



San Mateo County **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

Healthy Kids • Green Communities • Safe Journeys

2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT



SAN MATEO
COUNTY
OFFICE OF
EDUCATION

C/CAG
City/County Association of Governments
of San Mateo County

BACKGROUND

With more than 110,000 children from six to seventeen years old living in San Mateo County¹, families are concerned about the availability of safe routes to school. As Bay Area traffic increases, more parents drive their children to school, contributing to increased air pollution and higher childhood obesity rates in addition to more traffic.

Walking and biking to school are simple actions that children and their families can take to reduce traffic, mitigate climate change, improve health, and build community. Since its inception in 2011, San Mateo County Safe Routes to School (SRTS) has worked in partnership with municipalities, schools, and community members to

promote and support safe walking and biking practices and encourage municipalities to build infrastructure that supports walking and biking.

Vision

The efforts of SRTS in San Mateo County result in less traffic congestion around schools, improved air quality, a greener and healthier community, and an increase in self-reliance among San Mateo County children who walk and bike to school. SRTS is the catalyst for teaching children traffic safety skills and encouraging them to take an active mode of transportation to school. San Mateo County communities support this initiative with infrastructure that provides safe passage for children.

Safe Routes to Schools Partners and Shared Goals

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Partners:

- Bay Area Bike Mobile
- Marine Science Institute
- Perfection on Wheels
- Parisi
- Alta
- Kimley Horn
- Strategic Energy Innovations
- Kid Power
- SVBC
- YBike

Requirements:

- SRTS Coordinator meetings
- Participate in education and encouragement events
- Promote walking and biking

Funder: City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG)

Shared Goals:

- Educate and encourage children and their families on safe walking and biking

Shared Expectations:

- County-wide Walk & Roll to School Days
- Parent/Caregiver Survey, Student Travel Tallies
- Promotion of active transportation

Shared Partners:

- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Ybike
- Bay Area Children's Theatre

Active Transportation Program (ATP) Grant

Partners:

- SVBC
- YBike
- Marine Science Institute
- Alta
- San Mateo County Office of Education STEAM Center

Requirements:

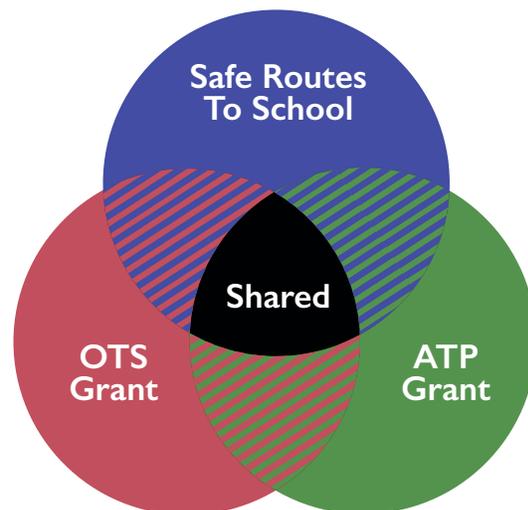
- Implement in-class curriculum
- Participate in education and encouragement events

Funder: ATP Cycle 1 - Caltrans

Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Grant

- Meet regularly (up to once a month) at school site
- Bay Area Children's Theatre + a bike rodeo (about \$3,000 worth of programs)
- \$600 worth of traffic safety supplies
- Free helmets
- Educational traffic safety materials

Funder: ATP Cycle 1 - Caltrans



¹ <https://www.kidsdata.org/region/4/san-mateo-county/summary#6/demographics>

Partner Organizations

Additional active partners include these school districts (SD) and organizations in San Mateo County:

School Districts

Belmont-Redwood Shores SD
Brisbane SD
Burlingame SD
Cabrillo Unified SD
Jefferson Elementary SD
Pacifica SD
Ravenswood City SD
Redwood City SD
San Carlos SD
San Mateo-Foster City SD
Sequoia Union High SD
South San Francisco Unified SD
St. Veronica Elementary School

Cities and Organizations

Belle Haven Action
California Office of Traffic Safety
Caltrans
City of Brisbane
City/County Association of Governments
City of Daly City
City of East Palo Alto
City of Half Moon Bay
City of Menlo Park
City of Millbrae
City of Pacifica

City of Redwood City
County of San Mateo
Parents for Safe Routes
San Mateo County Health Planning and Policy
San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)
Spare the Air Youth Technical Advisory Committee
San Mateo County Transportation Authority
Town of Colma

Mission

SRTS encourages and enables school children to walk and bicycle to school by implementing projects and activities that improve the health, well-being, and safety of children, resulting in less traffic congestion and vehicle emissions caused by school-related travel.

