



Hello, and welcome to Virginia Safe Routes to School (SRTS)! This program has been active since 2007 when we provided grant funding to eight school systems. That number has grown annually, and in 2019 we are providing funds to eighteen school divisions, helping them establish programs that encourage children in elementary and middle schools to lead healthy, active lifestyles by walking and biking to school.



Today, with increased traffic, busy schedules for children and parents, and the perception of danger, fewer and fewer students are walking or biking to school. The goal of the Safe Routes to School program is to reverse that trend by:

- educating school aged children in safe walking and biking practices
- encouraging children to use an active mode of transportation
- enforcing traffic laws on the streets surrounding schools to provide a safe environment for walking and biking
- providing engineering improvements around the schools such as crosswalks, signage and sidewalks
- and evaluating the effectiveness of the program activities and engineering improvements.

Undoubtedly, your school system can benefit from what the SRTS program has to offer. Our website, VirginiaDOT.org/SafeRoutes, is full of information that will help you get you started, including grant and project opportunities, events, and the latest SRTS news.

On the website, you'll find the Virginia SRTS Starter Kit, with tip sheets and guides to help plan events like Walk and Bike to School Day, and template flyers, posters, and other outreach materials to promote Safe Routes to School beyond the classroom. And our Resource Library has materials to help you develop your SRTS program, such as collecting student travel tallies, conducting walk audits, and incorporating SRTS throughout the school year.

Virginia SRTS also provides grants to school divisions for infrastructure, programming, Quick Start mini-grants for that one-time event or purchase, and Walkabout mini-grants, where we will provide you with a walking and biking assessment of the area around a school to better inform you of the obstacles that may exist that prevent students from walking and biking to school.

Even if you don't apply for one of our grant opportunities, you can still find a lot of useful information that you could apply in some degree to your schools. So let's get started!

Sincerely,

Katherine Graham

Katherine Graham
Virginia Safe Routes to School Coordinator