**The City of York, Pennsylvania**
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C. Kim Bracey, Mayor

**York City Bureau of Health**
227 W. Market Street • York, PA 17401
Phone: (717) 849-2252 • FAX: (717) 852-9397

MEMORANDUM

TO: York City School Board Members
FROM: Shaun Underkoffler
DATE: April 1, 2011
RE: Safe Routes to School Study Proposal

**Who:** The York City Bureau of Health is seeking approval to collaborate with 12 students from Hannah Penn Middle School.

**What:** The Health Bureau will introduce the program to the selected students and faculty member(s) of Hannah Penn. The program will empower the students to identify safety hazards along their walking route both to and from school.

**When:** The Health Bureau is prepared to introduce the program upon approval.

**Why:** The student's assessment will allow for improvements to be made to the built environment with the intent of enhancing safety and promoting physical activity. The York City Department of Public Works has committed to improving 4 crosswalks and will install signs to identify safe routes or crossing areas for students.

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Dear School Board Member,

## Background

The York City Bureau of Health applied for state funds to elicit input from school students to identify safety hazards along their walking route. The York City Bureau of Health is a part of a larger committee that is comprised of several key community organizations that is striving to achieve a healthier and safer community by looking at and revising policies, systems, and environmental determinants which influence health.

## Purpose

The York City Bureau of Health identified Hannah Penn Middle School as an asset in the community which has the ability to facilitate a change in the built environment. The York City Bureau of Health is seeking approval to work with 12 students which will be given equipment provided by them to assist in assessing the safety hazards along their everyday walking commute.

## Project Objectives

**Objective 1:** Create a safe walking route to school for students
**Objective 2:** Create a sense of community empowerment
**Objective 3:** Build lifelong health habits through increase physical activity among students

## Planned Program

1). Identify 12 students in the middle school to assess the walkability and bikeability of their routes to school. Students will receive disposable cameras, notepads, surveys, and other supplies needed to record hazardous situations along their route. Photographs of dangerous street crossings, sidewalks or walking areas will provide documentation for students to present to city planners, city council, school administrators and EPBY members as input for actionable infrastructure improvements to make their routes to school safer. Students will participate in a focus group to develop a list of priority projects to address in a 2-3 year plan. Students who complete the assessments, pictures, surveys and priority discussion will each receive a $10.00 give card to Wal-mart.

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2). Identify two (2) hazardous intersections (high street traffic or high pedestrian volume) used by students. Build crosswalks to increase visibility of safe crossing areas along the walking routes. Install signs to identify safe routes or crossing areas for students. The York City

Department of Public Works (DPW) has leveraged funding to provide crosswalks at two additional intersections along designated routes for a total of four (4) intersections improvements during this period. The DPW will also provide in-kind staffing to make these enhancements at the four (4) intersections.

3). Develop walking route map(s) for the school to post on the school's website, and to distribute with parents and students showing the safe designated routes. The school will distribute 1,600 double-sided maps in both English and Spanish with the designated routes.

4). Work with EPBY workgroups to identify funding opportunities and other local infrastructure initiatives that will coordinate or integrate the SRTS concept.

5). EPBY will coordinate with schools to promote with local media said activities to expand the SRTS initiative – including coverage of the student's walking the SRTS routes, participation in the assessments/surveys, and the building of crosswalks or Safe Routes.

If you have any questions in regard to the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Shaun Underkoffler
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