Goal

The overall goal of the program is to encourage children and their parents to carpool or to take an active mode of transportation to school to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. This is achieved through education in pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as awareness of human impact on the environment.

Funding

SRTS is a collaborative effort between the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) and the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE). Funding for SRTS is made possible through a combination of federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds and local C/CAG Measure M funds, which has led to two additional programs at SMCOE.

In 2014, SMCOE was awarded a Cycle I Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant. However, it was not able to

access the grant funds until May 2017 due to funding requirements. Grant funds were used to hire a project specialist; create a curriculum that meets science, engineering, computer science, health, and social science standards; and work with educators across the county in implementing the curriculum.

In 2018, the Safe Routes to School program received a \$100,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to support ten schools with a large population of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The ATP and OTS grants have enhanced the SRTS program and enabled San Mateo County to be a leader in innovative, inclusive and responsive Safe Routes to School programming.



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The SRTS program partners with service providers who educate children and parents on safe walking and biking practices through pedestrian and bicycle skills training, educational theater, and personal safety workshops. Specific support to participants includes the annual grant award program, the mini-grant program, professional development and training, connection to various Safe Routes to School resources, assistance in city/school relationship building, customized outreach, consultation, technical assistance, and countywide event coordination.

The SRTS coordinator collaborates with district administration, wellness coordinators, teachers, parents, community partners, and stakeholders to encourage young people to walk and bike to school, which results in a reduction of traffic congestion and improved air quality around schools. SRTS, coupled with climate change awareness and

education, helps children make a connection between transportation choices and climate impacts.

Safe Routes to School Community Advisory Committee Meeting

The Community Advisory Committee is comprised of SRTS stakeholders, including community members, city staff, students, community health planners, district-level SRTS coordinators, school board members, C/CAG staff, and SMCOE staff. The Committee provides guidance for SRTS in San Mateo County. The committee meets quarterly.

Six E's Model

The SRTS program was based on the comprehensive Six E's Model: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Equity.

Approved Vendors

- **Alta Planning + Design** – traffic analysis, route maps, Geographic Information System (GIS) modeling, encouragement activities, healthy community policies, bike share programs
- **Accent on Languages** – language translation services
- **Bay Area Bike Mobile** – hands-on bicycle repair workshops at schools, parks, and community events
- **Bay Area Children's Theatre** – *Rock the Block: A Walk and Roll Musical* for elementary school students, and *Step Up Crew: A Street Smart Concert* for middle school students. The shows both feature singing, dancing, comedy, and lessons about safely walking and bicycling to and from school (*Rock the Block*) and taking public transportation (*Step Up!*).
- **KidPower** – workshops to help reduce the fear of strangers
- **Kimley-Horn** – walk/bike audits, school route maps, training, and safety education
- **Marine Science Institute** – interactive hands-on adventures with San Francisco Bay Area marine life.
- **Richmond Blue Print** – printing services
- **Parisi** – walk/bike audits, school route maps, training, and safety education
- **Peninsula Family YMCA (Ybike)** – traffic safety and biking skills through classroom and on-bike experiences
- **Perfection on Wheels** – bicycle stunt show emphasizing the importance of wearing a helmet and riding a bike safely
- **Safe Moves** – bike rodeos, parent workshops, family bike rides
- **Strategic Energy Innovations** – hands-on sustainability projects, lessons, and campaigns in schools, focused on a variety of topics including air quality monitoring, transportation assessments, and green transportation campaigns
- **Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition** – pedestrian and bicycling safety skills, bike rodeos

Education: Educational activities are designed to promote and provide members of the school community—students, parents, faculty, and staff—a common understanding of what the SRTS program seeks to achieve and the positive impact the program can have on the environment, healthy lifestyle, and reducing traffic congestion. Education is delivered via school assemblies, classroom instruction, bicycle and pedestrian rodeos, bike clubs, green teams, family bike nights, and wellness fairs.

