

FAQs for the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Recognition Program

Q: Who can apply for the NJ SRTS Recognition Program?

A: Municipalities and schools (public, private, and charter) can apply for any of the levels of the SRTS Recognition Program. Requirements for the SRTS Recognition Program are different depending if you are applying as a municipality or a school.

Q: When are applications for the NJ SRTS Recognition Program due?

A: The program runs once annually. Schools and municipalities interested in recognition levels (First Step, Bronze, Silver, and Gold) must apply by January 31st each year (participants will be notified by April).

Q: How do schools and municipalities apply for the NJ SRTS Recognition Program?

A: [SRTS Regional Coordinators](#) are encouraged to reach out to schools and municipalities in their area and assist them with the online application which is at <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/levels> as well as recommend which level (First Step, Bronze, Silver, and Gold) to apply. Schools and municipalities may also directly apply online at <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/become-a-partner/> and those that have not collaborated with or contacted their Regional Coordinator will be forwarded to their respective Regional Coordinator for review and assistance.

Q: What documentation is necessary to prove that a participant has attained the desired recognition level?

A: For schools: endorsement letters must be signed by an official school or school district leader such as the superintendent, principal, PTO officer, Committee Chairperson, etc. For private or parochial schools, a letter of support or memorandum from the school's principal or PTA is acceptable. Please also provide specific information about each SRTS event including date, time, place, number of participants as well as an email, flyer, newsletter, etc. from the school or municipality publicizing the event. Please contact your [SRTS Regional Coordinator](#) for assistance.

A: For municipalities: A Letter or Resolution of Support for SRTS must be provided by the municipality. Applicants must lead, provide staff, or perform significant outreach at SRTS events. Please provide specific information about each event including date, time, place, number of participants as well as an email, flyer, newsletter, etc. from the organization publicizing the event. Moreover, an innovative SRTS project and a Post Observation Report for the top five busiest Crossing Guard locations must be completed. Please contact your [SRTS Regional Coordinator](#) for assistance.

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Q: How often can schools and municipalities apply for recognition?

A: NJ SRTS Recognition levels attained will be evaluated **every three years** which is consistent with Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification.

Q: When do I need to complete my events? What about student travel tallies, walk and bike assessments and school travel plans?

A: All events must be completed by the application deadline of January 31st. Events completed after January 31st can be used for subsequent application rounds, but late events will not be accepted.

For schools: Events must have been completed within the past 12 months of the application submission date. Student travel tallies must be from the past 2 years. Walk and Bike assessments must be within 3 years. School travel plans or updated school travel plans from the past 3 years will be accepted.

For municipalities: Events must have been completed within the past 12 months or 24 months of the application submission date depending on what level applying. School travel plans or updated school travel plans from the past 3 years will be accepted.

Q: What supporting documentation is needed?

A: Depending on the requirement you are completing, supporting documentation is needed and can be uploaded directly through the online nomination form. Supporting documentation for events and active transportation best practices can include: fliers, newsletter promotion, email promotion, pictures, press releases, news articles, etc. School Travel Plans, Student Travel Mode Tallies and Walk/Bike Assessments must be uploaded. Please consult [your SRTS Regional Coordinator](#) who can assist you with supporting documentation requirements.

Q: What do participants receive?

A: First and foremost, participants receive technical assistance for their SRTS programs from talented and dedicated SRTS Regional Coordinators! First Step, Bronze, Silver and Gold level participants will receive a Certificate of Achievement Award that can be presented by the Regional Coordinator at a meeting (i.e. School Board, Borough Council, PTO meeting, etc.). All participants will be listed on the NJ SRTS website and included in a Safe Routes Scoop article. Also, a press release template will be provided to SRTS Regional Coordinators to assist with local press and media coverage.

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Q: When will participants know if they have attained their recognition level?

A: Applications that are completed by January 31st will be notified by April. Certificate of Recognition will be given to the SRTS Regional Coordinator shortly after notification and can be presented at a respective meeting by the SRTS Regional Coordinator.

Q: How many SRTS programs or events are needed to attain Bronze, Silver and Gold level status?

A: For schools: Bronze level requires at least **two** SRTS programs or events **AND** the implementation of one active transportation best practice. Events must be held within the twelve (12) months of the submission date. The active transportation best practice must have been implemented within three years of the submission date and still be utilized to benefit the school community. **NOTE: This requirement also earns 10 points towards [Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification!](#)**

Silver level must meet Bronze level requirements (at least two SRTS programs and within twelve (12) months of submission date) and the implementation of one active transportation best practice (within three years of submission date). Silver applicants must complete at least ONE of the following:

- A walkability or bikeability assessment around the school (within 3 years of submission date)
- School-wide Student Travel Mode Tallies (within 24 months of submission)
- **Two** pedestrian or bicycle safety education programs, walk and bike to school events, or active transportation best practice (time requirement is same as Bronze level).
- Ongoing year-round active travel program (e.g. Walking Wednesdays, Walking School Buses)

Gold level must meet silver level requirements, show ongoing support and meet one higher level requirement. This may include (1) the completion of a School Travel Plan (**NOTE: This requirement also earns 10 points towards [Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification!](#)**) or (2) the adoption of a Safe Routes to School District Policy (**NOTE: This requirement also earns 10 points towards [Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification!](#)**), or (3) the implementation of an innovative walk/bike to school program or project, subject to approval.

For municipalities: Depending on the goals of your municipality, events are not a necessary component of a SRTS Recognition application. You may choose to manage/lead, provide staff or perform significant outreach for the required number of events as your municipality's additional requirement under the corresponding level of recognition.

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Q: Can a school and municipality from the same community apply for recognition?

A: Yes, both the school and municipality can apply, however they must apply separately due to distinct requirements.

Q: How does the Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification work with Safe Routes to School Recognition?

A: Sustainable Jersey (SJ) for Schools which launched on October 28, 2014 is a certification program for NJ public schools that want to go green, conserve resources and take steps to create a brighter future. There are 17 categories of actions ranging from Energy Efficiency to Food & Nutrition to Waste Management & Recycling, therefore the program is broader than the SRTS Recognition Program. The SJ for Schools Action "Student Safety" applies directly to SRTS. Schools can earn points for [SJ for Schools for School Travel Plans](#), [SRTS District Policy](#), as well as [Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Promotion Initiatives](#) which can also be used for SRTS Recognition achievements. (**NOTE: each are worth 10 points towards SJ for School certification!**). For more information on SJ for Schools, visit their website at <http://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/>.