

MINUTES
Safe Routes to School Committee Meeting
January 20, 2009 - 10:30 A.M.

The Safe Routes to School Committee met during a regular meeting on January 20, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., in the Civic Center, 200 W Arrington St, Farmington, New Mexico.

Present: Coordinator: Lori Meszaros
Members: Steve Krest
Joe Delmagori
Diana Long
Rod Conover
Sgt. Taft Tracy
Lieutenant Tyson
Katherine Lucero
Martin Lucero

Absent: Members: Lieutenant Washburn
Marilee Herman
Amanda DeWees

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Coordinator Meszaros and the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

DISCUSSION

Lori opened the meeting with a discussion of the next steps for applying for Phase II funding. Lori indicated the need to conduct surveys at all the schools that were designated on the Phase I application. Steve indicated that surveys would not have to be repeated at Mesa View. Also, the City of Farmington SRTS application is complete, including the revisions requested by NMDOT.

Lori would like to have the surveys passed out during the parent/teacher conferences at Apache and McKinley Elementary. The teachers can hand them out during the conference and have the parents fill them out as they wait. Lori will have the surveys printed out and ready to give to each school representative. Each school representative will have to meet with the

principal and obtain permission to hand out the survey packets to the teachers.

The additional items that would have to be completed would be the walkability survey and school assessment. This will need Parent and student involvement. In Mesa Verde Elementary, the 5th graders were taken by the teacher, and shown how to perform these surveys. The teachers taught the students how to evaluate their environment and surroundings.

Steve indicated that there was another way of collecting the information by having the students that currently walk take and complete the survey. He also added that he felt that the activity needed to wait until spring when the weather warms up and the number of students walking naturally increases.

A discussion about when the car and kid counts should be taken followed. A final consensus was reached that April and May would be the best time to take the counts; as it would be after the spring break release and during historically warmer weather. It would also be a better time to reproduce the counts on an annual basis, meaning counts are taken at the same time each year at the school. Steve indicated that it doesn't matter if the counts at Mesa Verde are taken during the fall period. As other schools join they can be added to the fall counts if necessary.

The target date for the car/kid counts were set for the week of April 13th for Apache Elementary and April 20th for McKinley Elementary. The counts will be taken on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Lori indicated that the group had a good start on the action plan needed for Phase II funding. It will need to be revisited after the surveys and counts were completed and probably only need minor revisions.

The discussion moved toward the need to start a stronger educational movement. This can be partially accomplished by the parent survey packets that the school representatives will take to the schools. It is anticipated that the surveys will be handed out on the 5th and 6th of February with a return date of the 13th.

Rod indicated that the majority of the parents that show up to the parent teacher conference are those parents of children that are doing well. He feels that a push needs to be made to contact the parents of the students

that are struggling. He pointed out that the community needs to be saturated with the information.

Lori indicated that she had additional statistical information concerning pollution and gas mileage that she could provide to help others see the need to walk and bike.

Lori also emphasized that she was working with the fifth graders at Mesa Verde Elementary in hopes that they will be able to carry the program into the middle schools. It was indicated that at McKinley Elementary the mediator program are the students that have been identified as the leaders of the school. They might be better utilized to carry the SRTS program forward.

Steve discussed the concerns that have recently surfaced concerning student at Tibbets and Hermosa Middle Schools. He related the incident with a student crossing the street that failed to recognize oncoming traffic.

Sgt. Taft Tracy added that students at middle schools are believed to know how to cross a street safely. The concern is that students are not being taught how to safely cross by parents and guardians. He believes it is a perception issue and not a conceptual problem. The students are viewing adults and faculty failing to cross at the cross walks. The students are following the examples of the adults and jaywalking. Issuing citation does not work as the students are just handing the citations to the parents to pay.

Lori and Steve indicated that this is a prime time to discuss SRTS with the public, as the topic is at the forefront, given the middle school incident. A discussion ensued on how best to inform the public of the program. Lori indicated that she would try to get an article into the newspaper.

The conversation turned toward the PowerPoint that Steve had for Lori. Lori inquired if the PowerPoint presentation could be adjusted to reflect more of the local involvement and concerns. Lori will make a presentation to the Retired Educators on February 10. Steve added that the presentation could be made to other community groups. Lori agreed and indicated that the more she gave the presentation the better she would get.

Steve and Joe agreed that they could revamp the PowerPoint presentation and give Lori a new copy prior to the week of the 10th.

Lori moved onto a discussion of the bike rodeo in May. She is planning on having a strong event. She is hopeful that the event will lead to similar events throughout the summer. Lori indicated that she still needed to setup a way to have business donate either a full bike package or money to purchase the items. She would also like to have a closed trailer donated that could be used to store the items and for transportation. She envisions the event being free to school age children.

In order to help with the planning Lori is organizing a new group to meet on Thursday at 6:30 under the name of Kids Live Long. It is to be a group that will help plan the event and bring in volunteer and business support. Lori figures that she will need a minimum of 10 bike packages to start off. The end goal would be to get the bike safety program into all of the school PE programs.

Steve indicated that the SRTS Maps are getting closer to completion.

Sgt. Taft Tracy indicated that enforcement has increased along Windsor and Kingsway. He indicated that they have given out a large amount of tickets in hopes of encouraging better driving habits.

The next SRTS Committee meeting was scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at the Civic Center Board Room. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.