

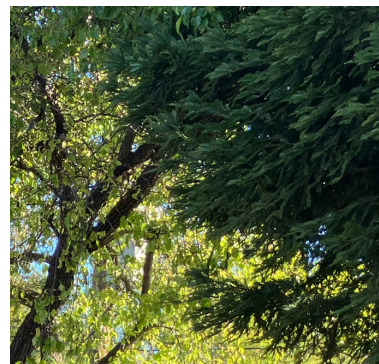
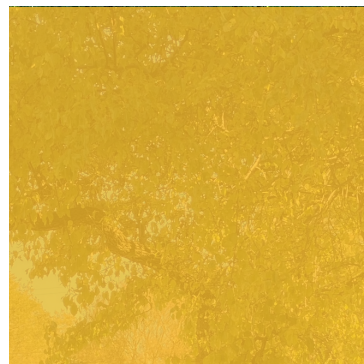


San Mateo County  
**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

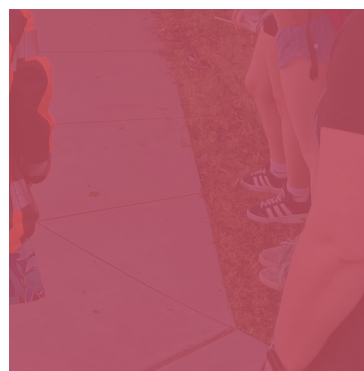
Healthy Kids • Green Communities • Safe Journeys

# 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Dedicated to creating safe, equitable, and accessible pathways for students to walk and bicycle to school.



SAN MATEO  
COUNTY  
OFFICE OF  
EDUCATION



# Introduction

Safe Routes to School is dedicated to creating safe, equitable, and accessible pathways for students to walk and bicycle to school. Rooted in the 6 Es — Education, Encouragement, Engagement, Equity, Evaluation, and Engineering — the program brings schools, municipalities, and community organizations together to collaborate on making walking and bicycling safer for students and their families. These efforts enhance safety and sustainability for the larger community. This annual report highlights key activities, partnerships, and accomplishments during the 2024-2025 school year and emphasizes the program’s commitment to supporting schools and equity-priority communities across the county.

## Vision

The efforts of Safe Routes to School result in less traffic congestion around schools, improved air quality, and a greener, healthier community. The program supports increased self-reliance among children who walk and bike to school and serves as a catalyst for teaching traffic safety skills and encouraging active modes of transportation. San Mateo County communities support this initiative through infrastructure that provides safe passage for children.

## Mission

San Mateo County Safe Routes to School encourages and enables students to walk and bicycle to school by implementing projects and activities that improve children’s health, well-being, and safety. These efforts contribute to reduced traffic congestion and lower emissions associated with school-related travel.

## Goals

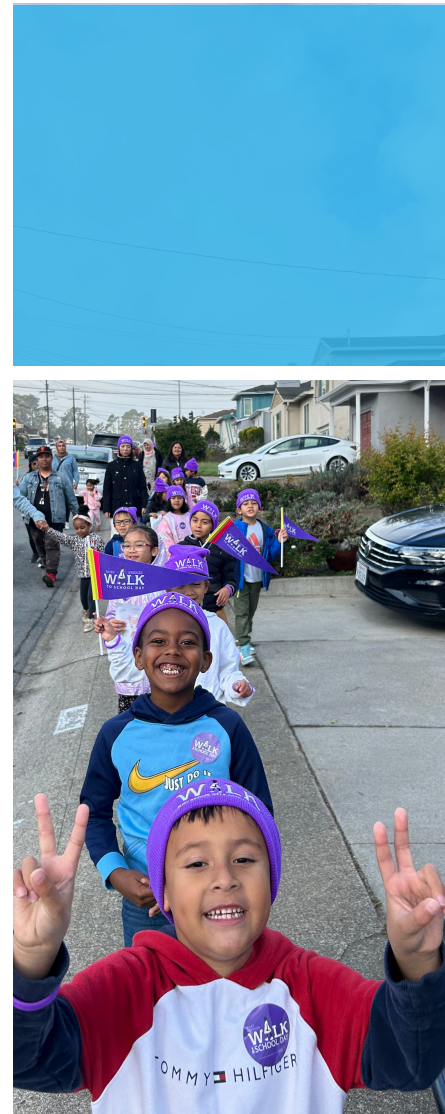
The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program has two primary goals:

