VDOT Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisor's Handbook

Last Updated August 2021

Contents

VDOT Safe Routes to School Program

The VDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program builds upon the federal SRTS program established with the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The goal of the program is to:

- Improve safety along school walking and bicycling routes.

- Enable and encourage more children (and their parents!) of all abilities to walk and bike to school.

VDOT recognizes that sustainable Safe Routes to School programs are the result of grassroots efforts. To support local efforts, VDOT has committed to the following objectives:

- Enable participation on a variety of levels

- Make program adaptable to participants in urban, suburban, and rural communities

- Promote comprehensive local SRTS programs and activities

- Promote sustainable local programs

- Maximize impact of available funds

SAFETEA-LU provided states with funding for both non-infrastructure and infrastructure programs and projects. VDOT has awarded all infrastructure funding from SAFETEA-LU for capital projects and continues to support broader program activities with its allotment of non-infrastructure funds. For example, the Virginia SRTS program has funded local SRTS coordinators since 2013. Until the 2016-2017 school year, grant awards provided 100% of the cost for these coordinators. Beginning in fall 2016, local SRTS coordinator grants required a 20% match for those receiving a fourth award. The Virginia SRTS program also uses non-infrastructure funds for $1,000 QuickStart Mini-grants and Walkabout Mini-grants in support of local SRTS programs. A link to more details is provided below under *Helpful Materials and Resources.*

In 2012, the passage of the transportation bill called Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) combined SRTS with several other programs to create the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) in December 2015 largely maintains TAP structures and funding shares. Projects proposed under TAP compete with one another for funding; however, SRTS project applications are eligible for additional points when all projects are scored. TAP grants are awarded on a biennial cycle with applications typically due in the fall/winter timeframe. Check the VDOT Local Assistance Division website for details regarding the application schedule and grant requirements.

SRTS Program Goals

The SRTS goals are based on an **Equitable and Sustainable** Program which includes activities aimed at evaluating, institutionalizing, and building support for the program so it can continue from year to year. It also includes efforts to ensure that the program is equitable and takes proactive steps to reach out to and benefit all students regardless of their race, disability, financial situation or other disadvantage.

This foundation is supported by four pillars, or building blocks:

Safe Streets includes efforts to improve the physical infrastructure of streets within 1-2 miles of schools so they are safer places to walk and bike.

Welcoming Campuses includes crossing guard programs and arrival and dismissal procedures that support safe walking and biking. It also includes on-campus amenities such as dedicated bike parking or bike racks that serve walkers and bikers and make walking and biking to school feasible.

Safe Behaviors includes driver safety education, driver pledge programs, and pedestrian and bicycle safety and skills education. It also includes non-infrastructure efforts to address harassment, bullying, and other personal security concerns that are barriers to walking and biking to school.

Supportive Culture: This building block is dependent, to a large extent, on the other building blocks, Safe Streets, Welcoming Campuses, and Safe Behaviors. It includes efforts to encourage students to walk and bike to school more frequently with activities like the Walk to School Day in the fall and Bike to School Day in the spring, frequent walker programs, walking school buses, bike trains and similar efforts.

Key Players in the VDOT Local SRTS Coordinator Program

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)—VDOT provides funding and technical assistance to support local and community-wide Safe Routes to School programs, including funding for Local SRTS Coordinators.

Virginia State Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Katherine Graham—Katherine Graham is the Local SRTS Coordinator Program administrator and an employee of VDOT.

Local Technical Assistance Coordinators (LTACs)—Katherine Graham is supported by the LTACs, who serve as the primary points of contact for Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisors and Local SRTS Coordinators depending on where they are located in Virginia. The VDOT SRTS Program has divided the state in to three regions: Blue Ridge, Coastal, and Piedmont. A map of the regions is available on the program website: http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_contact_us.asp.

Local SRTS Coordinators –The program to fund Local SRTS coordinators initially focused on coordinators who worked within a school division; however, the program has since expanded to include Local SRTS Coordinators that work for other organizations and agencies, such as local governments, regional hospitals, and active transportation advocacy organizations. Regardless of their home organization, Local SRTS Coordinators have the same basic responsibilities.

