



San Mateo County **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

Healthy Kids • Green Communities • Safe Journeys

2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT



SAN MATEO
COUNTY
OFFICE OF
EDUCATION

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

BACKGROUND

Ten years ago, the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) had the foresight to bring Safe Routes to School to San Mateo County. C/CAG's support of Safe Routes to School has been unwavering and the program has grown exponentially with additional funding from the Active Transportation Program, the California Office of Traffic Safety and, starting in the 2020-2021 school year, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. The majority of public schools and cities in the county have reaped the benefits of Safe Routes to School.

The 2019-2020 school year started off with the

promise of fun walk and roll to school days, bike rodeos, and pedestrian safety education. The annual Safe Routes to School Summit in fall 2019 gave attendees, including the 17 Safe Routes to School grantees, new ideas for engaging their students and families in the quest for reduced traffic congestion around schools. Then, COVID-19 hit and 110,000 students were suddenly told to stay home. No more traveling to school. No more walk and roll to school days. No need to know a safe route to school. The focus shifted to having a safe route to *anywhere*. In response, the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School team led county-wide partnerships to provide innovative and inclusive programming for children learning at home.

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)

Active Transportation

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

Program (ATP) Grant

Partners:

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

Requirements:

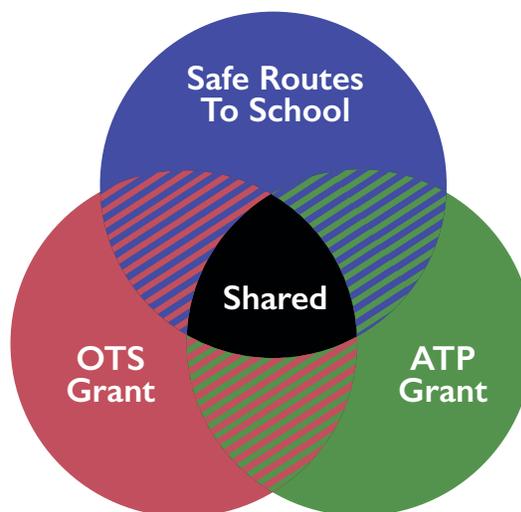
- Implement in-class curriculum
- Participate in education and encouragement events

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: CA Office of Traffic Safety



Partner Organizations

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

School Districts

Belmont-Redwood Shores Elementary SD
Brisbane Elementary SD
Burlingame Elementary SD
Cabrillo Unified SD
Jefferson Elementary SD
Pacifica SD
Ravenswood City Elementary SD
Redwood City SD
Redwood City 20/20
San Carlos Elementary SD
San Mateo-Foster City SD
Sequoia Union High SD
South San Francisco Unified SD

Cities and Organizations

Active Transportation Resource Center
California Office of Traffic Safety
Caltrans
City/County Association of Governments
City of Daly City
City of Half Moon Bay
City of Menlo Park
City of Redwood City
City of South San Francisco
Community Trust
County of San Mateo
MusicNotes
Office of Sustainability

Parents for Safe Routes
Reimagine Samtrans
Safe Kids Coalition
San Mateo County Health Planning and Policy
San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)
San Mateo County Transportation Authority
Spare the Air Youth Technical Advisory Committee
Stanford University
Transportation Equity Allied Movement
UC Davis Cooperative Extension

The C/CAG-funded Safe Routes to School program, which is also funded by a combination of the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and local C/CAG Measure M funds, has led to two additional Safe Routes to School programs at the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE).

SMCOE was awarded a Cycle 1 ATP grant in 2014. Due to funding requirements, SMCOE was not able to access the grant funds until May of 2017. 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. ATP funding is available until May 2021.

In 2018, the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program partnered with San Mateo County Health to create *Creating Safer Streets Near Schools*, which identified schools in high poverty areas close to intersections with a high amount of pedestrian and bicyclist collisions. The report was used to apply for a \$125,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) that was used to increase

transportation safety at ten priority schools.

The Safe Routes to School program also partners with service providers who educate children and parents on safe walking and biking practices through pedestrian and bicycle skills training, educational theatre, and personal safety workshops. A list of service providers can be found on page 4.