### 1. Promote Active Transportation and Safety Education

Partner with schools and community-based organizations to encourage families to choose active transportation options for school commutes. This approach reduces traffic congestion, improves air quality, educates on pedestrian and bicycle safety, and increases awareness of environmental impacts.

### 2. Strengthen School-Municipality Partnerships

Support schools in building strong relationships with local municipalities to improve active transportation opportunities for children and families. By fostering communication between schools and cities, the program addresses transportation-related challenges and develops practical solutions that prioritize student safety and accessibility.



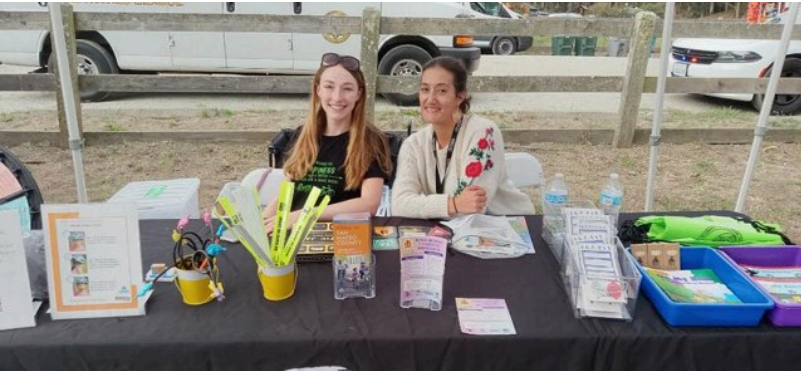
## Safe Routes to School Team

The success of the Safe Routes to School program is made possible by a dedicated and collaborative team that brings expertise, coordination, and on-the-ground implementation to schools and communities across the county. This work is led by the Coordinator and Project Specialist, and strengthened by Youth Development Specialists and an Administrative Assistant who together provide strategic direction, technical assistance, education, event coordination, and operational support. Additional support comes from dedicated AmeriCorps Fellows and targeted Safe Routes to School efforts on the coastside, both of which expand the program's reach and deepen its impact in schools and communities.

## School Participation

This [chart](#) highlights the breadth and depth of school participation in the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program during the reporting period. A total of 128 schools engaged in Safe Routes to School activities, alongside 8 community partners, demonstrating strong countywide commitment to student safety, health, and active transportation. Schools participated in a wide range of initiatives — from bike and pedestrian safety education programs such as Perfection on Wheels, Bike Mobile, Marine Science Institute, and Safe Moves to encouragement events including International Walk to School Day, Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, Golden Sneaker Contest, Bike Month, and Crossing Guard Appreciation Week. The data reflects both the scale and diversity of programming reaching elementary, middle, and high school students across multiple districts.





### **AmeriCorps Fellows**

AmeriCorps fellows have been a pillar of the Safe Routes to School program at the San Mateo County Office of Education since 2018, providing invaluable support to the team and greatly expanding its capacity to serve students and families. In April, federal cuts to AmeriCorps led to the premature termination of more than 32,000 volunteer placements, including the two fellows serving with Safe Routes to School through the Sustainability Service Corps. While legal battles were ongoing at the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year with a multi-state lawsuit contesting the terminations, the future of AmeriCorps was and is uncertain. Through the advocacy and efforts of County Office staff, and with County Office leadership making it possible to bring the fellows back as interns, the Safe Routes to School team returned to full capacity with both former AmeriCorps fellows rehired as interns. The Safe Routes to School team continued delivering consistent, enthusiastic service to support walking, rolling, and traffic safety in schools across the county, even while navigating the abrupt dismantling of AmeriCorps by the Department of Government Efficiency, which created sudden shifts in funding and team structure.

