

Safe Routes to School Resolution

John Strange PTO / Fairfield-Sylvan Neighborhood Association Committee

4/29/11

Current Committee Members:

John Strange Elementary School PTO

Jen Thomas, 2011-2012 Co-President
Anne Petersen, Parent
Carey Hamilton, Parent
Kathy Brown, 2011-2012 Co-President
Jennifer Beasley, Parent

Fairfield-Sylvan Neighborhood Association

Tom Sturmer, Board Member, Parent
Ted Hudnut, Member, Parent

Resolution:

The John Strange School PTO/ Fairfield-Sylvan Neighborhood Association Committee:

1. Supports the development of a walk/bike to school program at John Strange Elementary School.
2. Recommends that the School and School District sponsor a Safe Routes to School Application, due to the Indianapolis MPO by May 23, 2011.
3. Agrees to prepare the application for review and signature by the School and/or District Administration.
4. Agrees to serve as the Safe Routes to School Committee for the School in the implementation of the Walk/Bike to School Program.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program highlights:

1. Program highlights are detailed on the attached March 10, 2011 Workshop handout.
2. After speaking with the Indiana SRTS Coordinator, it is recommended that the School apply for a non-infrastructure grant application first, in order to be ready for a potential future infrastructure grant application in the future.
3. This program and grant application will only be successful if it is embraced by the John Strange School staff and parent community. Public awareness and education activities will be conducted and paid for by a successful non-infrastructure grant application award.
4. Various benefits to the John Strange School community are listed on the attachment.

Why it is important to embrace a Walk and Bike to School Program at John Strange School:

1. Child obesity rates and other health related problems are becoming epidemic in the US. Healthy students miss less school time and perform better.
2. Integrating active lifestyle programs into the school curriculum is believed to result in better student performance and self-esteem.
3. *Per the MSDWT, approximately 493 students who attend John Strange Elementary School live within a 2-mile radius. Approximately 236 students live within a 1-mile radius.*
4. Walk/Bike to School programs can be integrated into the IB school curriculum and become a positive component. This has been done successfully throughout the US and the world.
5. All children, regardless of whether they can walk or bike to school, can benefit from bicycle safety education and training.
6. Disadvantaged students who may not own a bicycle maybe eligible for free giveaways (bicycle equipment) funded by the SRTS program.
7. Fewer drop-off and pickup line motor vehicles will result.
 - a. This will reduce the harmful effect of poor air quality and potential health related impacts to staff members who attend the drop-off/ pick-up lines on a frequent basis.
 - b. This will help address the traffic back-ups onto Olney Street which is a concern to the residents of Olney Street.
 - c. This will reduce the number of vehicles parking on and off school property during special event nights, which is also a concern to the nearby residents.
8. Both off-site and on-site safety issues can be identified and addressed as part of follow-up infrastructure grant application.
9. The Fairfields-Sylvan Neighborhood Association can work with the City to address some of-site infrastructure issues and help to develop safe routes to school for the entire community.
10. The school and neighborhood community benefits from the increased social interactions due to walking and biking children and parents.
11. An enhanced relationship between the School community and the nearby residents should result from this program.
12. A Walk/Bike to School Program can be part of a comprehensive “Green Schools” initiative at John Strange School and throughout the District.

We propose that the John Strange School and Washington Township School District Administrations decide if they will sponsor a Safe Routes to School federal aid grant application by Friday, May 6, so that the Committee has time to prepare and submit a grant application by May 23rd.

INDIANA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

Walk & Bike to School Workgroup Workshop

March 10, 2011

Purpose of Safe Routes to School Program

1. **To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;**
2. **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. **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 primary and middle schools (Grades K-8).**

Potential Benefits

- Increased pedestrian and bicycle safety
- More children walking and biking to schools
- Increased physical activity & improved health
- Improved children's focus at school
- Reduced vehicle congestion around schools
- Improved air quality & reduced fuel use
- Enhanced accessibility within the community
- Improved community partnerships
- Socialization benefits for children and parents

Infrastructure Projects

- Involve construction work
- Eligible costs include project design, right-of-way purchases and construction or installation
- Projects must be located within 2 miles of school
- Projects must benefit K - 8th grade school trips
- Cost between \$5,000 and \$250,000

Non-Infrastructure Activities

- No construction or right-of-way purchases
- Education & training
- Encouragement activities
- Enforcement actions
- Safety Evaluations
- Activities must benefit K - 8th grade school trips
- No 2-mile limit
- Costs between \$5,000 and \$75,000

Examples of Non-Infrastructure Activities

- Public awareness & outreach
- Route safety evaluations
- Comprehensive safe routes plans & school travel plans
- Walking & biking safety training, bicycle rodeos, education materials
- Enforcement of safe driving within 2 miles of school
- "Walking school buses", "bike trains", various participation techniques & limited incentives
- Funding to train & equip crossing guards

Eligible Applicants: Cities, towns, counties, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), schools and school districts. Non-profits may partner with eligible applicants.

Next Application Period: April 1, 2011 through May 27, 2011

Application Forms and Instructions: Available March 18th for download and printing on-line at <http://saferoutes.in.gov>

Indiana Safe Routes to School Program

- Established in 2006 based on the federal SRTS program
- All evaluations conducted by the 8-member multi-disciplinary SRTS Advisory Committee who makes recommendations to the INDOT Commissioner for final selection
- Completed five application cycles
- Awarded over \$13.6 million to 217 schools, including \$3.4 million awarded to 39 schools in 2010
- Out of 220 SRTS applications in five years, 86 were selected for funding, including 21 in 2010
- All SRTS projects and activities are treated as local projects by INDOT
- 100% federal funds with no local match and all payments are reimbursements

Indiana SRTS Priorities

- Well developed infrastructure or non-infrastructure proposals that place a clear priority on increasing walking and biking to schools and decreasing parents driving students to school
- Applications based on school travel plans, comprehensive safe routes plans, adopted transportation or bicycle-pedestrian plans
- Proposals exhibiting multi-disciplinary review and input from local safe routes committees and clear local support
- Infrastructure proposals that demonstrate linkage to existing walking, biking and trail facilities and consideration of secondary neighborhood and non-student benefits
- Increasing emphasis on student health benefits

General Recommendations

- Form a local committee to guide and promote SRTS
- Conduct SRTS planning to support infrastructure projects
- For most infrastructure projects, city, town or county should be official applicant
- Demonstrate a clear commitment to walking and bicycling in general
- Review & evaluate current school policies regarding walking and biking to school
- Coordinate with local law enforcement, local health community and municipal officials
- Plan for parent and student surveys and coordinate with target schools in advance
- Be creative and build enthusiasm

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