Local Coordinator and Supervisor Responsibilities

Local Coordinator Responsibilities

The Local SRTS Coordinator recruits, encourages, and supports Safe Routes to School programs at the school division or municipal levels. Local SRTS Coordinators are expected to:

- Participate in monthly calls with the Virginia SRTS Coordinator, LTACs, and other Local SRTS Coordinators during the school year. These calls are used to provide information on upcoming events, activities, and funding opportunities. They also provide an opportunity for Local SRTS Coordinators to ask questions, learn each other's experience, and discuss new techniques and emerging issues related to SRTS.
- Submit monthly grant reports during the school year. These reports are reviewed by the LTACs and the Virginia SRTS Coordinator. They are used to verify progress toward fulfilling the grant agreement and identify topics for discussion during monthly calls. See *Monthly Grant Reporting* below for additional detail.
- Submit a Program Plan, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report. The Program Dashboard is used for all three of these reports and is filled out progressively throughout the school year, i.e., Program Plan section in the fall, Mid-Point Review section in the winter, Final Report section by the end of the grant period. These reports are intended as a planning tool for Local SRTS Coordinators as well as way to document their progress toward fulfilling the grant agreement. See *Program Planning Guide, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report* below for additional detail.
- Participate in two trainings. The trainings are typically held in the fall and winter. The fall training (September-October timeframe) is normally conducted via webinar and the winter training (January-February timeframe) is normally conducted as an in-person training.

Other typical duties and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to the following:

	Organize school division program or activity	Create materials for individual school use	Support individual school program or activity
Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day	•	•	•
Student Travel Tally Week	•	•	
Parent Surveys	•	•	
Safety education (pedestrian, bicyclists, motorist, personal safety)	•		•
Walk and Bike Audits	•	•	
Coordinate with local engineers and transportation officials on needed infrastructure improvements		•	•
Regular walking school buses and bicycle trains	•	•	
Stakeholder and volunteer participation	•	•	•
Safe Routes to School team	•	•	•
Information-sharing and networking	•		•
SRTS-supportive policies	•	•	•
Provide status of Safe Routes to School division-wide	•	•	

Supervisor Responsibilities

The Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisor is responsible for assisting the Local SRTS Coordinator by:

- Ensuring that coordinators fulfill the responsibilities outlined above.
- Reviewing and approving monthly grant reports (see *Monthly Grant Reporting*)
- Attending up to one monthly meeting or training session to discuss supervisor roles and responsibilities, if requested by program staff.
- Reviewing the Program Planning Guide, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report (see *Program Planning Guide, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report*)
- Overseeing the grant accounting and reimbursement process (see *Reimbursement Process)*, including reviewing and approving monthly invoices.
- Helping the Local SRTS Coordinator understand and navigate existing policies and practices that impact walking and bicycling to schools, e.g., school division and local government policies and practices.
- Helping to connect the Local SRTS Coordinator with people and organizations that can help implement SRTS, such as school principals, physical education teachers, PTAs, and local government or school division officials responsible for transportation.
- Endorsing the division- or municipal-wide SRTS program. Formal support from the Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisor will make it easier for the Local SRTS Coordinator to make contacts within the school division or municipal government as well as in individual schools.
- Supporting changes to school division or municipal government policies and procedures to advance the goals of SRTS. Tips and examples of policy changes that can be implemented at the school division level or provided in Making SRTS Happen at the School Division Level, a Learn it. Do it. Live It! resource posted on the Virginia SRTS Program website.

There are many other ways the Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisor can provide support. Local SRTS Coordinator Supervisors are encouraged to be more involved with SRTS in the division or municipality whenever possible.

Program Support Contact Information

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Katherine Graham	State SRTS Coordinator	804-786-4198	katherine.graham@vdot.virginia.gov
Wendy Phelps	Virginia SRTS Program Support Lead	301-927-1900 ext. 157	wendy@virginiasrts.org
Katie Heuser	Virginia SRTS Program LTAC-Blue Ridge Region	301-927-1900 ext. 165	katie@virginiasrts.org
Jim Elliott	Virginia SRTS Program LTAC—Piedmont Region	301-927-1900 ext. 121	jim@virginiasrts.org
Dan Reed	Virginia SRTS Program LTAC—Coastal Region	301-927-1900 ext. 143	dan@virginiasrts.org
Program Hotline		855-601-7787	info@virginiasrts.org

Local Coordinator and Supervisor Contact Information

Local coordinator and supervisor contact information is available on the Virginia SRTS coordinator website at: http://vasrts.org/content/contacts

Please contact info@virginiasrts.org if you need to make a revision to the contact information we have listed for you.

Local SRTS Coordinator Grant Funding Information

The funding period is for 12 months, during which the award amount is eligible to cover all necessary office expenses and local travel expenses, as well as the employer side of FICA and all other costs associated with the position, subject to the terms of the grant agreement. Expenses incurred prior to VDOT providing a formal Notice to Proceed to the employing agency will not be eligible for reimbursement. VDOT issues the Notice to Proceed after both parties execute the funding agreement.