### **Coastside Support**

For the fifth consecutive year, the Safe Routes to School program has funded a dedicated coordinator to support coastside school districts. With this continued support, coastside programs have flourished. Schools participated in events such as Walk & Roll to School Days, the Golden Sneaker Contest, Crossing Guard Appreciation Week, and Bike Month. All three coastside districts — Pacifica, Cabrillo Unified, and La Honda-Pescadero Unified — completed Student Travel Tallies and schools applied for and received educational programming and traffic safety kits.

All three coastside school districts secured Infrastructure and Special Projects funding from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. The Pacifica School District collaborated with the City of Pacifica on crosswalk improvements near two schools. Cabrillo Unified School District partnered with the Coastside Fire Protection District to enhance safety and connectivity in the area surrounding El Granada Elementary School and Fire Station #41. La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District received funding to support its bike program at Pescadero Middle/High School. Cabrillo School in Pacifica also received funds for a safer pathway to their on-campus bike racks.

Two walk audits were completed, one at Cabrillo School in February 2025 and one at Farallone View Elementary in April 2025, as part of San Mateo County’s participation in the School Travel Fellowship Cycle 4. Additionally, all coastside school districts continued to collaborate with their respective municipalities to implement recommendations from previous Safe Routes to School Walk Audit reports.

Safe Routes to School has remained active in the coastside community through events such as Fall Fest at Quarry Park, the Make It On Main Street Back-to-School Block Party, and National Night Out at Moonridge Apartments. The program also offered free bike repair and helmets at Cabrillo School and Moonridge and planned bike activities for the annual Día del Niño celebration at the Moonridge community, promoting safe and active transportation across the region. These efforts demonstrate the ongoing commitment of the program to enhance safety, encourage active transportation, and strengthen partnerships across the coastside community.





# Program Overview

The Safe Routes to School Program is a countywide initiative that supports schools and communities in creating safer, healthier, and more accessible transportation options for students and their families. The program was established in 2011 by the San Mateo County City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG), which remains the program’s primary funder and a key strategic partner. Since its inception, Safe Routes to School has grown into a comprehensive, multidisciplinary program that addresses traffic safety, public health, environmental sustainability, and equitable access to active transportation.

In addition to C/CAG funding, the program receives support from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) for small capital infrastructure projects and special initiatives; funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety to advance education, encouragement, and safety outcomes; and supplemental funding from San Mateo County Public Health to align school travel efforts with broader community health goals.

Administered by the San Mateo County Office of Education, the program partners closely with schools, cities, public agencies, and community organizations to reduce traffic congestion around school campuses, improve safety for all road users, and promote lifelong healthy travel habits. The program’s work is guided by the nationally recognized Six E’s framework — Education, Engagement, Encouragement, Evaluation, Engineering, and Equity, which provides a holistic structure for advancing safe, active, and sustainable school transportation.

Together, these interconnected strategies promote safer, healthier, and more sustainable transportation options for students and their families, including walking, bicycling, carpooling, and public transit use. By reducing traffic congestion near school campuses and enhancing student safety,

the Safe Routes to School program has become a vital resource for schools and communities throughout San Mateo County.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the program actively implemented the Six E's while continuing to explore innovative approaches to deepen its impact, strengthen partnerships, and respond to evolving community needs.

