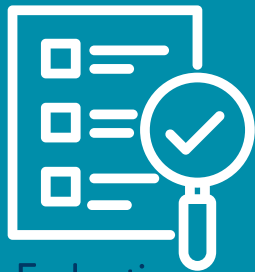




MN SRTS

Evaluation User Guide



Exploration



Installation



Implementation



Table of Contents



- 1.Introduction.....1
- 2 .Student Travel Tally5
- 3 .Parent Surveys.....6
- 4.School Zone Hazard Observational Assessment.....7
- 5.School Environment and Policy Assessment11
- 6 .School Implementation Program Checklist.....13
- 7.SRTS Plan Implementation Survey.....14

1

Introduction

Minnesota Safe Routes to School (SRTS) holds a vision that Minnesota is a state where all students can walk and bicycle on routes that are safe, comfortable, and convenient. Local communities across the state have been implementing SRTS initiatives since 2006. In 2015, the Minnesota SRTS Strategic Plan called for researching and developing evaluation methods to be used by agencies, schools, and school districts to measure the impact of SRTS activities locally and statewide. Evaluation can assist stakeholders in determining the effectiveness of SRTS programs (non-infrastructure) and projects (infrastructure). Evaluation results can demonstrate that an effort is worthwhile, identify changes needed for improvement, and identify efforts that should be discontinued altogether. The evaluation data and analyses can increase support for SRTS initiatives and influence how funding is allocated. In 2017, the Minnesota SRTS Steering Committee created a task force with members from the Minnesota Departments of Transportation and Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of

Minnesota Center for Prevention, and the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota to develop a robust evaluation plan for local and statewide evaluation of SRTS activities.

Goals of Evaluation

The goal of SRTS Evaluation is to monitor and evaluate three main concepts of SRTS:

- How students get to school
- The safety of the school arrival/dismissal area
- How the school is implementing SRTS



Photo Credit: Gideon Pond Planning Assistance Community Engagement

To help local agencies, schools, and school districts plan activities, track progress, and assess impact, the task force recommends that local programs use the following tools:

Tool	Measured Outcome	Source
1. Student travel tally and/or parent survey	How students get to school (mode share)	
2. School Zone Hazard Observation Assessment	Safety of the school arrival/dismissal area (number of unsafe behaviors)	All tools can be found at https://mnsaferoutes.to.school.org/about/evaluation/
3. School Environmental and Policy Assessment 4. School Implementation Progress Checklist 5. SRTS Plan Implementation Survey	How the school is implementing SRTS	

Safe Routes to School Students Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet

CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY - BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY

School Name: _____ Teacher's First Name: _____ Teacher's Last Name: _____

Weather: ☀️ ☁️ ☔️ ❄️

Key: ☀️ Sunny ☁️ Partly Sunny ☔️ Rainy ❄️ Snow

Key	Weather	Student Tally	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Other
Sample AM	☀️	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sample PM	☀️	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Thurs. AM								
Thurs. PM								
Wed. AM								
Wed. PM								
Tues. AM								
Tues. PM								

1

SCHOOL NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ARRIVAL START TIME: _____ **END TIME:** _____

DISMISSAL START TIME: _____ **END TIME:** _____

CIRCLE APPLICABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS:
 ☀️ SUNNY ☁️ PARTLY ☔️ RAINY ☄️ OVERCAST ❄️ SNOW OTHER: _____

APPROXIMATE TEMPERATURE: _____

IS THERE AN APPOINTED SCHOOL STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER DIRECTING TRAFFIC FLOW? YES NO

IS THERE A SPECIFIED DROP-OFF / PICK-UP AREA? YES NO

IS THE DROP-OFF / PICK-UP ZONE SEPARATE FROM OTHER VEHICLES? YES NO

IS THERE A SPECIFIED BIKE ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL AREA? YES NO

Print a map of your school area. If one does not exist use an online map such as Google Maps. Outline the observation area of each location where you are conducting the observations. Assign a location number to each observation area using the numbers listed in the table below. Then complete the remaining columns in each row with the corresponding observer name, whether the listed traffic control devices are present (Y or N) and whether the location is an sidewalk or an intersection center (C or I). You can have up to six observation areas. It may be helpful to have observers document their observation area by taking pictures of their area from where they are standing.

