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Missouri

Safe Routes to School State Network Progress Report

Overview

[The State Network Project](#) brings together state leaders to remove barriers to walking and bicycling to and from school. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) State Networks in nineteen states and DC are working to increase physical activity, ensure that federal SRTS funds are spent on quality projects, work to leverage additional state resources for SRTS initiatives, and advocate to remove barriers to walking and bicycling to schools through [policy initiatives](#).

Organizer

Each contracted state organizer manages the daily operations of the State Network Project for the [SRTS National Partnership](#) and works with partners from around the state who are involved in health, equity, transportation, youth, environmental and smart growth issues to develop and implement an action plan.

The Missouri State Organizer is Brent Hugh, Executive Director of the Missouri Foundation for Bicycling and Walking, (816) 695-6736, missouri@saferoutespartnership.org.

Honorary Chair of the Missouri Network is former mayor of Columbia and nationally recognized SRTS champion Darwin Hindman, (573) 449-5227, dhindman@socket.net. State Network Co-Chairs are Sarah Shipley of the Missouri Foundation for Bicycling and Walking, (202) 577-7141, sarah_shipley20024@yahoo.com, and Eric Bunch of the Missouri Foundation for Bicycling and Walking, (573) 701-2492, eric.bunch@mobikefed.org.

How To Get Involved

Each state network holds a telephone meeting every month, and network action teams work to make changes to the policies listed below. If you are interested in participating in the Missouri Network, or want more information about it, contact the state network organizer listed above.

Partners

The Missouri Network includes approximately 75 organizations and agencies, all of which are working on SRTS state programs and policies. For a detailed list, go to: <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/missouri>.

Achievements

At the heart of the State Network effort is policy change—specifically working to remove policy barriers to walking and bicycling to schools by implementing complete streets, changing statewide school siting and other policies, and by implementing legislation that would result in funding or policy changes.

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Achievements List

Below is a selected list of the major achievements of the Missouri Network from January 2010. For more information about these achievements, please contact the state network organizer.

- **Building the Missouri SRTS Network:** Missouri has built a strong Network with over 75 organizations, agencies, and elected officials represented. We have 12 active Action Teams, holding monthly meetings to move forward their Action Items. Thanks to generous matching grants from the Missouri Foundation for Health, the Incarnate Word Foundation, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Region VII Office of Minority Health together with a highly qualified volunteer staff members, we have been able to bring out three more staff members, each working about ¼ time, which allows us to more than double the amount of staff time dedicated to the Network. Starting this summer, three MoDOT SRTS grants will allow the Network to dedicate even more staff time to promoting SRTS statewide and helping communities get ready to apply for SRTS funding.
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Curriculum & Large Scale Instruction:** Applied for and received a MoDOT SRTS grant to create a pilot program to take an intensive three-hour bicycle skills education class and program to encourage more students to bicycle to school, to thousands of Missouri students.
- **School Bus Funding/Transportation Funding Formulas:** Requested and received a detailed analysis of Missouri Transportation Funding Formulas from Sarah Zimmerman of NPLAN. The analysis gives four specific policy changes the Missouri Network can work to implement, which will fundamentally change the culture of school transportation to encourage and favor more bicycling and walking, rather than disincentivizing bicycling and walking, as current policies do. The Network plans to create materials and introduce these ideas into the state's public policy discussion about school transportation funding in Missouri and work with a few key school districts to create pilot projects to showcase the policy changes in the real world.
- **SRTS Communications:** The Network has worked to create lively monthly meetings with special guests sharing their expertise on topics of interest. The Network has created a Facebook page, Twitter account, monthly email newsletter list, and has its own Safe Routes to School web site with regular news and updates at MoBikeFed.org/saferoutes.
- **MoDOT improves process:** John Schaefer of MoDOT, who has been a full SRTS Network partner, revised and greatly improved the SRTS grant application in the recent round of SRTS Non-infrastructure grants. MoDOT is working internally to improve its process and help communities that receive grants be able to complete them successfully.
- **MoDOT working with Network to create strategic plan and framework for SRTS Noninfrastructure funding:** A Network Action Team headed by MoDOT SRTS Coordinator John Schaefer is creating guidelines for more efficient and effective use of Missouri's SRTS funding. The first tangible result will be a framework for efficiently creating and funding SRTS programs to cover the entire state or large regions. This will allow Missouri to more easily continue and expand some of its most successful SRTS programs like Walking School Bus Training Seminars and SRTS Minigrants. It will allow regional programs that will reach underserved students in both rural small towns and underserved areas in the large metropolitan areas.