### Education

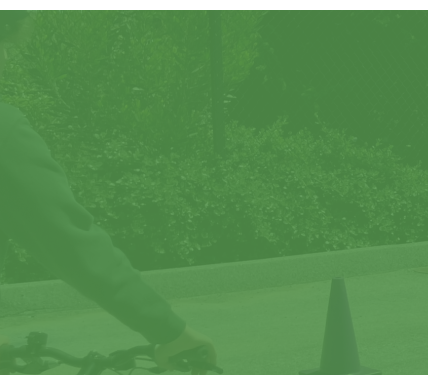
Education is a cornerstone of the Safe Routes to School program, equipping students and families with essential traffic safety skills and an understanding of how transportation choices affect personal health, community well-being, and the environment. During the 2024-2025 school year, the program delivered education through a variety of formats, including school assemblies, classroom-based instruction, wellness programs, community events, and student clubs.

Educational offerings were delivered in partnership with trusted service providers such as Safe Moves, Music Notes, and other bicycle and pedestrian safety educators, ensuring developmentally appropriate, engaging, and culturally responsive instruction. Lessons emphasized safe street behaviors, bicycle handling skills, helmet use, and strategies for navigating school travel environments confidently.

A key example of innovative education was the Community Science Leadership Academy, a short, multi-session program in partnership with [Stanford Our Voice](#) that introduced students to the connections between community health, transportation, and the built environment. Through guided discussions and hands-on activities, students explored how walking and biking conditions around their schools impact safety and access, empowering them to observe their neighborhoods and contribute informed perspectives to local transportation conversations.

Number of Assemblies	Sorted by Vendor
Service	# of Schools Served
Bike Mobile	3
EarthCapades	5
Marine Science Institute	12
Music Notes	9
Perfection on Wheels	25
Safe Moves	11
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>

Schools Served Sorted By Grade Levels	
Grade Levels	# of Schools Served
Elementary	47
Middle School	9
High School	2
K22	1
Community Events	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>





## Engagement

The Safe Routes to School program prioritizes meaningful engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders, including students, families, educators, school administrators, city staff, public health professionals, and community-based organizations. Engagement efforts are designed to build trust, encourage shared ownership, and ensure that local knowledge informs program activities.

During the reporting year, SRTS engaged school communities through school meetings, family events, walk audits, and collaborative planning processes. For example, students and caregivers participated alongside city staff and transportation professionals in walk audits and school travel discussions, providing firsthand insight into daily travel challenges and helping shape practical, community-supported solutions.

## Encouragement

Encouragement efforts focus on building enthusiasm for walking and bicycling to school and inspiring the adoption of new, healthy travel habits. During the 2024-2025 school year, celebratory events such as International Walk to School Day, Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, Earth Month, and Bike Month generated excitement and reinforced safe travel behaviors.

Monthly Walk and Roll to School Days helped sustain momentum throughout the year, while school-led events were supported through the distribution of promotional materials and incentives, including stickers and reflectors. The program also provided technical assistance and encouragement tools to schools, enabling them to tailor events to their unique communities.

Together, these activities fostered a positive culture of active transportation, making walking and bicycling to school both rewarding and enjoyable for students and families while reinforcing safety messages and community connection.



## Evaluation

Evaluation is essential for measuring program effectiveness and identifying opportunities for improvement. During the 2024-2025 school year, the Safe Routes to School program conducted student travel tallies and parent and caregiver surveys to better understand school travel patterns, perceptions of safety, and barriers to active transportation.

Findings from these evaluations informed strategic planning, helped refine program offerings, and guided conversations with schools and city partners about priority needs. Program performance was further monitored through quarterly reporting, which tracked progress toward goals and documented accomplishments across all program areas.

In addition, the Safe Routes to School program participated in CHOICES, a collaborative evaluation initiative with San Mateo County Public Health, the California Department of Public Health, and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Through CHOICES, the program contributed data and insights that strengthened the evidence base for active transportation interventions and highlighted the role of Safe Routes to School in advancing public health outcomes.