New additions to the Safe Routes to School program included poster contests for International Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day, which received more than 200 works of art from students across the county. The winning posters were duplicated and used for countywide promotion and encouragement. Another addition was the Safe Routes to School Mini Grant, which was awarded to five schools at the end of the 2017-2018 school year for the 2018-2019 school year. This grant funded Safe Routes to School projects for schools that were not part of the regular grant program. The mini-grantees were supported in developing a Safe Routes to School program and all five schools applied for the regular Safe Routes to School grant for 2018-2019.

Walking and biking to school are simple actions that children and their families can take to mitigate climate change. The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School Program works in partnership with municipalities, schools and community members to promote and support safe walking and biking practices and encourages municipalities to build infrastructure that supports walking and biking. Infrastructure coupled with education and encouragement will lead to behavior change and a healthier, cleaner, greener San Mateo County!

Vision

The efforts of Safe Routes to School in San Mateo County result in less traffic congestion around schools; improved air quality; a greener, healthier

community; and an increase in self-reliance among San Mateo County children who walk and bike to school. Safe Routes to School 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.

Mission

San Mateo County Safe Routes to School 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.

Approved Service Providers

- **Alta Planning + Design** - traffic analysis, route maps, GIS modeling, encouragement activities, works on healthy community policies, bike share programs
- **Accent on Languages** - language translation services
- **Beeline Bikes** - hands-on bicycle repair workshops at schools, parks, and community events in an effort to encourage folks to walk & bike more often
- **Ecology Action** - walk smart and bike smart programs
- **KidPower** - workshops to teach personal safety skills to children while walking or biking
- **Kimley-Horn** - walk bike audits, school route maps and training and safety education
- **Marine Science Institute** - interactive, hands-on adventures with San Francisco Bay Area marine life to show how active transportation helps the environment
- **Richmond Blue Print** - printing services
- **Parisi** - walk bike audits, school route maps, and 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 emphasizes the importance of wearing a helmet and riding a bike safely
- **Safe Moves** - bike rodeos, parent workshops, family bike rides
- **Shows that Teach** - bicycle education assembly
- **Strategic Energy Innovations** - hands-on sustainability projects, lessons, and campaigns in schools 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
- **Wheel Kids** - bicycle education and bicycle adventures

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 on pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as awareness around human impact on the environment.

Program Structure

Funding for the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School Program is made possible through a combination of federal CMAQ funds and local C/CAG Measure M funds. San Mateo County Safe Routes to School is a collaborative effort between C/CAG and the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE). During the 2019-2020 school year, other partners and collaborators included: California Office of Traffic Safety, San Mateo County Health Policy and Planning, Caltrans, Spare the Air Youth Technical Advisory Committee, Parents for Safe Routes, Alta Planning + Design and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and a variety of approved service providers listed on page 4.

Specific support to participants included providing remote learning and engagement options, the annual grant award program, professional development and training, Safe Routes to School resources, assistance in city/school relationship building, customized outreach, consultation, technical assistance, and countywide event coordination. SMCOE's Safe Routes to School coordinator leads a team of two other Safe Routes to School practitioners, including a project specialist and an AmeriCorps Fellow. During the 2019-2020 school year, the team collaborated with district administration, wellness coordinators, teachers, parents, community partners, and stakeholders to encourage young people to walk and bike to school. When schools moved to distance learning due to the pandemic, the focus of the work remained - keeping students safe when walking and biking – but the messaging became more inclusive – Safe Routes to *Anywhere*.