Location Number	Observer Name	Which of the following traffic control devices are present at the observation area? (Check an X in the column for each device that is present)	Sidewalk (S) or Intersection (I)				
		Concave	Flashing Beacon	Stop Sign	Stop Bar	Stop Sign	Other (Specify)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

2

The first set of questions asks about your school's policies and practices walking and biking

Does your school or district wellness policy address walking and biking?
 Promotes walking and biking
 Walking and biking are not addressed
 Promotes walking and biking
 Not Applicable

Does your school or district transportation policy address walking and biking?
 Promotes walking and biking
 Walking and biking are not addressed
 Promotes walking and biking
 Not Applicable

Does your school or district collaborate with local law enforcement on enforcing speed limits or other traffic laws in the school zone?
 No
 Yes
 Not Applicable

Does your school or district have a plan for evaluating Safe Routes to School efforts?
 No
 Yes
 Not Applicable

Does your school have or participate in walking and biking events or programs such as Walk to School Day or Walking School Buses?
 No
 Yes
 Not Applicable

Does your school have or participate in walking and biking skills and after training or curriculum?
 No
 Staff trained, but curriculum not yet in place
 Yes, staff trained and curriculum being implemented
 Not Applicable

3

Plan Evaluation Survey

Basic SRTS Plan Information

Your Name: _____
 Your Organization: _____
 Name of SRTS Plan: _____

Please indicate your level of involvement with the plan:

I was not involved in plan DEVELOPMENT
 I was not involved in plan IMPLEMENTATION
 I was not involved in both plan DEVELOPMENT and plan IMPLEMENTATION

Does your SRTS plan cover one school or multiple schools?

One School
 Multiple schools, but not every school in the school district
 Multiple schools - the entire school district

Have you ever received funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to work on SRTS?

No
 Yes, currently receiving funding
 Yes, not currently receiving funding but received funding in the past

What other types of funding or resources have you received or intend to support your SRTS work?

Staff time
 Volunteer time
 In-kind donations
 Leveraged funding

Approximately how much of your SRTS plan has been implemented?

All or nearly all of it (95% or more)
 Majority of it (65%-95%)
 Some of it (35-65%)
 None of it

4

Implementation Stages

EXPLOSION → INSTALLATION → INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION → FULL IMPLEMENTATION

School Progress Checklist

Instructions: This checklist should be completed by someone knowledgeable about the Safe Routes to School activities at the school. If there are multiple schools covered under the same Safe Routes to School plan, complete a separate checklist for each school. A school does not have to have a Safe Routes to School plan in order to complete this checklist. Please refer to the definitions below when answering the questions.

Measure: For each of the six E's (Education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, equity), please answer the following questions.

Education

1. Which stage best describes the status of the school's implementation of Safe Routes to School (E) activities?
 a. Haven't thought about _____ activities yet
 b. Exploration
 c. Installation
 d. Initial implementation
 e. Full implementation

2. Is the school planning for or working on any of the following activities to support sustainability of its Safe Routes to School (E) activities?
 a. Establishing funding streams to continue implementation of the activities

5

2

Student Travel Tally

What Does It Measure?

Student Travel Tally measures how students get to school (mode share). Local programs may use one or both (Parent Survey) tools to measure mode share. The student travel tally serves as a baseline for the SRTS planning process. If conducted annually the student tally can also serve as a measure of mode shift and program effectiveness.

Format

The student travel tally is conducted by teachers in the classroom on 2-3 consecutive school days during a specified week. Teachers record the number of students arriving/leaving school that day using each type of travel mode. The downloadable form is available [here](#). The tally should be administered in as many classrooms as possible, with a minimum of two classrooms per grade. The tally will be completed first thing in the morning –asking two questions: ‘How did you arrive at school this morning?’ and ‘how do you plan to leave for home after school?’ Before the survey starts, record school, teacher, grad, date and number of students.

Mark the day’s weather and number of students present when count is taking place. Only count the number of students present when count is taking place. When asking the two key questions of “how did you travel to school?” and “how do you plan to return home?” read all seven travel options from the form aloud before students respond. Then, reread each option and count the number of students who raise their hands for each. Record the students’ primary mode of travel. For example, if a student walks to the bus stop, then arrives at school by bus, then they should be counted in the bus column. Mark only once per student.

Frequency

Mode share should be measured annually or semi-annually, at approximately the same time each year to avoid variations in travel model due to seasons. The Tally should be completed on two or three midweek days (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). Avoid conducting tally’s on Monday or Friday.

Interpretation

The tally results can be used to assess current status of mode share or if there are any changes to mode share since implementing SRTS strategies.

3

Parent Survey

What Does It Measure?

The parent survey measures what factors affect whether parents allow their children to walk or bike to school and the presence of safety related conditions along routes to school. Local programs may use one or both (Student Tally) tools to measure mode share.

Format

The parent survey can be completed by parents on paper or online.