## Engineering

Engineering efforts focused on improving the physical conditions that support safe walking and bicycling to school. Through collaboration with transportation and planning professionals, including Alta Planning + Design and public health and transportation consultant Mark Fenton, the Safe Routes to School program addressed infrastructure barriers to active transportation and advanced actionable safety solutions.

During the reporting year, walk audits were conducted at six schools to assess existing conditions and identify improvements related to pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety.

These audits resulted in site-specific recommendations that supported both near-term, low-cost improvements and longer-term infrastructure planning. Several cities that participated in the School Travel Fellowship or sponsored walk audits used these findings to strengthen applications for external funding opportunities.

Engineering initiatives also included demonstration projects developed through the School Travel Fellowship. These projects piloted innovative, quick-build traffic-calming strategies such as curb extensions, enhanced



crosswalk designs, vertical delineators, and other low-cost infrastructure treatments. Demonstration projects allowed cities and school communities to test, observe, and refine solutions that improve safety and accessibility within school zones before pursuing permanent installations.

Engineering efforts were further strengthened through small capital infrastructure grants funded by the SMCTA and administered through the program. These grants provided schools with direct access to funding for targeted safety improvements, such as signage, striping, visibility enhancements, and other low-cost infrastructure treatments, that address immediate needs within school zones.

Across the program, staff supported a range of engineering-related activities, including walk audits, demonstration projects, small capital infrastructure grants, safety education events connected to the built environment, and infrastructure-focused planning efforts that collectively strengthened the safety and comfort of school travel environments countywide.

## **Equity**

Equity remains a central pillar of the Safe Routes to School program, guiding how resources are allocated and how services are delivered to ensure all students can safely access active and sustainable transportation options. The program prioritized inclusive approaches by providing multilingual materials, supporting schools with Special Education programs, and addressing systemic barriers such as air quality concerns, traffic exposure, and socioeconomic inequities.

Partnerships with initiatives such as Every Kid Deserves a Bike and organizations like ALAS (Ayudando a Latinos a Soñar) exemplified the program's commitment to reaching underserved communities in the far reaches of San Mateo County by increasing access to bicycles, safety equipment, and education through programming. The program also intentionally prioritized equity priority communities for technical assistance, encouragement events, and fellowship opportunities, recognizing that these communities often experience the greatest safety risks and the fewest transportation resources.



By centering equity in planning and implementation, the Safe Routes to School program ensured that historically marginalized voices were included in transportation decision-making and that safety investments were directed to communities with the greatest need. Through these efforts, SRTS continued to advance equitable access to safe, healthy, and sustainable transportation for students and families across San Mateo County.

These efforts demonstrate the program’s comprehensive and collaborative approach to improving school travel. By integrating education, engagement, encouragement, evaluation, engineering, and equity, the program supports safer streets, healthier students, and more connected communities. This annual report provides further detail on how these strategies were implemented during the 2024-2025 school year, highlights key partnerships, and documents the impacts achieved across schools and communities throughout San Mateo County.

 The 6 E's



**EVALUATION**

Assessing which approaches are more or less successful, ensuring that programs and initiatives are supporting equitable outcomes, and identifying unintended consequences or opportunities to improve the effectiveness of each approach



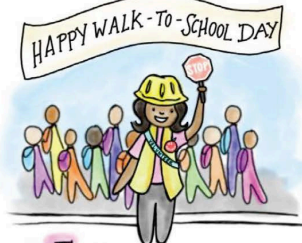
**EQUITY**

Ensuring that Safe Routes to School initiatives are benefiting all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income students, students of color, students of all genders, students with disabilities, and others.



**ENGINEERING**

Creating physical improvements to streets and neighborhoods that make walking and bicycling safer, more comfortable and more convenient.



