will also assume the maintenance responsibilities of these improvements (assuming that the infrastructure improvements aren't on SCDOT's ROW).

Applicant Organization _____

Contact _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Signature (X) _____ Date _____

1.D Location Map

Please attach a location map of the school with a 1.5 mile radius clearly marked around the school. No other manipulation should be made to the map. (i.e. No suggested improvements on this map, please.) Attach an aerial photograph when available. Documents should be no larger than 11" by 17" (tabloid.)

SECTION 2

2.A School Partnerships

Please provide a list of contacts at various partner organizations and government bodies. Refer to the lists provided on the SRTS web site: <http://www.scdot.org/getting/saferoutes.aspx>. Click on Materials and Resources tab. Contact the organizations and government bodies and provide letters of support for the Safe Routes to School Applicant. *Required partners

*City, Town, or County Administrator city/town/county _____

Administrator's name _____ phone _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

*Local Law Enforcement _____ phone _____

Contact _____ Title _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) _____ phone _____

Contact _____ Title _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

Council of Government (COG) _____ phone _____

Contact _____ Title _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

SCDOT District _____ District Engineering Administrator _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

Other _____ phone _____

Contact _____ Title _____

Is a letter supporting Safe Routes to School at the applicant school included from this partner?

circle one YES NO

2.B Leveraging funds

Explain any opportunities to leverage funds. *Reminder: Federal funds (including Safe Routes to School funds) **may not** be used to match other federal program funds (i.e. Transportation Enhancement Grant Funds)* SRTS Funds may be used in addition to the 80% funds with a 20% match made to the other funds. **No match is required for SRTS Funds.** We encourage organizations, schools, and municipalities to work with each other to determine the availability of additional funds and the priorities of the community. Indicate dollar amounts to be leveraged and attach any documentation supporting the opportunity, how SRTS Funds will be utilized in conjunction with those other funds, and letters of commitment. *Label all attachments for this section **2.B***

2.C Disadvantaged Community

Is this a Title I School?

circle one YES NO

If yes, please explain briefly.

SECTION 3

3.A Population Data

Total Student Population _____

Number of students that live within a 1.5 miles of the school _____

3.B Travel Data

Please provide the below information for the applicant school.

Here are simple instructions for obtaining the information:

- Please conduct these counts **on any one day from Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday of an assigned week.**
- **Please do not conduct these counts on Mondays, Fridays,** or special event days such as
- Teachers should conduct this exercise in classrooms. Then compile the totals in the chart below.
- Before asking your student to raise their hands to indicate the one answer that is correct for them, read through all-potential answers so they will know what the choices are.
- Ask your students as a group the question **“How did you arrive at school today?”**
- Read each answer and record the number of students that raised their hands for each.
- **Place just one character or number in each box.**
- Follow the same procedure for the question **“How do you plan to leave for home after school?”**
- For best results conduct this count on days with favorable weather conditions (i.e. pleasant days for walking and or cycling).

Step 1. Fill in the number of students in school for the day data is obtained			Step 2. Ask students “How did you arrive at school today?” and “How do you plan to leave for home after school?” (record number for each answer)						
# of Students (in school when count made)	WALK	BIKE	SCHOOL BUS	FAMILY VEHICLE (only with children from your household)	CARPOOL (riding with children from another household)	TRANSIT (city/bus)	DAY CARE BUS/VAN	OTHER (Skate-board, scooter, inline skates, etc.)	
AM									
PM									

What percentage of the # of students walk, cycle, or take another form of non-motorized transportation

AM

PM

(To determine percentage for each AM and PM add “walk” column, “Bike” column, and “Other” column then divide by “# of students” column and multiply by 100.)