Frequency

Mode share should be measured annually or semi-annually, at approximately the same time each year to avoid variations in travel model due to seasons.

Interpretation

Use information to assess where there may be opportunities for increasing safety or number of children who to walk or bike to school and to assess parents' attitude towards children walking or biking to school where SRTS programs occur and identify opportunities to improve.

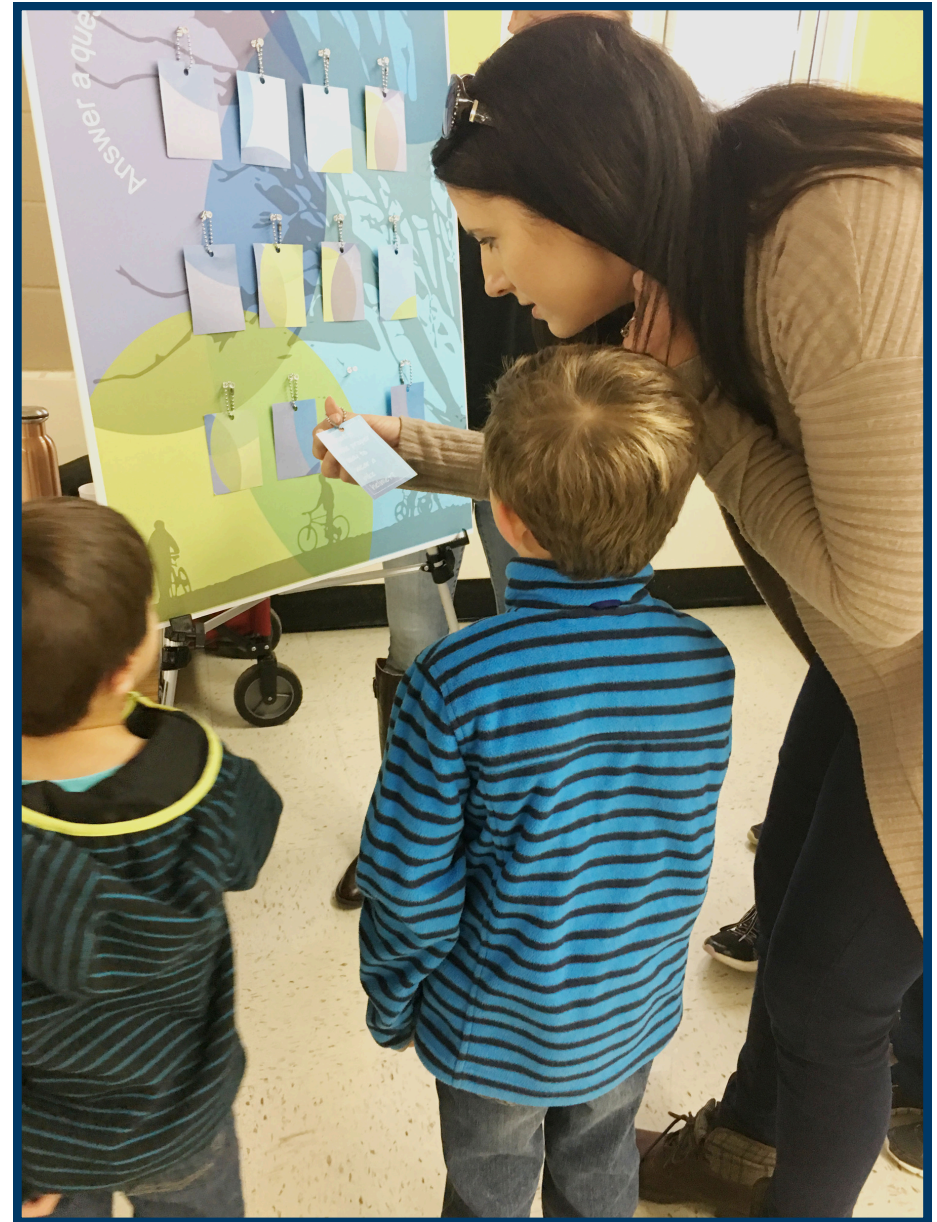


Photo Credit: Sauk Centre Planning Assistance Community Engagement

4

School Zone Hazard Observational Assessment

What Does It Measure?

This tool is a way to track leading hazards that decrease safety around schools. It requires in-person observation. The tool tracks different travel modes and corresponding behaviors (i.e. distractions, illegal parking/pick up, unsafe crossing, or helmet usage) separately. It can help local initiatives identify short and long-term areas of focus by identifying hazards that need to be addressed through and SRTS infrastructure and/or infrastructure changes that will

non- reduce these hazards. It can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes made through SRTS, that is, to measure decreases in unsafe events and behavior at an individual school. The data from the tool will also allow MnDOT to track overall progress statewide through state-level trends.