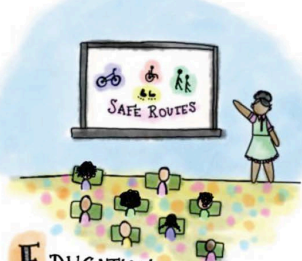
**ENCOURAGEMENT**

Generating enthusiasm and increased walking and bicycling for students through events, activities & programs



**ENGAGEMENT**

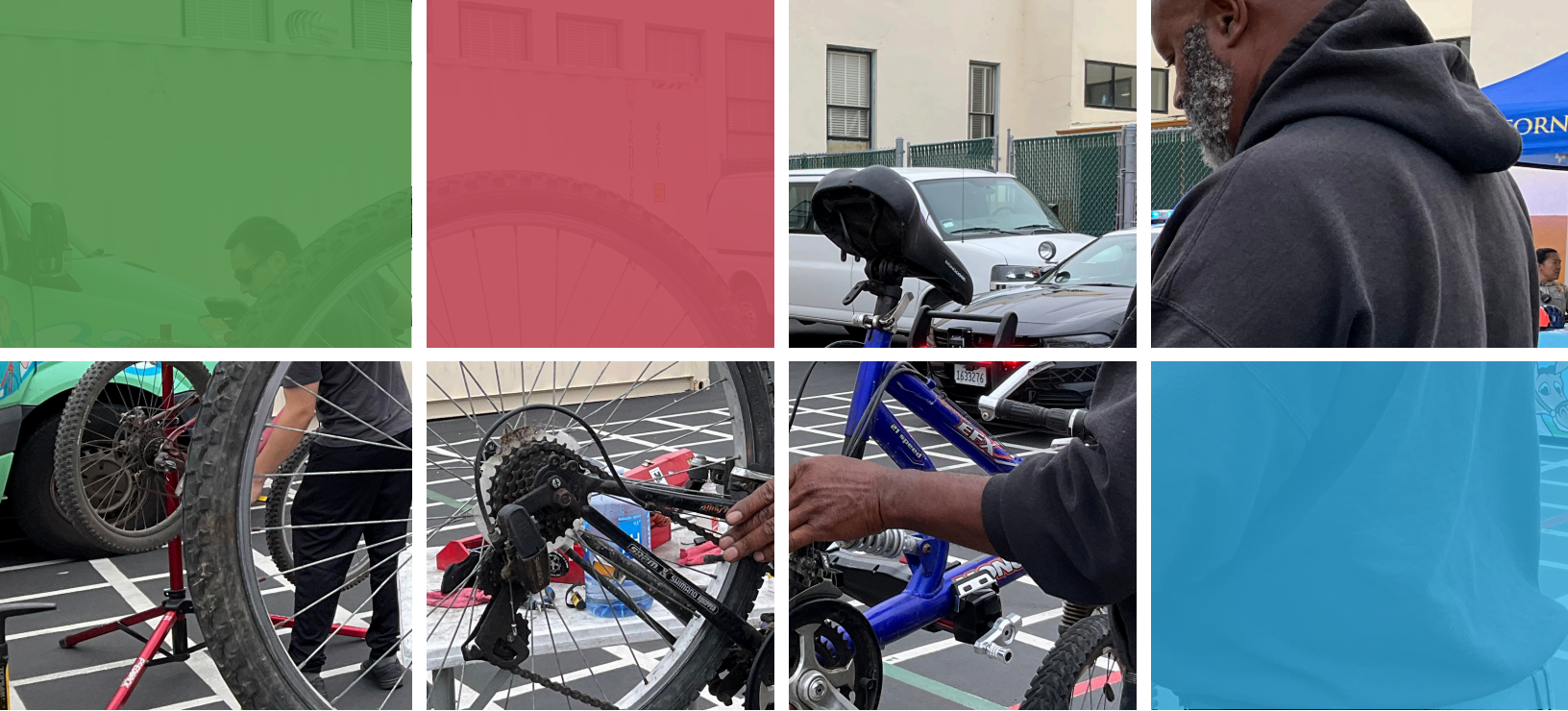
All Safe Routes to School initiatives should begin by listening to students, families, teachers, and school leaders and working with existing community organizations, and build intentional, ongoing engagement opportunities into the program structure.