Encouragement: Encouragement events are integrated into educational activities. Students have an opportunity to practice positive walking and biking behaviors, generate interest, build community, and sustain momentum by celebrating success at these events.

Engineering: Engineering proposals tend to focus on smaller infrastructure projects, which include painting parking lots, directing traffic flow, designating pick-up and drop-off zones, and installing bicycle racks.

Walk and bike audits assess the walkability and bikeability of a school and its surrounding environment. These audits include analyzing traffic patterns and travel to and from a school. Walk and bike audits allow for direct and indirect feedback for potential positive changes. Walking and biking route maps are also generated in order to provide an effective tool for safe and efficient travel flow to and from a school. Currently, engineering projects are not supported by the SRTS grant.

Enforcement: The main goal of enforcement strategies is to encourage all road users to obey traffic laws. SRTS coordinators are encouraged to work closely with school resource officers to address issues regarding traffic safety in and around the school campus. Other effective tools include student valet programs, active speed monitors, and community awareness via announcements and parent newsletters.

Equity: Children from low-income families are more likely to walk to school out of necessity and often face busy streets, poor infrastructure, and more crime or violence. Additionally, low-income communities often lack strong policies or staffing to ensure community streets are safe for walking and biking and have considerably higher injury and fatality rates from traffic crashes often because of years of disinvestment in safe places to walk and bike. Due to these factors, fatality rates nationwide are twice as high for people walking in low-income metropolitan areas than those in upper-income areas.



Evaluation: Evaluation is an important element of any SRTS program. It is used to help determine if the most vital needs are addressed, appropriate strategies are used, and desired results are achieved.

The two main evaluation tools/activities in the SRTS program are student travel tallies and the parent/caregiver survey. Student travel tallies help measure how students get to and from school. These data are collected through the National Safe Routes Student Travel Tally Form and computed with the assistance of the National Safe Routes Data Center.

The SRTS parent/caregiver survey asks for information about what factors affect whether parents allow their children to walk, roll, or bike to school, the presence of key safety-related conditions along various routes to school and related background information. The parent survey is available in English and Spanish and is available online as well as in print.



Coordinator Support

The following workshops and opportunities were offered during the 2018-2019 school year to support school and district SRTS coordinators:

Safe Routes to School Coordinator Meetings

The 2018-2019 school year offered several opportunities for SRTS Coordinators to network, learn, and improve their programs, starting with the annual Safe Routes to School Summit. Throughout the year, the SRTS Coordinators enjoyed attending regular meetings where they could network and hear presentations from various partners on the environmental aspect of SRTS, how to partner with their municipality’s traffic engineers, and how to engage their community. Coordinators also attended a screening of the documentary *The Slow Way Home* and discussed how to encourage active modes of transportation.

Technical Assistance

SMCOE’s SRTS Coordinator conducted two site visits or phone calls per coordinator during the school year to provide support and technical assistance as well as professional development opportunities, which included training on how to lead a walk audit and SRTS standards-aligned curriculum training.

2018-19 YEAR IN REVIEW

A total of 90 schools from 15 school districts participated in the SRTS program in the 2018-2019 school year by hosting weekly walk to school days, walking school buses, International Walk to School Day, Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, Golden Sneaker Contests, Earth Day, and National Bike to School Day. Overall, the schools conducted five walkability and bikeability audits as well as hosted 792 assemblies, bike rodeos, and other education and encouragement events.

Contests

Participating schools hosted the second annual Golden Bicycle bike rack decorating contest, where the schools decorated their bicycle racks with safety messages on Bike to School Day. The winning school gets its name engraved on the Golden Bicycle Award, which is presented each year. The winning school in 2019 was Cunha Middle School in the Cabrillo Unified School District.



Schools also participated in two county-wide poster contests for International Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day. More than 200 students from across the

Participation Breakdown

K-6th Grade	57
K-8th Grade	15
Middle	13
High School	5

Total number of schools supported in '18-'19 . . .	90
Walkability and Bikeability Audits	5
Total Assemblies, Bike Rodeos, Education, Encouragement Events	792

* Funding was awarded for 1.5 years: January 2018 - June 2019

2018-19 Program Participants

During the 2018-19 school year, 15 districts participated in the SRTS Program.

