

# SRTS District-Wide Programs and Principles

The term “safe routes,” when capitalized as Safe Routes to School or SRTS, refers to the overall program which is supported by the district in concert with many partners. Though currently funded by a SRTS grant from NDOT of federal funds, the program is not synonymous with that grant since many other types of financial and in-kind support contribute to the program. When uncapitalized, it refers to the right of every student to have available safe, human-powered modes of transportation to and from school, and to on-the-ground routes that support that right. The fulfillment of this right is not the responsibility of any particular entity, but of the community as a whole.

## **Overall**

- The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program will serve as a key strategy for implementing any changes in walking/busing distance, bus routes, school schedules, and school sites.
- Recognizing that portions of the SRTS program are a core element of the district’s education, health and safety responsibilities, the program will be staffed with district or partner personnel at a level necessary to fulfill these core functions, regardless of grant funding.
- The SRTS program will identify and enact synergies with other school efforts such as health and nutrition education, and community efforts such as making Carson City a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community, Bike to Work Day, and after-school and school-break programs for children.
- The district and its partners will always seek funding from the federally funded, NDOT-administered SRTS grant program, and from other sources as appropriate to enhance or extend the basic program.
- Engineering and other elements of the SRTS program will be prioritized no less than every school year, to meet district-wide and school-site concerns, changing conditions, data on student behavior and parental concerns, and enforcement and accident records. A district-wide SRTS Advisory Committee will be established to support prioritization and to provide a forum for district staff, parents, partners, and community members to have input.
- Develop and update existing conditions reports and recommendations for each school site. The reports will include infrastructure, observations of student and parent behavior, and documentation of specific safety hazards, and will be aligned with or included in existing district safety documents and site traffic plans. Complete a comprehensive model document for Bordewich Bray by February 2009, for Al Seeliger and Fremont by June 2009, and for all other schools by June 2010. Interim, possibly non-comprehensive reports and recommendations will be developed for all school sites as soon as possible, in order to support action and grant applications.
- While only elementary and middle schools are eligible under the NDOT-administered SRTS program, the district and partners will seek other funding to extend the program to high school level.

## **Engineering**

- The Carson City School District and Carson City Public Works will work in close cooperation to identify, design, fund and implement appropriate engineering and infrastructure in order to ensure safe routes to school.
- A district-wide standard for curb colors, signing, and practices will be established no later than May 2009. Full implementation of this standard will occur no later than the beginning of the school year in 2011. Major changes to colors, signing and practices will be implemented during

summer breaks, with education beginning at the end of the previous school year and continuing through back-to-school night at each site, and enforcement starting after this time. The exception to this summer break implementation will be the painting of red curbs to show the legal restriction of no parking within 20 feet of crosswalks and 5 feet of driveways. Though curb painting is not legally required for enforcement, the safety benefit of being explicit about these restrictions on streets immediately adjacent to schools justifies the painting as soon as possible.

- Consider implementation of timed flashing lights in each school zone rather than posted time periods, in order to increase the prominence of and compliance with school zones, while not unnecessarily restricting traffic at times that do not affect school safety.
- Bring all school zone and school crosswalk signing into compliance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) by the beginning of the 2010 school year. By the beginning of the 2009 school year, replace all yellow five-sided school pedestrian signs (MUTCD S1-1) with florescent yellow-green signs at all mid-block crosswalks staffed by crossing guards.
- Pilot in 2008-2009 the installation of in-street delineators (MUTCD R1-6) at one crosswalk location in the district.
- Consider the placement of dual-language (English/Spanish) signs at all school sites, for on-campus signs that communicate safety information and practices to parents.
- Implement infrastructure changes, practices, signing and education that prevent the intrusion of other vehicles into bus lanes or zones during arrival and departure times. Make sure that such changes do not require school staff or crossing guards in order to carry them out, beyond a possible initial period of education.