2019-2020 Presentations

The Safe Routes to School Team gave presentations



in the Bay Area and on the national stage. They included:

“Relationship Building – Cities and Schools” - Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition Bike Summit

“Analyzing and Applying Data Driven Decisions to Promote Health Equity in Safe Routes to School Programs;” “Setting Your Program Up for Success: Tools for Partnerships, Funding & Sustainability;” “SRTS in the Classroom: Using Creative + Collaborative Approaches to Promote Walking and Biking” - **National SRTS Conference**

“Creating SRTS Partnerships” - San Mateo County Safe Routes to School

“Be Part of the Green Revolution...Start a Walk & Roll Movement at Your School!” - Teens Tackle Tobacco Conference

Changes to the Six E's

In June 2020, the Safe Routes to School Partnership announced that they officially dropped **Enforcement** as one of the Safe Routes to School E's and adopted a new E: **Engagement**. This shift addresses equitable access to safe active transportation and has facilitated dialogue about racial equity, accessibility, transportation, community safety, and social justice. Safe Routes to School continues to be a community-focused program that draws from the experiences, expertise, knowledge and leadership of students, educators, and community members and aligns with other community-driven initiatives. It is about engaging community members to make walking and biking safe for all children, especially those who live in underserved communities and those who walk and bike out of necessity. While law enforcement will continue to be partners in this effort, enforcement is not the principal factor of a successful Safe Routes to School program.



community – students, parents, faculty, and staff – a common understanding of what the Safe Routes to School program seeks to achieve and the positive impact the program can have on the environment. Education is delivered in a multitude of ways and includes school assemblies, classroom instruction, bicycle and pedestrian rodeos, wellness programs, student clubs, and family events aimed at increasing active participation in Safe Routes to School events. COVID-19 has required service providers, educators, and Safe Routes to School coordinators to pivot their delivery to support education virtually, including virtual classroom presentations, field trips, safety patrol trainings, and Story Time.

Encouragement: Encouragement events and activities are intended to spark interest in walking and biking to school as opposed to driving in a single occupancy vehicle. Encouragement events are integrated into educational activities. Students are provided with the opportunity to practice positive walking and biking behaviors, and encouragement activities generate interest, build community,

Framework for Success

The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School Program is based on the Six E's Model, a nationally recognized framework that help form a comprehensive Safe Routes to School program. The most successful Safe Routes to School programs include all 6 E's into their programming. The 6 E's include: Education, Encouragement, Evaluation, Engineering, Equity, and Engagement.

Education: Educational activities are designed to promote and provide members of the school

Participation Breakdown

K-6th Grade.	72
K-8th Grade.	19
Middle School	18
High School	8

Total number of schools supported in '19-'20.	117
Walkability and Bikeability Audits.	4
Total assemblies, bike rodeos, education, encouragement events	312
Total route maps	15

2019-20 Program Participants

DISTRICT	BIKE RODEOS	ASSEMBLIES/ CLASSES	ENCOURAGEMENT EVENTS	WALK AUDITS	ROUTE MAPS
Bayshore SD		2			
Belmont-Redwood Shores SD			23		
Brisbane SD	1	5	29	1	
Burlingame SD		52	1		
Cabrillo SD		4	5		
Jefferson Elementary SD		20	5	2	3
Las Lomas SD		1	3		2
Menlo-Atherton High School		15	1		
Menlo Park City SD	1	7	3		
Ravenswood SD			1		
Redwood City SD		3	27		
Redwood High School		23	2		
San Bruno Park				1	1
San Carlos SD		29	9		
San Mateo-Foster City SD	5		21		
South San Francisco Unified SD	1	5			

2019-20 EVENTS

International Walk to School Day
October 2, 2019

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day
November 14, 2019

Earth Day
Week of April 20, 2020

Safe Routes to School Story Time:
April 22 - June 3, 2020

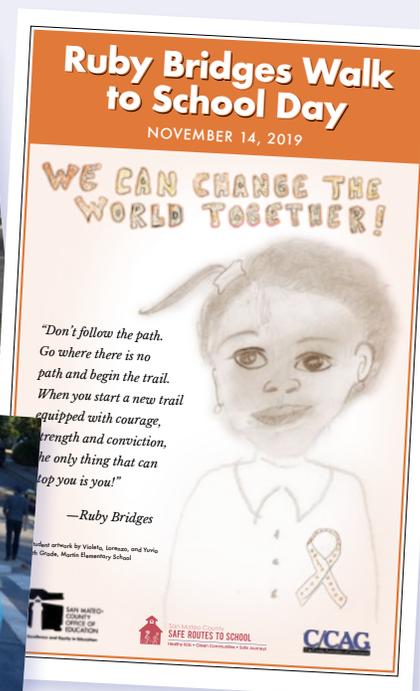
Bike to Anywhere Week:
Week of May 4, 2020

Food Drives: May 2020

Teddy Bear Challenge: May 2020

**International Walk to School
Day Poster Contest:**
September 2019

Walk to School Days: Fall 2019





and sustain momentum by celebrating success at these events.