Format

To implement, the local SRTS lead will need staff or volunteer support (estimated 3-5 people_ depending on number of locations to be observed). At each location, volunteers should observe both the morning arrival and afternoon dismissal periods.

The assessment is designed to capture the total number of people entering the observation space by each mode (driving, walking, or bicycling) and also track selected unsafe behaviors using a tally system. A single person may engage in more than one unsafe behavior. While we have designated some common unsafe behaviors there is a box titled “other” to capture unique safety hazards for each site. The tool also asks for time, weather, presence of crosswalk or school patrol, and other contextual details that can help interpret the results.

Coordinator Instructions

Day of Observation

1. Print out maps of the school area and give to observers.
2. Have observers complete the questions below (time, weather, location, description of conditions, etc.).
3. When volunteers are observing at a secondary school (Grades 7 through 12), have them track adult and teen drivers separately, use the form that has a row for teen drivers (labeled Secondary Schools at the bottom of the page).
4. Conduct the observation both during the morning arrival and afternoon dismissal.
5. Inform volunteers where the designated drop off area is located and where there is signage indicating the designated drop off area.
6. For visibility, volunteers may prefer to wear bright colors or a reflective vest, if available.

Analysis

Add up all the tally marks in each column and enter the totals into the Electronic Analysis Tool (available at <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/evaluation.html>). Then use the formulas to calculate the percentage of people engaging in each unsafe behavior by mode. If you observed multiple locations, do the analysis for each location separately.

Frequency

This tool should be used as part of a local program's planning process to inform intervention priorities. The tool should be repeated 6-12 months after changes have been implemented to address the issues/hazards identified by the initial observations. To the extent possible, conduct the repeat observations under conditions that are as similar as possible to the initial observation (e.g., time of day, day of week, season, and locations).

Interpretation

The local SRTS coordinator and SRTS team should look at the results to identify the opportunities to reduce hazards. You can ask the following questions to help you understand the results. Use the answers to these questions to inform your SRTS program/project planning.

Look at the first page of the observation form.

- What safety features were present at the location?
- What safety features were missing that might help address the hazards you observed?
- What can be done to reduce the safety hazards you observed? For example, car arrival and dismissal times be separated by mode to improve safety?
- What are the highest priority needs for improving safety?

After you have implemented changes to address hazards, conduct a repeat observation and use the following questions to help you interpret the results:

- Were there changes in the percentage and number of people arriving/leaving by each mode?
- How did the percentage and number of people engaging in unsafe behaviors change?
- Which unsafe behaviors were the most common in the repeat observation?
- Did this change from the previous observation?
- Which locations experienced the most changes in percentage and number of unsafe behaviors?
- Can any of the changes be explained by differences in weather, season, time of day, or location between the two time periods?
- Did our SRTS program/project appear to reduce unsafe behavior?
- What new safety issues have emerged? (For example, if more kids are riding their bikes to school, the number of kids biking without helmets might also increase. This is not a failure, but rather reflects the need to add new education components now that more kids are biking.)

Definitions

These evaluation tools and instructions use people-first language wherever appropriate (e.g., “people riding bicycles” rather than “bicyclist”). Use of this language communicates that all people using our streets and sidewalks are people before all else. They are our friends, neighbors, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, parents, and loved ones. We encourage all schools and communities working on Safe Routes to School to adopt this language where appropriate when communicating with stakeholders and the public.

Definitions are provided below for times when it is necessary to use labels (e.g., using shorthand on a data collection form or discussing an initiative on a method that is identified using other language, such as “bicycle and pedestrian counts”).

Special notes: This tool may NOT be used in place of bicycle and pedestrian counts to measure the number of people using each mode. Bicycle and pedestrian counts use a screen line (one-dimensional) methodology, whereas this tool observes all people entering a two-dimensional observation space, such as a half-block area.

- **Pedestrian** - Any person on foot walking or using a mobility assisted device (e.g., cane, walker, crutches, stroller, or wheelchair) through (to or from) your designated observation area
- **Bicyclist** – Any person on a bicycle
- **Driver** – Person operating the vehicle
- **Distracted** – Using a phone, texting, eating, wearing headphones or earpiece
- **Stopping outside of designated space** – Designated drop off and pick up locations are decided by each school.
- **Does not yield to pedestrians** – Vehicle that does not stop to let people on foot cross the street. Once a person is at the curb, the car should yield. Crossing Guards have the authority to stop traffic while school patrol waits until it is clear and the cars must yield.
- **Unsafe Crossing Behavior** – When a person on foot is crossing mid-block, against the signal or not observing traffic i.e. going between cars or crossing in front of a bus.

