



January 2012 Monthly Activity Report

In January, the Georgia SRTS Resource Center project team continued outreach to schools. Weather in Georgia has been unseasonably warm which means that January was a great month for Safe Routes to School. The project team

School Outreach Coordinator Activity Highlights

Through January, the Outreach team secured **6** schools as new Partners. The Resource Center has **236** Friends to date. In January, the Outreach team conducted 65 meetings, gave three presentations and participated in two different events across the state.

Coastal Georgia (Patti Sistrunk, SOC)

Claxton Middle School, Evans County (Silver Partner)

Claxton Middle School Champion and staff member, Mrs. Judy Scarboro invited Patti to present to the regional women educators association. Effingham, Liberty, McIntosh, Evans, and Bryan counties were represented by approximately 25 educators. The group meets monthly and each month, the women from a specific county's schools provide the speaker. Mrs. Scarboro and other teachers from Claxton Middle in Evans County explained Claxton Middle Schools' Walk to School Day events at which the entire school population takes a walk around the neighborhood behind the school. Patti explained the Resource Center's resources including the pedestrian safety education curriculum, the pedometer lesson plan, incentives, and online materials.

West Chatham Elementary School, Chatham County (Gold Partner)

West Chatham Elementary School Principal Peter Ulrich hosted a coffee and conversation meeting on January 3rd with key community partners of the school. Patti was invited to attend. Principal Ulrich focused discussions on improving the overall school experience and cost savings for the school and the Savannah Chatham County School District as a whole. He took input from the Mayor of Pooler, local business owners, parents, teachers, and advocacy partners. Transportation was a major point of concern. The school, despite having quite a few walking and bicycling students, experiences traffic congestion as a result of parent pick-up in the afternoon. Mr. Ulrich is concerned about the safety of pedestrian and cyclists in the traffic as well as the safety of motorists. Patti shared SRTS strategies to mitigate the congestion and to encourage more participation while potentially cutting costs for the district and parents.

South Georgia (Nykia Burke, SOC)

Outreach Expansion Meetings Safekids Columbus and River Valley Regional Commission

Nykia has established strong partnerships with both the SafeKids Columbus Coalition and River Valley Regional Commission bike/ped planning team. Nykia met with these organizations to identify strategies for further expansion of SRTS programming within Muscogee County and the RVRC planning region. Targets include initiation of the Quitman County programs, increased participation in Sumter and Crisp Counties, and increased outreach to Harris County. Nykia continues to expand outreach in these areas.

An established relationship between SafeKids and the Muscogee County School Board provided a valuable opportunity to re-introduce SRTS at the school district level and encourage further use of the NHTSA Child Pedestrian Safety Education curriculum and other SRTS resources. Nykia met with Dr. Gary Gibson, System-

wide Athletics Director for MCS D schools to strengthen support of SRTS initiatives, provide an update on school participation and partner levels, and identify opportunities to further programming. Dr. Gibson is fully supportive of SRTS and will provide assistance with completion of the proposed Midtown Columbus Travel Plan. Nykia will present similar information at the next School Board Cabinet meeting.

Newbern Middle School, Valdosta (Gold-Level Partner)-Infrastructure Concept Meeting

Newbern Middle School was recently awarded a SRTS Infrastructure Grant to build sidewalks and implement other traffic calming measures around the school campus. The infrastructure concept meeting was held at Newbern Middle School and involved a review of the proposed plan and walk audit of the project area. Nykia coordinated attendance from the school staff and SRTS champions and Southern Georgia Regional Commission.

Central Georgia (Sandie Parker, SOC)

Gray Elementary School, Jones County (Silver-level Partner)

Gray Elementary School continues to participate in the Travel Plan assistance offered by the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center and Toole Design. At a meeting held on January 19 Sandie and Toole Design representatives presented the preliminary draft of the travel plan. In attendance were Principal Lori Poythress, Assistant Principal Dena Smith, Physical Education teacher Angela Watts, County Commissioner Mike Underwood, Kelly Roberts Executive Director of Jones County School, and PLAN chairperson Chris Smarr, County Commissioner Mike Underwood, police Sergeant Hunt and Middle Georgia Regional Commission Boy Rychel. As a result, Gray Elementary and the supporting SRTS task force are excited about the SRTS program and Georgia Walk to School day in March. The group is working together to generate creative ways get more kids and parents involved in participating in the Safe Routes to School program. The task force will meet again in February to organize the Georgia Walk to School event and focus on how they can implement recommendations from the travel plan.

Heritage Elementary School, Bibb County (Potential Partner)

Sandie met with principal Donna Jackson and Assistant Principal Jennifer Saddler to discuss becoming a partner with the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center. Heritage Elementary students do not have a safe walking environment around the school. However, the school staff encourages pedestrian safety and physical activity through walk and talk lunches and through school safety patrol. Principal Jackson requested Sandie to make a presentation at the next PTO meeting to speak with the parents about pedestrian safety and to discuss what the Safe Routes to School Program. Sandie presented the Pedestrian Safety Education workbook at the meeting. The P.E. teacher, Coach Chaney, is going to incorporate the curriculum in the P.E. classes

Henry County

Sandie is preparing for the upcoming National Course scheduled for February 28, 2012 at Red Oak Elementary. The goal of the meeting is to get 100% participation from all partner schools in Henry County. In addition, Sandie will be presenting on February 14, 2012 at the principal meeting for Henry County Schools. By presenting to all principals, Sandie and SRTS Friend Partners as well as the school district will encourage 100% of Henry County partners to participate in Georgia Walk to School day.