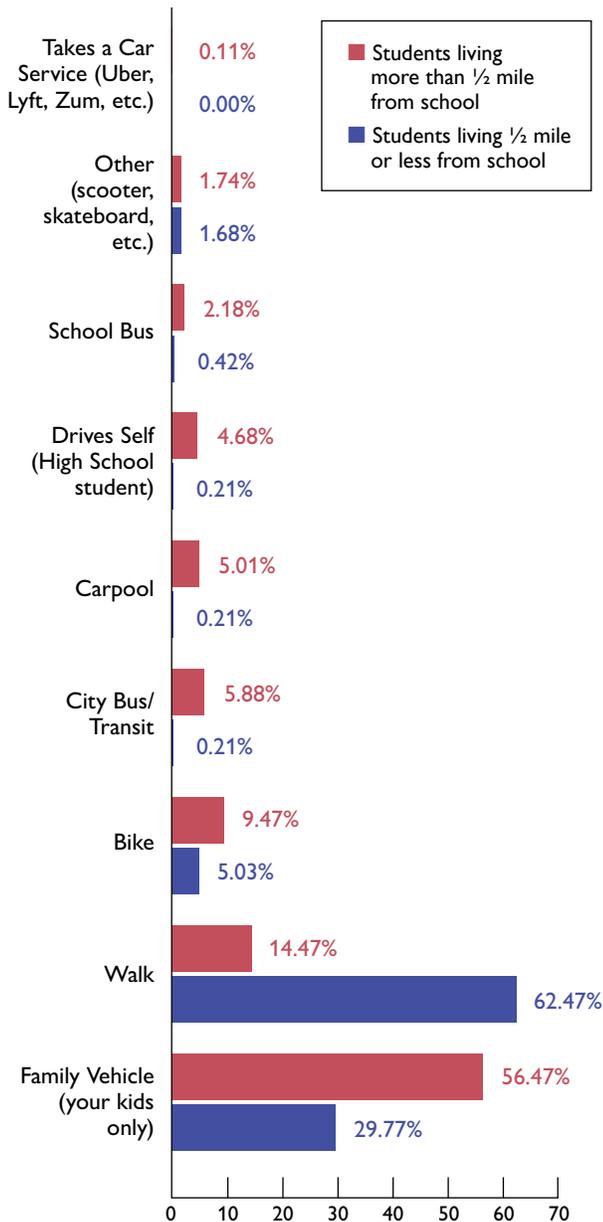
Countywide encouragement events include International Walk to School Day in October, Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day in November, Earth Day in April, and Bike to School Day in May. Schools and families are encouraged to walk or bike to school year-round through the promotion of weekly or monthly walk and roll to school days. Regular encouragement activities are essential to shifting modes of travel from single occupancy vehicles to more active forms of transportation. Since March 2020, when San Mateo County transitioned to distance learning and most travel to school was stalled, the San Mateo County Office of Education shifted encouragement activities to fit the current needs. Safe Routes to Anywhere and Walk to Anywhere Days have helped Safe Routes to School programming continue encouragement activities while students are in distance learning.