DISTRICT	BIKE RODEOS	ASSEMBLIES/ CLASSES	ENCOURAGEMENT EVENTS
Belmont-Redwood Shores SD	7	2	38
Brisbane SD	3	3	39
Burlingame SD	1	71	25
Cabrillo SD	4	2	16
Jefferson Elementary SD	2	8	20
La Honda-Pescadero Unified SD	0	0	0
Las Lomas SD	1	9	3
Menlo Park City SD	4	3	8
Pacifica SD	6	6	14
Ravenswood SD	0	0	2
Redwood City SD	4	23	50
San Carlos SD	6	1	37
San Mateo-Foster City SD	23	17	22
Sequoia Union High SD	1	183	92
South San Francisco Unified SD	0	1	35

2018-19 EVENTS

International Walk to School Day (IWTSD)
October 10, 2018

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day
November 14, 2018

Golden Sneaker
Dates determined by coordinators

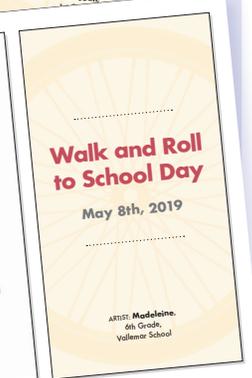
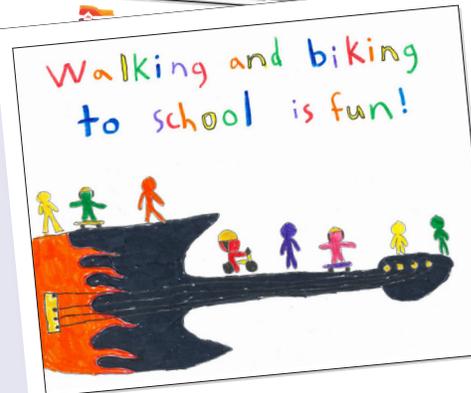
Earth Day
Week of April 22, 2019

National Bike to School Day (BTSD)
May 8, 2019

Bike Rack Decorating Contest – May 2019

Poster Contests
September 2018 (for IWTSD)
and April 2019 (for BTSD)

Walk to School Days
Determined by coordinators



county submitted works of art. The winning posters were duplicated and used for countywide promotion and encouragement.

Mini Grants

The SRTS Mini Grant was awarded to five schools at the end of the 2017-2018 school year for the 2018-2019 school year. This grant funded SRTS projects for schools that were not part of the regular grant program. The mini-grantees were supported in developing a SRTS program and four of the five schools applied for the regular SRTS grant for 2018-2019.

Community Collaboration

During the 2018-2019 school year, the SRTS program connected school administrators to their corresponding city staff to improve capacity to address barriers to walking and biking to school, such as infrastructure. One example of this in 2018-2019 occurred during the Daly City Collective Impact Project. SRTS staff brought representatives from the city, law enforcement, schools, community-based organizations and county health together to focus on issues around Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, a priority school identified in the San Mateo County Health Planning and Policy's *Creating Safer Streets Near Schools* report. Assisting the school in

Mini-Grant Schools and Projects They Are Working On

George Washington Elementary School, Daly City:*
Bicycle and Pedestrian Education