Metro Atlanta (Nykia Burke, SOC)

Woodward Elementary Travel Plan Meeting 3 (Silver-Level Partner)

Nykia facilitated meeting three of the SRTS/Toole Design Travel Plan for Woodward Elementary School. Attendees included Woodward's SRTS team, Dekalb County BOH, and the Dekalb County Planning Department. This meeting provided an opportunity to present draft recommendations of potential infrastructure and non-engineering solutions for barriers to safe walking and biking in the community. Nykia coordinated with the Dekalb County BOH and BOE to identify Woodward as one of six schools awarded \$3,000 via the

Communities Putting Prevention to Work grants. A portion of these funds will be utilized to fund SRTS projects that encourage increased physical activity via walking and biking to school.

Dekalb County SRTS/JUA Monthly Meeting

Dekalb County Board of Education has partnered with the Resource Center and Dekalb County Board of Health to integrate SRTS into the School wellness policy. Nykia attended the monthly planning meeting to assist with furthered implementation of SRTS programs. Three Dekalb County Schools officially joined the Resource Center as Gold Level Partners-Cary Reynolds ES, Dunbar ES, and Kelley Lake ES. These schools participated in the original Dekalb BOH-funded pilot program for integration of SRTS into the schools system wellness policy. Nykia assisted in the identification of six additional schools that will receive funding from the Communities Putting Prevention to Work Grant managed through Dekalb BOH. Two of these schools(Chestnut Charter and Woodward ES) are currently active SRTS partners. Nykia will utilize the opportunity to further outreach and will partner with the BOH and BOE teams to obtain partnership from the other four schools and assist with development of their SRTS-related programming. Nykia will support SRTS activities at two Dekalb County schools receiving BOH funding via a Health Promotions grant.

Northwest Georgia (Alicia Hatcher, SOC)

Cherokee County – Infrastructure Concept Meeting

Cherokee County held their infrastructure concept meeting on January 24. Six schools are part of the \$369K grant: Bascomb Elementary, Carmel Elementary, Woodstock Elementary, Knox Elementary, Holly Springs Elementary, and Ball Ground Elementary. The majority of the grant will be spent at Holly Springs Elementary and Ball Ground Elementary. A sidewalk and crosswalk will be installed at Holly Springs Elementary connecting to two large subdivisions, along with a possible traffic light or pedestrian activated light. Ball Ground Elementary will have a new school opening at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, and sidewalks and crosswalks will be added as part of the SRTS grant to make the school walkable from nearby neighborhoods.

Dalton City Schools & NW GA Regional Commission – Crossing Guard Training

Outreach is helping to coordinate a day-long Crossing Guard Training for Dalton City Schools. The Northwest Georgia Regional Commission has already purchased adult sized reflective vests and stop paddles for the schools, and will bring in a trainer for the schools. This training will help to ensure safety for Dalton's large walking population. A date is being finalized, but will take place in February or March 2012.

Northeast Georgia (Andy Pittman, SOC)

Resource Center Presentation to White County School Board

In January, Andy Pittman from the Resource Center was asked to present along side Tom Bryant at the monthly White County School Board Meeting. Tom Bryant is the Director of Community and Economic Development for Cleveland and is a recent advocate of Safe Routes to School. The meeting was attended by the school board, the four principals of White County schools and over thirty White County residents.

JP Nix Primary Academy and White County Middle School recently committed to becoming partners with the Resource Center, so the entire School Board wanted to learn more about Safe Routes to School and how Georgia's program can benefit their rural environment. Tom and Andy provided the audience with a twenty minute presentation covering the Resource Center, the five E's, successes seen around the state and our plans for implementation with White County Schools. The meeting ended with the approval and blessing to aggressively develop a fully comprehensive Safe Routes program at the schools as well as start working on developing a Travel Plan.

Forsyth County Bicycle Safety Education Initiative

Settles Bridge Elementary hosted their third Travel Plan meeting in January. The meeting led by the Resource Center was to go over final input from the SRTS Task Force before developing the final draft of the plan and presenting it in February. During this meeting, Facilities Planner Tim Amerson was presented with an idea for bicycle safety education at Settles Bridge Elementary and realized that there is potential to not only have this education at Settles, but at every school in Forsyth County.

The connection was made between Tim and Matt Pate with the County's Parks and Rec Department to help start a County-wide bicycle education program. It turns out that the Parks and Rec Department was given a donation of several bikes from a Corporate Donor and they have been looking for a way to use these bikes! Matt will be attending the next Travel Plan meeting in February to join the conversation to help this idea become a reality.

SRTS Marketing and Travel Plans (Toole Design Group)

During January, the marketing and outreach teams focused on key deliverables and tasks:

- Provided program oversight and management
- Staffed Resource Center telephone hotline
- Updated Resource Center web site as needed
- Updated GA Safe Routes to School Resource Center Facebook Page with regular posts and corresponding information to web site
- Distributed Planning Guide and Workbook in print and electronically on USB drive to SOCs to, in turn, distribute as needed to interested schools
- Established a registration page for GA Walk to School Day on the web site
- Continued meeting with five travel plan assistance schools and corresponding SRTS committees; researched and assessed data for plans; continued on-going production of travel plans