## **Education**

- Though students will not be discouraged from any mode of human-powered transportation at any grade level, they will not be actively encouraged to walk until they have received age-appropriate pedestrian safety education in the second grade, nor actively encouraged to bicycle until they have received age-appropriate bicycle safety education in the third grade. Though skateboarders and scooter users are technically pedestrians, the safe use of these modes requires similar physical skills and awareness to bicycling, so will be included at the third grade level.
- While the bicycling safety program offered to all students in grades 3–5 is a separately developed and already successful program, its objectives are completely in alignment with those of the SRTS program, and therefore the SRTS program will support in every way possible the bicycle safety program. Such support may include the purchase of safety equipment, and the initial and continuing training of PE specialists in Nevada- or nationally-recognized safety education programs.
- Safety, health and transportation education will occur in all classrooms, integrated into all subject areas in an age-appropriate manner, and will not be solely the responsibility of physical education classes.
- Seek funding to train key people in the SRTS program, which will include a coordinator, district safety, law enforcement and transportation staff, all PE specialists at the elementary level and at least one PE teacher per school at the middle school level, other key staff at each school, one or more Parent-Teacher Organization volunteers at each school site, key personnel from partner agencies and organizations, and at least one individual from the Carson City Sheriff's Office.
- Develop a brochure or flier on the SRTS program and related health, safety and transportation issues that can be used district-wide by all schools, recognizing that each school site may also have

school-site brochures or fliers for communicating with parents, drivers and students at that particular site, addressing practices at that particular site. Make all parent communication available in English and Spanish.

- Establish and maintain a website to provide SRTS information and news to school staff, parents, students and the community.
- Create and distribute a periodic newsletter, via email, to all school staff.

### **Encouragement**

- Walk to School Days (and bike, scooter and skateboard) will be held district-wide on the international day, the second Wednesday in October, and at least three additional good-weather months of the year. Obtain media coverage of these special days.
- Each elementary school will have some sort of lunch recess or morning recess walking program that occurs no less than once a week in good-weather months, but may occur as often as every day throughout the school year, with the frequency determined by each school site based on the staff and volunteer resources they have available. These at-school programs will offer the opportunity for students who use school bus transportation, and whose parents refuse to allow them to walk and bicycle, to still receive the health benefits of regular exercise that are in alignment with the goals of the SRTS program. Grant funding will be sought for paid extra hours stipends for school staff to support these programs.
- Commonly used incentives for Walk to School Days and walking programs will be purchased with available grant funds and shared with all elementary schools.
- Pilot the development of a “safe routes” map for one elementary school for use no later than the beginning of the 2009 school year, and add at least one school each additional year until all schools are covered. Consider developing a sidewalk marking such as a unique arrow which provides on-the-ground confirmation of safe routes. If indicated by the development of these maps, add to or change the locations of school crossing guards so as to staff crosswalks which have a high volume and/or are particularly hazardous.

### **Enforcement**

- Professional and trained school crossing guards are recognized as a key component of the Safe Routes to School program. Crossing guards will be trained at beginning of employment and each year, in a way compliant with Nevada law or guidelines (which do not exist yet) or national law, guidelines or best practices, and will be supplied with MUTCD compliant safety equipment. Training and safety equipment may be supplied by the SRTS program.
- A district-wide standard for on-campus speed limits will be established, signed and enforced, no later than the beginning of the school year in 2011.
- Ensure that there is a pool of speed indicator signs that can be used temporarily in any school zone and on campus, where parents, school staff, crossing guards or law enforcement officers have reported speeding.

### **Evaluation**

- Complete student arrival and departure tally sheets for every elementary and middle school student at target grades levels, near the beginning and end of each school year. Tentatively, these target grade levels will be second, third, fifth and seventh.

- Use parent surveys as appropriate to each school site to determine parent concerns and information that can be used to implement or improve the SRTS program.
- Make tally and survey results publicly available and provide results to the SRTS Advisory Committee on a timely basis.