**EDUCATION**

Providing students and the community with the skills to walk and bicycle safely, educating them about the benefits of walking and bicycling, and teaching them about the broad range of transportation choices





# Education

## E-Bike Safety Education

With the growing popularity of e-mobility among youth, the Safe Routes to School program has prioritized addressing educational gaps and safety considerations related to e-bikes and e-scooters. In June 2025, the program released an e-bike handbook for students and parents that outlines e-bike classifications, safe riding practices, maintenance and battery safety, and applicable local laws. To increase accessibility, a one-page flyer highlighting essential e-mobility safety information was also developed. As e-bike and e-scooter regulations continue to evolve, these resources will be updated as needed to ensure accuracy and relevance.

To remain informed on emerging youth e-bike safety issues, beginning in January 2025, a designated staff member began participating in a national monthly virtual e-bike safety meeting with Safe Routes to School partners. These meetings provide valuable opportunities to discuss current challenges, share best practices, and collaborate on solutions related to youth e-mobility.

Safe Routes to School program staff identified a significant gap in the availability of local, in-person e-bike safety trainings for youth. While online trainings offer some benefit, the need for hands-on, experiential learning was clear. In response, the program partnered with E-Bike Sense, an organization that works with school districts to deliver comprehensive, in-person e-bike safety education. The E-Bike Sense program includes a two-hour course combining classroom instruction with on-site riding drills.

Students who successfully complete the training receive a certification sticker that permits them to park their e-bikes on campus, helping ensure that e-bike riders commuting to school have received formal safety training. During the 2025-2026 school year, the program is collaborating with E-Bike Sense and the Burlingame School District to pilot this program at Burlingame Intermediate School.



Recognizing that many youth e-bike safety concerns can be mitigated through parent education, the Safe Routes to School program is also focused on outreach to families and school administrators. Parents play a critical role in understanding e-bike legality, local regulations, maintenance needs, and safety expectations, as well as in having informed conversations with their children prior to purchasing an e-bike. To address this need, the program partnered with E-Bike Sense and The Parent Venture to host a national webinar on youth e-bike safety for parents and school administrators. Leveraging The Parent Venture’s virtual platform and E-Bike Sense’s subject-matter expertise, the webinar reached more than 50 live participants and is now available for on-demand viewing on [Parent Venture website](#) and [YouTube](#). The program is also planning an additional e-bike safety webinar to support parents and administrators at the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

### **Pedestrian Star**

The Pedestrian Star program was developed and launched during the 2024-2025 fiscal year to help Kindergarten through second-grade students understand their role as pedestrians and how it relates to their environment. Designed to align with California’s K-2 curriculum standards, the program incorporates multiple areas of learning and focused on four core objectives: (1) teaching key safety guidelines, (2) engaging students through visual and auditory learning, (3) guiding a walking field trip to help students identify real-world safety hazards, and (4) reinforcing concepts through supplemental reading and learning materials.

The program was piloted in May 2025 with a kindergarten class at Arundel Elementary. The Safe Routes to School team facilitated both the classroom lesson and the walking field trip, during which students were eager, attentive, and highly engaged. They demonstrated a strong understanding of safety concepts, such as how to safely cross intersections and navigate driveways, and applied these skills during their walk around campus. Based on the success of the pilot, Safe Routes to School plans to expand implementation in 2025-2026.

## **Student Safety Valet Training**

The Student Safety Valet training program is a hallmark of Safe Routes to School services, enabling San Mateo County schools to empower teams of fourth- and fifth-grade students to help create safer and more efficient school drop-off and pick-up environments. Through this program, students take on leadership roles that promote traffic safety and positive travel behaviors on campus.