**Parkway Heights Middle School,
South San Francisco:**
Bicycle and Pedestrian Education

Redwood High School, Redwood City:*
Bike Shed Program

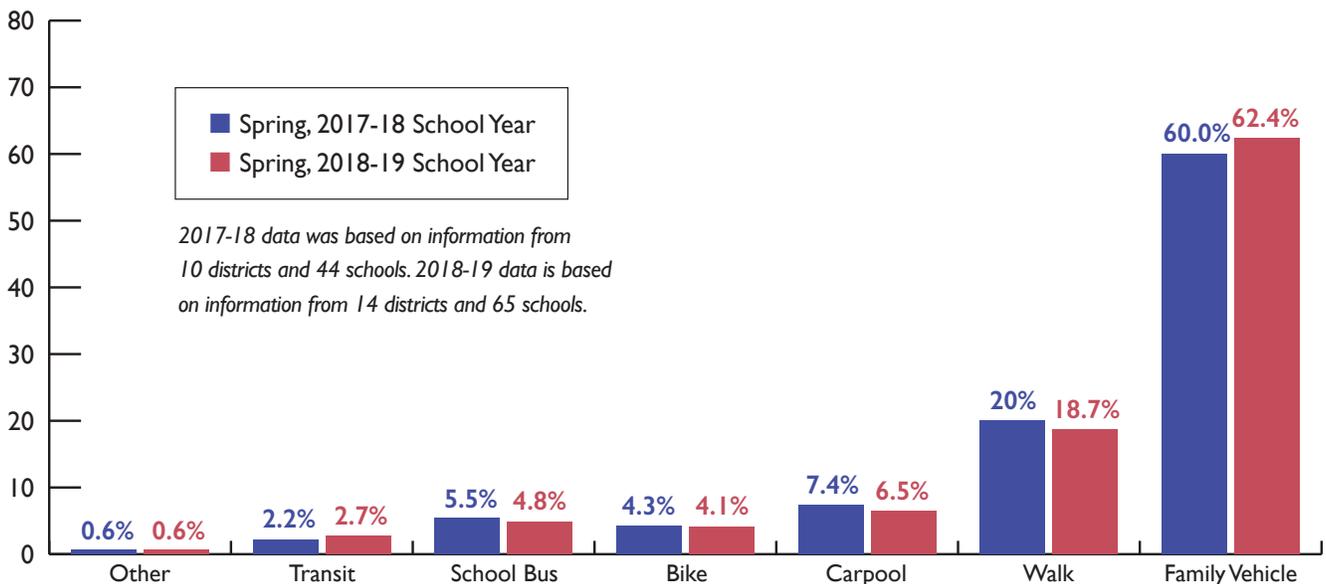
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, Daly City:*
School Safety Patrol

Woodside High School, Redwood City:*
Bike Shed Program

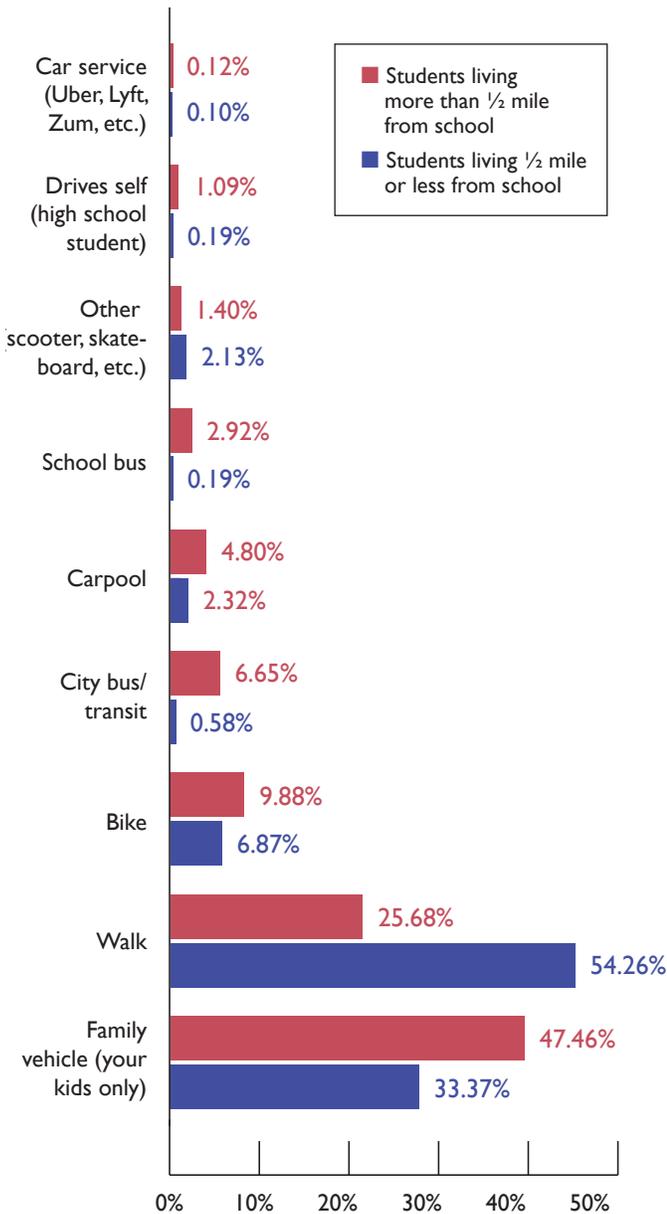
**Four of these schools applied for a regular Safe Routes to School grant at the end of the 2018-2019 school year to be implemented in 2019-2020.*

