

Frequently Asked Questions

This document will be updated with questions received during the application period and from grant webinars.

Updated: 12/18/23

What if we have a low STEPP (Student Transportation Equity for Priority Populations) score?

- We intend to raise applications from under-resourced areas and direct funding to priority populations to improve safety and well-being. However, applications that show a community is ready to launch a SRTS program, partners interested or convening on SRTS, or a timely need may provide strong scores for those communities with lower STEPP scores.

Do we need a Safe Routes to School Plan?

- We strongly encourage applications that support the implementation of strategies from a SRTS plan. However, we know not all communities have the time and resources to complete a plan or have successful awards of a SRTS plan. For those without a plan, clearly describe the need for the proposed project and how the idea was developed from community engagement efforts.

Can we fund staff time with the Boost grant?

- All funds for the Boost grant must be spent by June 30, 2025. It is an allowable expense if staff time is needed, and they can complete their duties by June 30, 2025.

Can the SRTS boost grant be used for activities led by the city but promoted to students in the school district, or do the events need to be led by the school district?

- Yes, a city or other entity can apply for SRTS funds to support biking and walking for youth in coordination with schools. For example, a town could apply for funds for a bike rodeo or bicycle camp through its recreation program and partner with the school to promote or use an existing school bicycle fleet.

What if we still need to complete student tallies or parent surveys for our school district?

- The school data application question should be available from a Student Transportation Director's data for the number of students within the walk zone, bussed students, and hazard busing.

If we are doing a districtwide project, do we need to provide data for each school?

- Yes, each school that will be covered under the plan or project should be listed with school travel data. Please use the additional Excel form to record more than five more schools on your application.

Will Boost fund a crossing guard for a state highway and city street crossing for arrival and dismissal? If so, how long?

- The location of the crossing guard does not matter for funding. Funding could support time, materials, training, etc. A [crossing guard training](#) is available on the MnSRTS website.

On average, what is the typical funding range for a Boost grant?

- Funded projects can range from a minimum of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$50,000. Typically, this is for one application, either per school or district, depending on the project proposed.

Does this grant require matching funds?

- No, this is 100% funding for a project. We do not require a match; however, it's often best practice to leverage local funds and resources to maximize a project and grant award.

Are law enforcement resources still eligible for funding? Would technology like flashing driver feedback speed signs be eligible?

- Funded projects can include Law Enforcement partners to support any "E's" like education, encouragement, or engagement projects. We consider flashing driver feedback speed signs to be an encouragement strategy and encourage this not to be connected with an enforcement wave as that may impact equity efforts.

Can we fund any signage with a Boost grant?

- We cannot fund any signage on a road authority's right of way as that would be considered infrastructure, which is ineligible with this funding source. Signage on the private property of the school facility like a 'no idling' or 'no cell phones' or 'bus only' would be eligible expenses to improve school arrival/dismissal and safety for walkers and bikers. Other signage like sandwich boards, posters, banners, or yard signs are allowable expenses.

Can a community or school district submit more than one application?

- We are flexible on the number of applications a school district or city can submit. We recognize that different schools within a school district, private schools, and charter schools have different needs to advance walking and biking mode shifts for youth that require separate applications. However, the applications will compete against each other during the scoring and review process, and submitting more than one application does not increase the likelihood that a school district will receive funding. We encourage school districts to apply annually if there are more significant needs and to consider packaging multiple strategies into one application.

Can a boost grant fund snow removal equipment to help maintain clear sidewalks and paths for students to walk to school?

- Unfortunately, this grant funding cannot cover snow removal equipment purchases. We recognize what a significant issue this is. MnDOT and our partners at the Minnesota Department of Health created a [snow removal guide](#) with different ideas and case studies from across the state that may be helpful for communities to identify other solutions.

Can a PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) apply?

- Non-profits can apply if the PTO has non-profit status. Otherwise, a PTO can write the application for the school/school district, city, or non-profit partner and implement the project while another entity is the fiscal host. A fiscal host would be necessary as this is a reimbursement-only grant with monthly reporting, invoicing requirements, and a formal contract agreement with MnDOT.

What do you estimate the monthly reporting requirements and time burden to be?

- A short monthly progress report narrative and a monthly invoice (even if it's zero-sum) will be required to be submitted. The process has a slight learning curve but will be minimal each month.