



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Ellen Pillsbury

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

218-529-7554 (direct)
1-800-232-0707 (toll free)
epillsbury@ardc.org

Grand Marais Safe Routes to School Planning Kicks-off April 23rd

The Grand Marais Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning committee will hold its kick-off meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2009 from 2:30p.m -5:00p.m.in the Jane Mianowski Conference Center. Mark Plotz, a SRTS expert from the National Center for Bicycling and Walking will facilitate the meeting and lead a walkability assessment around the vicinity of both schools to help the committee set initial goals for the Grand Marais SRTS program. The community is encouraged to attend and join the discussion on safety issues and barriers for students traveling by bus, car, foot or bike to school.

SRTS is a federally funded program coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) Safe Routes to School Program with the goal of increasing the number of students walking and bicycling by improving conditions around schools. Successful SRTS programs are sustained by parents, schools, community leaders and local, state and federal governments. SRTS programs include recommendations in the areas of *education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement and evaluation*. This ensures community involvement and increases safety for walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements and heightened public awareness.

The Cook County Independent School District received a planning grant from MN/DOT with assistance from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission. The SRTS Committee with public input will work for the next eight months to develop and begin implementation of a Grand Marais Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program.

Mark Plotz's visit is funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Center for Prevention.

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