developing a relationship with the city and community partners led to a successful walk audit, implementation of a school safety patrol, increased signal timing on the John Daly Boulevard crosswalk near the school, and improvement of a crosswalk right outside the school.

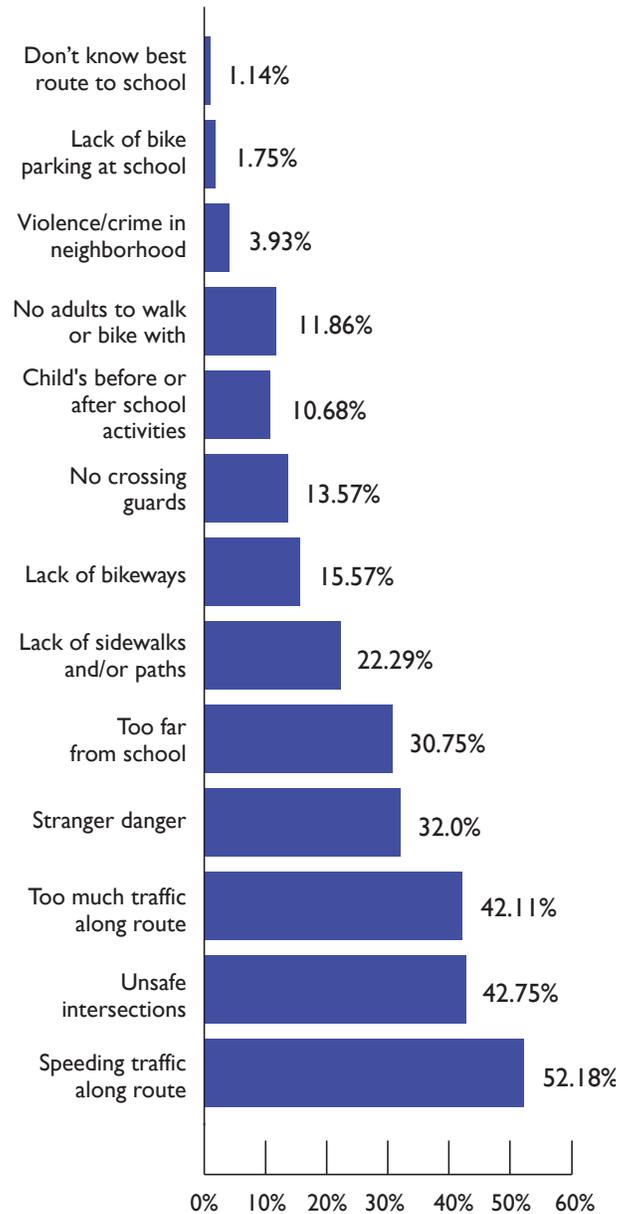
2017-19 Student Travel Tally



How does your child usually travel to school?



What are your top three concerns regarding your child or children walking and/or biking to school?



Infrastructure and Enforcement Projects

During the 2018-2019 school year, all schools that had student valet programs continued their efforts. Funding from OTS provided safety signage at schools located in high density areas and near unsafe intersections.

SMCOE hosted walk audits at Bayshore Elementary School, Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, and Los

Cerritos Elementary School. These walk audits resulted in some immediate changes near the schools. At Woodrow Wilson, for example, the signal timing was changed across John Daly Boulevard to allow pedestrians more time to cross. In South San Francisco, a bollard was removed that was a barrier on a path used by cyclists and parents with strollers. Walk audits were performed by Mark Fenton, a national transportation, health, and planning consultant. Three engineering firms were also available for walk audits during the 2018-2019

school year: Parisi Transportation Group, Kimley-Horn, and Alta Planning + Design.