The grant is provided on a reimbursement basis. **The sponsor must provide a log of the coordinator's hours and a statement showing that they were paid by the employing agency, with FICA included, with each reimbursement request – a copy of the pay stub is sufficient. They must also keep receipts/statements for all expenses for which they would like to be reimbursed. Reimbursement requests must be sent at least once per quarter but no more frequently than once per month.**

Monthly Reports

The following is a brief overview of the monthly grant reporting process:

1. Virginia SRTS Program staff will send Local SRTS Coordinators an email reminder one week before monthly reports are due with a link to the online monthly report form.
2. Local SRTS Coordinators must complete all fields of the monthly report form and submit it by the first Tuesday of each month.
3. Submittal of the monthly report triggers an auto-generated email to the Local SRTS Coordinator's Supervisor that includes a PDF of the draft report. **Supervisors should review the report and email the LTAC for their region that they either approve the report or request changes to it by COB Thursday (i.e., two days after the deadline for report submittal).**
4. The final monthly reports are reviewed by the appropriate LTAC and by the Virginia SRTS Coordinator, who may request additional detail.

   NOTE: The monthly reports are used to plan the monthly call agendas, including opportunities for Local SRTS Coordinators to share their past month's work. The monthly reports are shared among all coordinators and supervisors the week prior to the monthly call (which takes place the second Wednesday of the month). This allows coordinators and supervisors to prepare any questions they may have regarding their peers' activities on the monthly call.

The web address for the online reporting form is: https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1943700/MonthlyRpt. The reporting form template is shown in Appendix A.

Program Planning Guide, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report

In addition to monthly reports, a Local SRTS Coordinators must also complete the Program Planning Guide, Mid-Point Review, and Final Report sections in their Program Dashboard. The Program Dashboard spreadsheet was submitted with the Non-Infrastructure grant application and there is a link to an editable version of the Program Dashboard and instructions at https://vasrts.org/reporting-and-reimbursement. The Program Planning Guide is typically due in the October-November timeframe, the Mid-Point Review in the February-March timeframe, and the Final Report within 45 days after the end of the grant period.

Reimbursement Process

The reimbursement process will be done via a word document that can be found at http://www.vasrts.org/content/reporting-and-reimbursement. Reimbursements must be submitted every one-to-three months via email. The reimbursement form must include the letterhead of the corresponding employing agency and a signature from a fiscally responsible party, as determined by the employing agency's grant agreement. The reimbursement request must include the following:

- A log of the local SRTS coordinator's hours
- A log of hours for anyone else whose time is charged to the grant (this must be preapproved)
- Proof of payment to Local SRTS Coordinator*
- Mileage log (for travel reimbursement)
- Receipts (for purchases)

*As this is a reimbursement grant, each request must include proof that the employing agency has made a payment to the Local SRTS Coordinator. Acceptable documents include pay stubs or statements from the employing agency's accounting system. Other documentation may be accepted with prior approval.

Note that this year there are three types of reimbursement forms:
1. 100% VDOT-Funded Reimbursement Form
2. 80-20 Local Match Reimbursement Form
3. In-Kind Match Acceptance Request Form

Emailed reimbursement forms and appropriate attachments can be sent to Katherine Graham at katherine.graham@vdot.virginia.gov or if necessary by U.S. Postal Mail at:

Katherine Graham
Safe Routes to School Coordinator
VDOT Transportation and Mobility Planning
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Program Calendar

The following calendar includes Virginia SRTS program events and activities in which the Local SRTS Coordinator is encouraged to participate. For more details, visit http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_events.asp

August	September	October	November	December
QuickStart Mini-grant application due	First month for Student Travel Tallies QuickStart Mini-grant application due	**Walk to School Month** Walk to School Day QuickStart Mini-grant application due Last month for Student Travel Tallies	Due date for Student Travel Tally data input	Outstanding Crossing Guard Nominations Open
January	**February**	**March**	**April**	**May**
SRTS Division Coordinator Training Outstanding Crossing Guard Nominations Close	**Crossing Guard Appreciation Month** QuickStart Mini-grant application due Crossing Guard Appreciation Day	QuickStart Mini-grant application due	QuickStart Mini-grant application due Earth Day	**Bike to School Month** Bike to School Day

Helpful Materials and Resources

Non-Infrastructure Grant Procedures Guide: https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/safe_routes/2016-2017/Non-Infra_Grants/VDOT_SRTS_Non-Infrastructure_Grant_Procedures_July_2021_FINAL_rev.pdf

Non-Infrastructure Grant Guidelines: https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/safe_routes/2016-2017/Non-Infra_Grants/VDOT_SRTS_Guidelines_July_2021.pdf

VDOT SRTS Grant opportunities: http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_school_travel_plans_and_grants.asp

Marketing Toolkit: http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srsm_marketing_toolkit.asp (Logos, graphics, and template for press releases, school announcements, flyers, and more!)