Evaluation: Evaluation is an important element of any Safe Routes to School program. It is used to determine if the most vital needs are addressed,

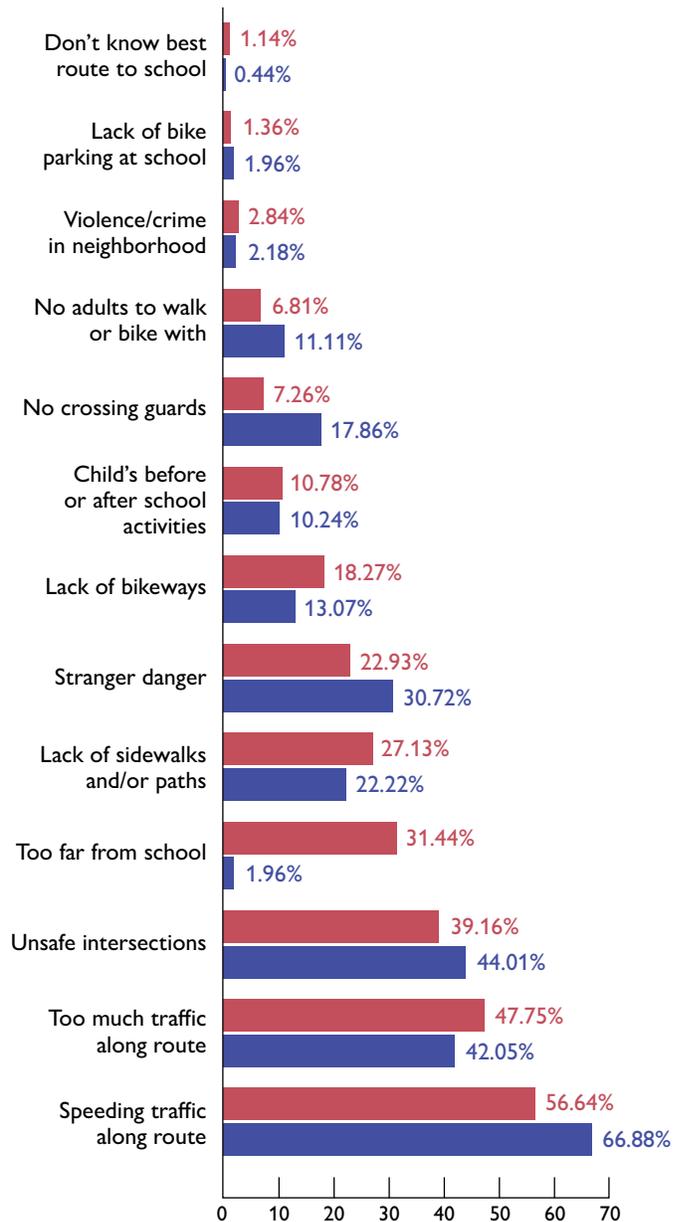
appropriate strategies are used, and desired results are achieved. The two main evaluation methods in the Safe Routes to School program are student travel tallies and the parent and caregiver survey. Student travel tallies are collected twice a year and measure how students get to and from school. They can serve as a metric for the effectiveness of encouragement and education activities. These data are collected through the National Safe Routes Student Travel Tally Form and are computed with the assistance of the National Safe Routes Data Center. Due to the pandemic, the student travel tally data collected during the 2019-2020 school year is not significant enough to report.

The Safe Routes to School parent/caregiver survey asks for information regarding factors that affect a parent or caregiver's decision to allow their children to walk, roll, or bike to school, and 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. Some parent/caregiver survey data was collected prior to the

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?



NOTE: 1578 people from 13 school districts took the survey pre-pandemic. Other districts planned on taking it but the pandemic put a halt to this.

2019-20 Student Travel Tally

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, student travel tally data that was collected is not significant enough to show



pandemic. The most recent iteration of the annual parent survey includes questions that pertain to safety and health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Engineering: In addition to the other E's, engaging in engineering allows for broader collaboration with local cities, municipalities, and other public agencies and stakeholders to identify and address barriers to walking, bicycling and access to transit.

Walk and bike safety 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. Four walk audits were held during the 2019-2020 school year, resulting in some changes on or near each school site. Walking and biking route maps are also generated to support safe and efficient travel flow to and from a school. 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..

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 instances of crime or violence during their trips to and from school. Additionally, low-income communities often lack strong policies, funding, or other forms of support to ensure community streets are safe for walking and biking and have considerably high injury and fatality rates from traffic crashes, due in large

part to years of disinvestment in safe infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. Due to these factors, fatality rates nationwide are twice as high for pedestrians in low-income metropolitan areas than those in upper-income neighborhoods.