In addition, Belmont-Redwood Shores School District (BRSSD) and Redwood City 2020, were awarded funds for small capital infrastructure projects. BRSSD converted their funding to non-infrastructure and Redwood City 2020 was successful in installing a bicycle rack at a school in the Redwood City School District.

Equity

SRTS aims to make walking and biking safe for all children by supporting schools in low-income neighborhoods and near unsafe intersections. During the 2018-2019 school year, SRTS utilized OTS funding to improve walking and biking safety for ten priority schools in low-income neighborhoods and near unsafe intersections. The program provided educational opportunities for students to learn about safe walking and biking practices and improved partnerships between schools and their local municipalities.

SRTS hosted other events to support schools in low-income neighborhoods, including a bike rodeo and bike giveaway in East Palo Alto. SRTS is also working with the county to address the lack of free breakfast programs for students enrolled in the Voluntary Transfer Program.

Additionally, equity was also taken into consideration in reviewing SRTS grant applications for the 2019-2020 school year. More points were awarded to schools and districts that had a high percentage of students on free and reduced lunch.

Evaluation

The parent/caregiver survey was available to parents from fall 2018 through late spring 2019. There was a 40 percent increase in respondents from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019.

Data collected from the 2018-2019 survey indicates that 46 percent of respondents live one mile or less from school, a distance easily covered on foot. Of this percentage, 60 percent report their children regularly take an active mode of transportation to school. Overall, however, only 35 percent of all survey respondents indicate that their children walk, bike, or use another active mode to travel to school most days.

The top five most pressing concerns for parents, from greatest to least, are speeding, unsafe intersections, too much traffic, distance from school, and stranger danger. During the 2018-2019 school year, the SRTS program addressed these barriers by connecting school administrators to their corresponding city staff.

FUTURE OF SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Several goals for the future of SRTS were identified during the 2018-2019 school year. The SRTS Coordinator will work with the SRTS Community Advisory Committee to achieve these goals. They include:

- promotion of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day
- continuing to deliver the SRTS program with an equity lens
- embedding SRTS curriculum in schools across the county
- assisting schools and their municipalities in developing a relationship
- promoting walking and biking culture with all SRTS grantees
- providing professional development opportunities for SRTS stakeholders





Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

The inaugural Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day took place on November 14, 2018. This day was the brainchild of a group of 5th graders from Martin Elementary School in South San Francisco. They were studying Ruby Bridges and were so inspired by her courage that they decided there needed to be a day to honor her. They asked their school board to pass a resolution. The SRTS Coordinator happened to be at the school board meeting and reached out to the students and their teacher about making Ruby Bridges Day an official “walk to school day.” Fourteen schools participated in 2018. The students have a dream to make it a nationwide day and SRTS will help make this happen!

Breakdown of Program Goals

Equity Lens

The SRTS program will continue to use OTS grant money to support ten priority schools highlighted in the report *Creating Safer Streets Near Schools*. This grant will enhance the equity lens of the SRTS program by providing more access to education and encouragement in low-income areas.

Sustainability and Embedding Curriculum

More than 30 people have been trained in the SRTS curriculum, Resilient Neighborhoods. A teacher stipend, funded by C/CAG, helped SRTS staff promote this training across the county. This curriculum, developed by the SMCOE STEAM Center, is a standards-aligned, project-based, solutionary unit that helps students assess their neighborhoods and transportation choices and take action.



The SMCOE SRTS Coordinator will continue to partner with the ATP funded Safe Routes to School for Health and Wellness Project Specialist to promote the standards aligned curriculum across the county. These efforts, coupled with education and encouragement funded by the SRTS grant, will lead to a greater county-wide emphasis on the benefits of active transportation.

Assist Schools and Their Municipalities in Relationship Building

The SRTS program had great success in Daly City connecting schools and the city of Daly City staff through the Collective Impact Project. The project focused on Woodrow Wilson Elementary and members included Daly City traffic engineers, the school principal, district staff, community partners, law enforcement, and community-based organizations. The SRTS Coordinator will take this model to other schools to help them develop a relationship with key stakeholders. SRTS works best when the school, municipality, and community engage on addressing issues together.

