

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program

Statute: [§ 85.029](#) **Admin. Rule:** N/A

Program objective:

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement that promotes walking and bicycling to school. In 2005, the United States Congress signed into law a federally funded Safe Routes to School Program, allocating money to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The goals of the program are:

- To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school.
- 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.
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Program eligibility:

Projects must meet federal and state requirements. Local governments with taxing authority, state agencies and Indian tribes are eligible for funding. Projects costing \$25,000 or more that involve construction are eligible for funding, as are non-construction projects costing \$10,000 or more. Additionally, the project must be usable when it is completed and not staged so that additional money is needed to make it a useful project. A project sponsor must pay for a project and then seek reimbursement for the project from the state. Federal funds will provide up to 100% of project costs.

Under SAFETEA-LU, the Safe Routes to School projects must:

- Promote and/or improve conditions for walking and/or bicycling to school.
- Focus on children in Kindergarten through eighth grade (Grades K – 8).
- Be located within a two-mile radius of any elementary or middle school (Grades K – 8).
- Be open to both public and private schools.

Program history:

In August of 2000, the U.S. Congress funded two pilot SRTS projects through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Within a year of the launch of the pilot projects, many other grassroots SRTS efforts began throughout the United States. Success with the pilot projects generated interest in a federally funded national program. Momentum for a national SRTS program in the United States continued to build as several states developed their own programs. In August 2005, federal transportation legislation devoted \$612 million for the National Safe Routes to School Program from 2005 through 2009.

Application cycle:

Projects are solicited in even numbered years with applications usually available in January and due in April. The 2010 project solicitation was delayed and applications become available in June with applications due in July. Two years of funding is made available during the program cycle. Funding for the SRTS program is on a competitive basis with a committee ranking projects and making funding recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Secretary.

Amount in the 2009-11 Wisconsin Budget: \$3,230,100 per year.

WisDOT Program Contact for Safe Routes to School Program

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