The increasing relevance of accessible, equitable programming has become the foundation for the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program. It places particular emphasis on providing access and support for low-income students, students of color, students of all genders, students with disabilities, and others. This foundation ensures safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for all. Safe Routes to School has committed to building programs around equity by using Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) funding to provide additional resources to schools low-income communities, particularly technical assistance for schools serving low-income communities with higher rates of traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists. During the 2019-2020 school year, Safe Routes to School utilized OTS funding to improve walking and biking safety for ten priority schools in low-income neighborhoods within a half mile radius of unsafe intersections. The program provided educational opportunities for students to learn about safe walking and biking practices and improved partnerships between schools, their local municipalities, and community organizations. When the shelter in place order went into effect, the Safe Routes to School team worked with two high needs schools to get pedestrian and bicycle safety information and activity kits to students via district-sponsored food drives. Additionally, equity was considered when schools and districts



Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

The inaugural Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day (RBWTSD) took place on November 14, 2018, when 14 schools across the county participated. In 2019, 25 schools took part. Students from the South San Francisco Unified School District's Martin Elementary School started the movement with a dream to make RBWTSD a nationwide event. SMCOE Safe Routes to School took up this mantle and promoted RBWTSD among Safe Routes to School practitioners throughout the Bay Area and across the country, presenting the initiative at a Bay Area conference and the National Safe Routes to School Conference in Tampa, Florida. Several school districts and organizations from across the country have expressed interest in participating in 2020. One district decided to hold their inaugural RBWTSD in February 2020 during Black History Month. The act of walking to school together to show support for equity and inclusion in our schools is what makes this day so powerful.

applied for the Safe Routes to School grant. Schools with large numbers of students on free and reduced lunch scored higher than schools in wealthier areas.

Infrastructure Projects

Four walk audits were conducted by Alta Planning + Design during the 2019-2020 school year at Daniel Webster Elementary, General Pershing School, and Panorama Elementary in Daly City as well as Belle Air Elementary in San Bruno. City staff, community members, and school staff were engaged in each walk audit, which resulted in some immediate changes near the schools. At Daniel Webster, for example, the city of Daly City improved a troublesome crosswalk near the school. Unfortunately, the pandemic put a halt to improvement plans.

2019 - 2020 Coordinator Support

The following workshops and opportunities were offered during the 2019-2020 school year to

support school and district Safe Routes to School Coordinators:

Safe Routes to School Coordinator Meetings

The Safe Routes to School Coordinators met quarterly. When the shelter in place order went into effect in March, all meetings were held via Zoom. Meetings included presentations by various partners and on various topics, including how to shift Safe Routes to School education to the virtual world.

Safe Routes to School Summit

The fifth Annual Safe Routes to School Summit brought Safe Routes to School practitioners from San Mateo County and beyond together for workshops, a resource fair, and sharing of best practices. This summit is the only one of its kind in the Bay Area.

Technical Assistance

SMCOE's Safe Routes to School Coordinator

provided support and technical assistance as well as professional development opportunities, which included training on creating Safe Routes to School partnerships and how to find funding for infrastructure projects.

2019-20 YEAR IN REVIEW

Resilient Neighborhoods Curriculum

The 2019-2020 school year marked the second year that the Mateo Environmental Literacy Collaborative (SMELC) included the Safe Routes to School Resilient Neighborhoods curriculum in its Transportation unit, supported by funding from C/CAG. SMELC is an opportunity for regional educators to implement environmental literacy and standards-aligned curriculum into their classrooms through service learning and a solutionary framework, which empowers students to explore, understand, and tackle real-world issues that impact the environment. Through the lens of transportation, educators and students learn to assess their neighborhoods, understand the transportation needs in their communities, and ultimately learn to make informed and healthy decisions regarding how they travel to school. Given the COVID-19 restraints on public gatherings, 2020 marked the first year of

hosting the curriculum training completely virtually. Teachers participated in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities to help them pivot to teaching the subject matter virtually, while still emphasizing the importance of teaching environmental, social, and transportation justice to students.