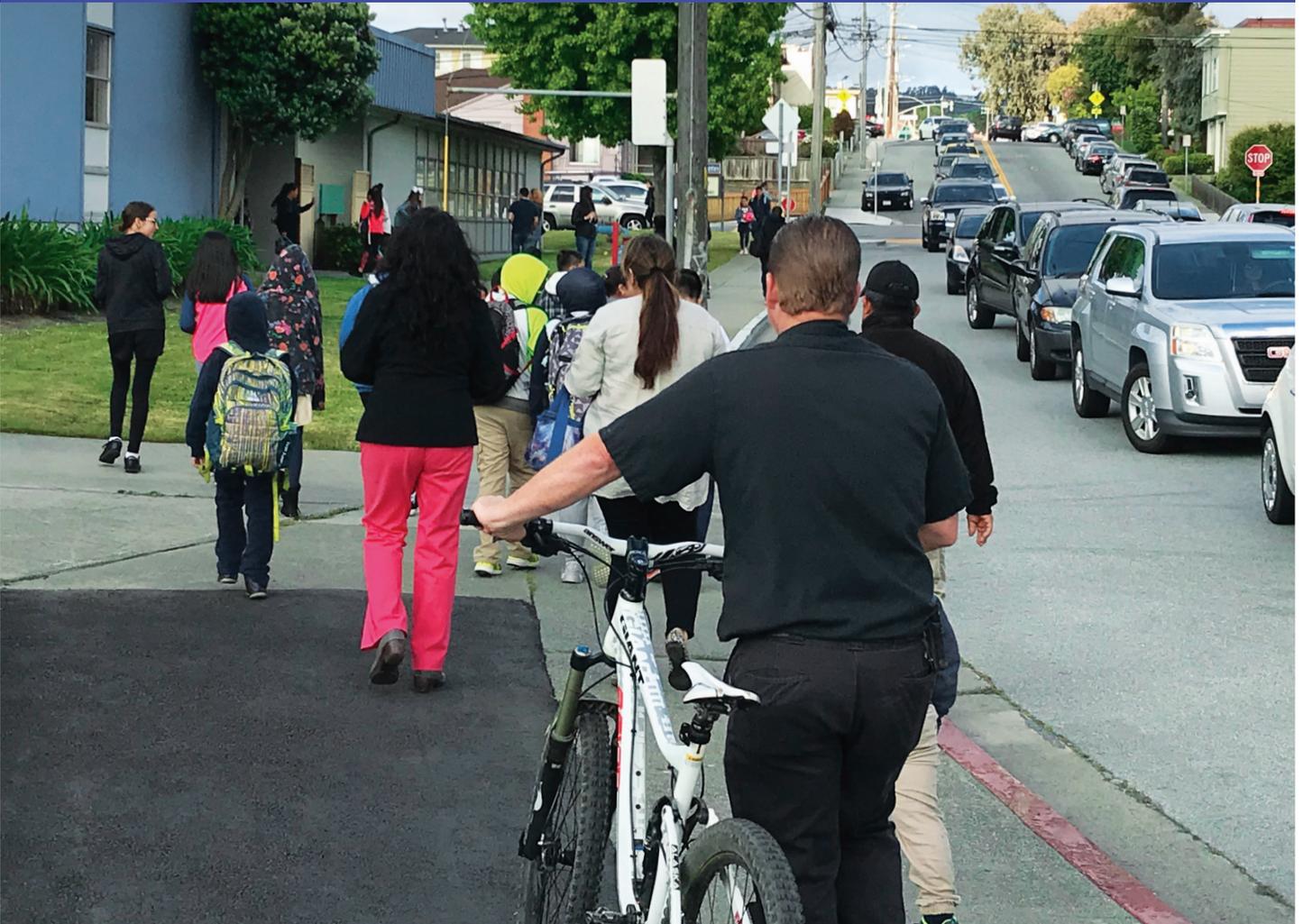
Promote Walking and Biking to School

Many schools in the county are located in areas with topographic challenges or are not conducive to bicycling. Efforts to promote safe bicycling practices will continue along with a greater effort to promote a culture of walking. New service providers have been added to the approved vendor list and include walk smart programs.



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