3.C Potential Participation

What percentage of students at the applicant school can and will potentially walk and/or bicycle if improvements and programming are implemented? Show evidence of parental and school support for improvements and commitment to participate and encourage behaviors. Label documents **3.C**

Percentage of total school population who will potentially walk and/or bicycle AFTER SRTS improvements are implemented? %

SECTION 4
Barriers

4.A Hazardous Busing

South Carolina law dictates that children living within 1.5 miles of a school are not guaranteed transportation. These students must find their own mode of transportation unless conditions are deemed hazardous. This may include blighted areas, traffic-related hazards, or impassible obstacles such as high traffic roads or bodies of water.

Is there a need or demand for students or more students to be bused within 1.5 miles?

circle one YES NO

Why (if at all) are students bused within 1.5 miles of the Applicant School? Explain in detail and give specific reference points, obstacles, and conditions.

4.B Physical Barriers

What physical conditions exist that prevent students from walking or bicycling to school?

Attach documentation to support the information (e.g. surveys, speed limits, crime data, environmental factors, articles, photographs, lack of facilities, etc.) *Label each document 4.B.*

4.C Local Barriers

Do local ordinances exist that would present barriers to SRTS? (e.g. allowing cars to park on sidewalks)

Circle one YES NO

List and describe any ordinances. *Label documents* **4.C**

4.D Bicycle/Pedestrian Youth Crashes

Have any walking or cycling children been injured or killed in crashes involving vehicles within a 1.5 mile radius of the applicant school within the last five years?

Circle one YES NO

If yes, please explain briefly. Label any supporting documents **4.D**

4.E Perceived Barriers

What perceptions and attitudes exist that prevent students from walking or bicycling to school? These may include parental concerns, student attitudes, school liability, distance perceptions, etc. You may attach articles, letters, photographs, and other documentation to support your conclusions. A survey is available online at www.saferoutesinfo.org that may help in collecting this data. Please do not attach all surveys. Instead include highlights and trends. *Label supporting documents* **4.E**

SECTION 5

Exhibit existing interest

5.A Local Safe Routes to School Committee

Have you formed a Safe Routes to School local committee? Safe Routes to School Committees may consist of, but is not limited to, educators, school officials, parents, local law enforcement, environmental and health professionals, advocates, local engineers and local policy-makers.

Circle one Yes No

Please name committed members:

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Affiliation: _____

5.B Existing Activities

Describe any existing programs or activities that currently support or encourage walking or bicycling to school, limited use of motorized vehicles, and physical activity. Examples include walking or bicycling clubs, mileage clubs, "morning mile" exercises, bicycle or pedestrian education, no idling policies or other green initiatives, teacher physical activity programs, etc. Please label supporting documents **5.B**.

5.C Walk to School Day

SC Walk to School Day and International Walk to School Day are annual events that bring awareness to children about walking and cycling to school. The first Wednesday in October is typically designated for International Walk to School Day. SC Walk to School Day is typically held the first Wednesday in March. Has this school ever participated in either/both Walk to School Day events?

Circle one YES NO

Were the students encouraged to walk *to* school, or was the event a "walk at school" event?

Circle one Walk TO School Walk AT School Both

Please state the year(s) that this school participated. _____

Was this event registered with the Walk to School Day web site: www.walktoschool.org?

Circle one YES NO

Briefly describe the event and activities involved.

SECTION 6 *15%*

A Comprehensive SRTS Plan

Briefly describe your ideal Safe Routes to School Plan for your school. What is your Safe Routes to School vision? List your desired projects and programs using the five E's: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. How do the projects and programs address current conditions and concerns? List your desired outcomes. You may attach supporting documents (e.g. maps, school route plans, curriculum, programming, etc.) Label them **Section 6**.

Please note that we will use this information to determine comprehension of SRTS. A definitive program will be determined only after selection, careful consideration and planning by the local Safe Routes to School committee, and approval from SCDOT and the SC Department of Education.

SECTION 7

Signature

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information submitted in this application and in the documents attached is accurate. I acknowledge that this application does not constitute a contract. *Also, by my signature I provide SCDOT and Safe Routes to School partners with permission to re-print information and images in this document for promotional and educational purposes.*

Applicant Signature (X) _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Title _____ Organization _____