Safe Routes to Zoom

Since March 2020, when San Mateo County transitioned to distance learning and most travel to school was stalled, the San Mateo County Office of Education shifted encouragement activities to fit the current needs. Given that schools were closed to in-person instruction, programming was briefly at a standstill. With many encouragement events on the horizon, including anchor events such as Earth Day and Bike to School Day, the Safe Routes to School team developed ways to encourage families and communities county-wide to continue walking and biking safely, despite the sudden decrease in travel to/from school. The team worked with approved vendors and service providers to help Safe Routes to School continue encouragement activities while students were in distance learning. Through these collaborative efforts, the team quickly formed Safe Routes to Zoom, a concerted effort to engage families, schools, and communities through safe walking and biking promotion. The pivot from in-per-





son education to virtual education facilitated new, innovative approaches to bike and pedestrian safety education and encouragement.

The team launched Story Time with Safe Routes to School, a live, weekly event in which staff read stories featuring children walking and biking. Every Story Time event features games, activities, and safety tips related to the story. Student Safety Patrol teams from various schools continued to meet virtually, and the Safe Routes to School team stepped in to lead some of their meetings, encourage safety patrollers to think of unique ways to continue promoting safe behaviors when walking and biking, and facilitated meetings between two safety patrols in different school districts. Students used this time to share best practices and learn from one another.

The Safe Routes to School team created specific COVID-19-related collateral to share throughout the county. A Walking/Biking Safely During COVID-19 flyer in English and Spanish provided helpful reminders for walking and biking during a pandemic and charts that help children visualize what six feet looks like. In addition to the flyer, the Safe Routes to School team created activity kits that were distributed as part of school district-sponsored food banks. Early in the pandemic, households nationwide were

placing teddy bears or other stuffed animals in their street-facing windows for young children to enjoy “hunting” teddy bears on their walks and bike rides. Safe Routes to School promoted this activity widely through the *San Mateo Daily Journal’s* circulation as well as website-based advertisement.

The team also developed a series of six videos that facilitate teaching safe walking and biking skills, such as riding a bike with traffic, how to cross the street safely, and how to properly fit a helmet. These videos were uploaded to the SMCOE YouTube page and are free, accessible options for providing bike and pedestrian safety education while most students are in distance learning. In lieu of Earth Day and Bike to School Day encouragement events, Safe Routes to School promoted Safe Routes to Anywhere and Walk/Bike to Anywhere Days, which promote active modes of transportation to local family-friendly destinations.

Safe Routes to School for Health and Wellness

In 2014, SMCOE was awarded funding from Caltrans’ Cycle I Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant. However, the organization was unable to access the grant funds until May 2017, due to specific funding requirements. Grant funds were used to hire a project



specialist to develop resources designed to encourage sustainable, long-term programming that shifts school culture to promote safe, accessible, and active transportation. These resources include an administrator toolkit that addresses common issues such as concerns regarding bullying and personal safety and provides resources for education and encouragement events; a parent and community engagement toolkit that encourages parents to become actively involved in Safe Routes to School by providing fun and engaging ideas for encouragement events and planning tools to help facilitate event coordination; and lastly, a curriculum that meets science, engineering, computer science, health, and social science standards. The ATP project specialist worked with educators, administrators, and community organizations across the county to implement these resources and provide additional technical assistance to 14 schools in communities of concern. These schools received hands-on technical assistance and resources that included pedestrian and bicycle rodeos, parent engagement workshops and resources, walk and bike audits, and additional support for walk/bike to school encouragement events. In addition, more than 40 educators coun-

ty-wide have been trained in the Safe Routes to School curriculum, Resilient Neighborhoods, since its inception in the 2018-2019 school year. Through the support of C/CAG, Safe Routes to School staff were able to offer a teacher stipend to those implementing the curriculum in their classrooms across the county. The standards-aligned, solutions-focused curriculum allows educators and students to assess their neighborhoods, understand transportation needs in their communities, and empowers them to make an informed and healthy decision regarding how they choose to travel to school. These combined efforts helped pave the way for a greater county-wide emphasis on the benefits of active transportation. The ATP funded grant is scheduled to close out in May 2021 but has created a lasting impact for schools county-wide.