VDOT Local SRTS Coordinator Website: www.vasrts.org (Click "Reporting and Reimbursement" tab for links to reporting and reimbursement forms.)

Walk and Bike to School: http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center: http://www.pedbikeinfo.org

Resource for identifying school locations that have the greatest need for pedestrian infrastructure improvements: Safety-based Prioritization of Schools for Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Projects: A Process for Transportation Professionals

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) SRTS Website and Program Guidance: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/

Safe Routes Partnership: http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/

Appendix A: Monthly Reporting Form

The monthly reporting form is available online at https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1943700/MonthlyRpt and via the Reporting and Reimbursement page on the vasrts.org website.

This version of the reporting form is provided for informational purposes only.

VDOT SRTS Coordinator Reporting Form

1) What is your employing organization?*

( ) Alexandria City Public Schools

( ) Arlington Public Schools

( ) Central Shenandoah Valley Office of Youth

( ) Chesapeake Public Schools

( ) Chesterfield County Public Schools

( ) City of Charlottesville

( ) City of Galax

( ) Fairfax County Public Schools

( ) Harrisonburg City

( ) Loudoun County Public Schools

( ) Lynchburg City Schools

( ) Newport News Public Schools

( ) Norfolk Public Schools

( ) Portsmouth Public Schools

( ) Prince William County Public Schools

( ) Fit4Kids, Richmond

( ) Rockingham County Public Schools

( ) Williamsburg-James City County Schools

2) Please indicate the reporting month for this form.*

( ) January

( ) February

( ) March

( ) April

( ) May

( ) June

( ) July

( ) August

( ) September

( ) October

( ) November

( ) December

3) During the reporting period, what is the *one* accomplishment (SRTS event, planning effort, outreach, etc.) that you are most proud of?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

4) During the reporting period, did you take any actions or gain any insights related to the SRTS Program Building Blocks?

Equitable and Sustainable Program

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Safe Streets

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Welcoming Campuses

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Safe Behaviors

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_____

Supportive Culture

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_____

5) What additional activities and outreach did you participate in or implement over the reporting period?

Please keep your response brief, using bullets to help format and organize your response.

Activities include facilitating or coordinating SRTS events; implementing safety education for teachers, students, and adults; participating in a school sponsored event, such as a health night or open house; planning for future events with schools or community members; distributing incentive items for schools; providing schools with SRTS resources; developing new materials; etc. Outreach activities include coordinating future meetings with schools and community groups; attending local government or committee meetings; making new contacts; meeting with principals, PE teachers, school resource officers, or school health officials; presenting SRTS information to schools or community groups; etc.

If you met or worked with a specific individual, be sure so include their full name and title. If you worked with a specific group, be sure to include the full name of that group. Lastly, if any of your efforts over the past month contribute to accomplishing specific items in your workplan, be sure to include those workplan elements as well.

_____

_____

_____

_____

6) Did you face any challenges during the reporting period? If so, what were they?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7) Would you like advice on how to address these challenges?

( ) Yes

( ) No

8) How would you like us to respond? Check all that apply.

[ ] Contact me directly

[ ] Discuss with other coordinators on the monthly call

[ ] Discuss with other coordinators through Google Groups

[ ] Other - Write In (Required): _____ *

9) (OPTIONAL) Please list the schools that you have actively worked with during the reporting period.

Please be sure to list the name of each school, including its designation as middle, elementary, primary, etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

10) Would you like to share any files related to your work plan? If so, please upload them here.

Note that up to 10 files can be uploaded through this question. After uploading the first file, simply click "Browse" button again to locate and upload the 2nd file, repeating this process until all files are uploaded.

_____1

_____2

_____3

_____4

_____5

_____6

_____7

_____8

_____9

_____10

11) Would you like to share any useful resources you discovered over the past month with other Local Coordinators? If so, please enter the web addresses in the comment box below.

	Resource Name	Resource URL
1.	_____ ____	_____ ____
2.	_____ ____	_____ ____
3.	_____ ____	_____ ____
4.	_____ ____	_____ ____
5.	_____ ____	_____ ____
6.	_____ ____	_____ ____
7.	_____ ____	_____ ____
8.	_____ ____	_____ ____
9.	_____ ____	_____ ____
10.	_____ ____	_____ ____

Thank you!