5

School Environment and Policy Assessment

What Does It Measure?

The purpose of the tool is to identify what aspects of environment and policy in the school zone create a safe and appealing walking and biking environment, and what aspects need some improvement. Questions address your school policies and practices around walking and biking, your school property arrival and dismissal procedures, and your school zone's environment. You may use this tool to measure progress overtime in your Safe Routes to School initiative, including both infrastructure and non-infrastructure changes. It does not require in-person observation. Results can be used for planning changes to create a more appealing and safer walking and biking environment in the school zone and evaluation of these aspects of the school zone.

Format

This online tool is designed to be completed from one's desk. The tool allows you to score each environmental structure or policy aspect from ideal practices/conditions (Green) to poor practices/conditions (Red). Some of these aspects allow for a middle ground (Yellow) option, and others do not. The tool allows you to rate your overall school environment at a green, yellow, or red status depending on the safety of the environment with a maximum score of 42 points. Access the online assessment <https://apps.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=EE3A7LA8M8>.

As you answer each question, targeted suggestions for improvement will appear based on your answer. You are encouraged to use these suggestions when planning your SRTS initiative. At the end of the assessment, you will be able to save and print a copy of your final results along with the targeted suggestions for improvement.

Instructions

This tool should be completed by someone who is familiar with the environment and policies that exist in the school zone and the schools' wellness plan, SRTS plan, and SRTS activities. You may need to talk to the School Wellness Coordinator, Principal/Vice-Principal, School Resource Officer, PTA Representatives, Physical Education Teacher, District/School Transportation Director, Parent Champions, and/or Crossing Guard/Student Safety Patrol Coordinator in order to find the answers to some of the questions. Answer each question based on the current status of the environment or policy. This may require some research on current conditions or policies, but this information is necessary as it will help to provide a complete picture of the safety of the school zone. You may view and print a complete list of the questions by following the link to the online assessment before you begin. Once you begin entering data, you may not save your place and return to finish later, so make sure you have all the answers before you begin entering data.

Frequency

This tool is most effective if completed annually. The first time will take longer. Annual updates can serve as a measure of change.

After Observation

Review your answers to the assessment and the targeted suggestions for improvement with your stakeholders. Identify priority areas for change and develop an action plan to address them. Assess how your answers have changed over time. Have your efforts resulted in improvements in the topics you targeted? If now what changes are needed in your approach in order to accomplish your program/project objectives?

Definitions

School Zone - School property and the area surrounding the school property to a distance of 300 feet or one city block, whichever distance is greater.

6

School Implementation Progress Checklist

What Does It Measure?

This tool is meant to measure the progress of implementation of Safe Routes to school activities at a specific school.

Format

This is an online tool that should be completed by someone who is familiar with all Safe Routes to School Activities at a specific school. Access the online assessment here: <https://apps.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=4M9AJTN7PR>. If there are multiple schools covered under the same Safe Routes to School plan, complete a separate checklist for each school. A school does not have to have a Safe Routes to School plan in order to complete this checklist.

Frequency

This tool should be completed annually.

Interpretation

This tool can be used to identify areas which of the six “E’s” are being implemented at what level.

Implementation Stages

Typically 5 -7 years to complete the implementation process

Exploration:

- Assessing Needs
- Identifying Activities
- Assessing Fit and Feasibility



Installation:

- Developing communication channels
- Finding funding
- Location physical space
- Purchasing resources
- Training



Initial Implementation:

- Activities are first put to use
- Quick problem solving efforts



Full Implementation:

- Activities integrated into standard processes and procedures
- Initial implementation challenges resolved
- All Aspects of activity implemented as planned



Source: implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-1/implementation-stages

7

SRTS Plan Implementation Survey

What Does It Measure?

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is gathering information from communities who have developed, or are in the process of developing a SRTS plan to better understand the impact of plans on building a successful SRTS program.

Format

This tool is an online survey. This tool should be completed by a coordinator of the SRTS plan. Access the online assessment here:

The parent survey can be completed by parents on paper or online. If your SRTS plan is for multiple schools, please answer on behalf of all of the schools collectively. You can provide details about a particular school or strategy in the open-ended questions.

Frequency

Complete this tool annually.

For more information, contact saferoutes.dot@state.mn.us



Photo Credit: SSPS Bike to School Day

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