FUTURE OF SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Several goals for the future of Safe Routes to School were identified during the 2019-2020 school year. They include:

- create program options that reflect the needs of individual schools
- deliver the Safe Routes to Schools program with an equity lens
- assist schools and their municipalities in collaboration efforts
- promote walking and biking culture across the county
- provide professional development opportunities for Safe Routes to School stakeholders, including options for remote learning

Program Goals

Options that Reflect the Needs of Individual Schools

It is essential that Safe Routes to School address the needs of each school that adopts the program. What works for one school will not, necessarily, work for the next school. The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program will continue to

engage with all school stakeholders to develop programming that addresses any barriers to walking and biking that exist.

Equity Lens

In May 2020, the SMCOE Safe Routes to School program was awarded a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety for the third year in a row. This grant has allowed the program to focus on priority schools in under-resourced areas of the county where the majority of students receive free and reduced lunch. Students in low-income areas often walk and bike to school out of necessity. The OTS grant has enhanced the equity lens of the Safe Routes to School program by providing more access to education and encouragement, community engagement, and bike helmets.

Assist Schools and their Municipalities in Relationship Building

At the start of the pandemic, several municipalities throughout the county implemented a “slow streets” program, recognizing that more people, including school children, would be walking and biking. These same municipalities also recognized the need for outdoor seating for restaurants and blocked off streets to provide this. These actions demonstrate what is possible for slowing down streets around schools. The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program will assist schools in advocating for slower streets in anticipation of students returning to school.

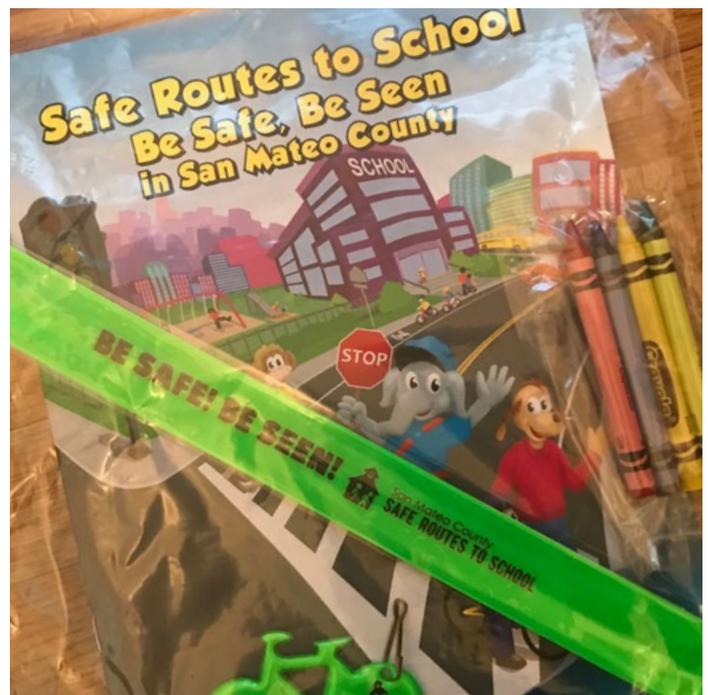
Promote Walking and Biking to School

As many schools continue to operate through distance learning, San Mateo County Safe Routes to School will continue to promote Safe Routes to Anywhere. Efforts will focus on keeping students safe as they navigate their neighborhood on their bicycle or by taking a walk. As schools announce a return to in-person learning, Safe Routes to School will be at the forefront of promoting and supporting safe walking and biking practices.

Professional Development

San Mateo County Safe Routes to School will continue to provide professional development opportunities and

a professional learning network where Safe Routes to School practitioners can share best practices. The importance of this was highlighted during the initial shelter in place order when schools pivoted to online learning. With students learning from home and engaging in active transportation in their neighborhoods, access to bicycle and pedestrian education was imperative, maybe even more so than when they were attending school in-person. The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School team developed several ideas for online learning that were shared with Safe Routes to School practitioners across the county. Professional development will continue to include presentations on engaging in Safe Routes to School on a virtual platform.





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