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- **Media Coverage:** Creation of the Missouri SRTS Network was covered in Kansas City infoZine, StLouisMo.com, the Kansas City MetroGreen newsletter, PedNet's newsletter, TrailNet Health, Active & Vibrant Communities blog, MoBikeFed News, the St Joseph News-Press, MoDOT's Express Lane newsletter, the MoDOT Minute video news report, and MoDOT's social media sites.
- **Complete Streets Resolution in Missouri House:** The creation of the Missouri Safe Routes to School Network is included in Complete Streets Resolution, HCR 67, sponsored by Rep. Mike Sutherland of Warrenton and co-sponsored by 21 other representatives, as one of the supporting reasons for including Complete Streets policies at the municipal, metropolitan, statewide, and national levels. HCR 67 passed the Missouri House on the final day of the legislation session.

Missouri Network Priority Policy Progress:

1. **Complete Streets Policies:** Missouri has made considerable progress in moving Complete Streets forward. Four cities and two MPOs have adopted Complete Streets policies. The St Louis City Council is set to adopt a Complete Streets policy this week and the Kansas City MPO has included strong Complete Streets language in its draft long range plan that will be adopted this summer. The full Missouri House passed a Complete Streets Resolution in May. MoDOT adopted a new and greatly improved pedestrian policy in January and is currently working to improve its bicycle policies. MU Extension is hiring a planner to working toward a statewide complete streets policy. Cindy Deblauw, who is hiring the person has updated our action item goals and tasks to match MU Extension's plan and timeline.
2. **SRTS Champions:** The network has successfully finished the action plan and devised the idea to include Champions as an action item. Cindy Mense of Trailnet provided a presentation on the regular SRTS Network monthly call that included information about TrailNet's work to foster local champions in schools in the St Louis area. Action Team members are working to create a pilot program in one school district to integrate SRTS and sign-up for Walking School Buses into the district's student registration process.
3. **Bicycle/Pedestrian Curriculum & Large Scale Instruction:** Following the top item in our Action Plan for this item, the Missouri Foundation for Bicycling & Walking applied for and MoDOT has awarded a grant for a mass bicycle skills instruction program that will reach over 1000 middle schoolers with three hours of intensive, on-bike instruction. This will be a pilot program with the aim of replicating the program across the state.
4. **SRTS Statewide Non-Infrastructure Plan & Application Guidelines:** Meetings have taken place with John Schaefer, MoDOT SRTS Coordinator, and other stakeholders; they have developed the main goals and timeline for creating a structure within MoDOT for handling large-scale statewide or region-wide non-infrastructure projects.
5. **SRTS Mass Communication:** MoDOT SRTS grants have been awarded to create a website, e-newsletter, print newsletter, SRTS guidebook, and promoting Walk/Bike to School Days statewide. However we are still waiting on notice to proceed. Press releases have been started, facebook groups, website framework are in place.

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6. **Underserved Communities & Personal Safety:** The Action Team has worked on refining goals and researching the policy. A small sample of Missouri school children survey was completed to determine the need for SRTS.
7. **School Wellness Policies:** Conversations between team members has been strong. Another group is working to update Missouri's wellness policy; our group is set to improve SRTS portions of the policy when that happens. Group has set a monthly meeting time.
8. **Educate key policy makers and groups about SRTS:** Working to create powerpoint presentations and printed materials to summarize each Action Item. Working to incorporate Michelle Obama's Let's Move Campaign into the materials.
9. **Joint Use Agreements & School Siting Policies:** Network member Amy Eyler has located a grad student who will research these items and move this Action Item forward this summer.
10. **School Bus Funding/Transportation Funding Formulas:** Sarah Zimmerman from NPLAN provided a detailed description and analysis of Missouri's school bus funding policy. Her research was compiled into a paper and she summarized the findings in a conference call with Missouri Network partners. Next step is putting the findings into the form of a white paper and one-page summary sheets, then working to create pilot projects to prove the value of the policy changes.

Missouri Network Secondary Policy Progress:

1. **SRTS Data Gathering & Analysis:** Missouri's Department of Health & Senior Services may be willing put a question regarding Bicycling/Walking or SRTS in the MO DHSS periodic surveys of Missourian's health. This would generate the first solid, statewide data on SRTS in Missouri and track that data over time. St Louis firm Transtria has offered to help with data gathering and/or analysis of SRTS-related data.
2. **Strategic Highway Safety Plans:** SRTS Network partner Sheree Galnor is on the MO State Highway Safety Committee. Policy research has been completed.

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