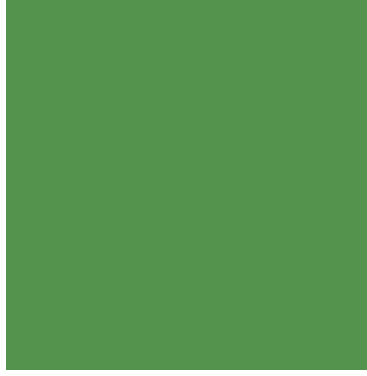
Using [AAA's School Safety Patrol resource tool](#), program staff support schools in establishing Safety Patrol or Safety Valet programs by identifying site-specific traffic safety concerns, coordinating administrative and material needs, and training student leaders. The training includes a two-part approach: a classroom-based curriculum covering program guidelines, expectations, and emergency preparedness, followed by hands-on instruction focused on real-world application. During practical training sessions, students practice safely opening and closing vehicle doors without leaving the sidewalk, communicating effectively with students and families, and responding appropriately to a variety of scenarios.

Following completion of the training, the program provides Safety Valet teams with essential safety equipment, including reflective vests and high-visibility beanies, to ensure students are easily seen during their shifts. To maintain program quality and reinforce safety standards, program staff also offers annual retraining for participating teams, ensuring students remain confident and familiar with program expectations and safety protocols.

## **Adult Community Outreach**

This year, Safe Routes to School expanded outreach to the older adult community. The program staffed resource fairs in East Palo Alto and Daly City to engage adults on pedestrian and bicycling safety, distributing reflective vests and other visibility gear while reviewing proper safety practices. For the first time, Safe Routes to School partnered with the Fair Oaks Adult Community Center on a two-part walking field trip. The Fall session took participants through the neighborhood surrounding the center, covering both business and residential areas to assess the strengths and weaknesses of local safety infrastructure. Participants concluded with an open discussion on immediate and long-term safety needs in the community.





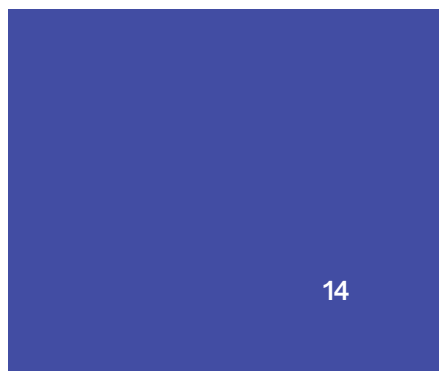
The Spring session took place in collaboration with Wunderlich Parks, San Mateo County Public Health, Safe Routes to School, and the Fair Oaks Adult Community Center. Adults were transported to Wunderlich Parks, where park rangers and Safe Routes to School facilitators led a short, accessible hike, an art project focused on complete streets and ideal neighborhoods, and a brief visit to the local museum. All activities were conducted in both Spanish and English to ensure full engagement with the community, which is primarily Spanish-speaking.

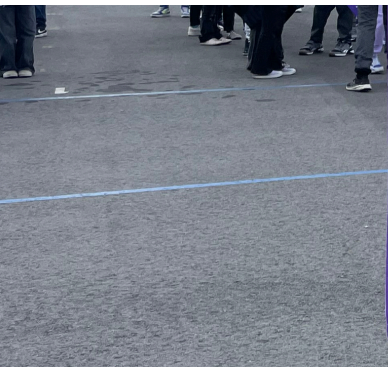
## Encouragement

### Golden Sneaker

To encourage walking and bicycling and reduce single-family car commutes, Safe Routes to School hosted its annual Golden Sneaker Contest in February. This year, the program partnered with Solving Fun to create engaging, event-themed puzzles that helped build excitement among students and staff. Participating schools received tally posters to track how students traveled to school each day over a two-week period, with students encouraged to walk, roll, ride transit, or carpool. Using a standardized scoring formula, each class submitted its participation totals to Safe Routes to School at the end of the contest. The class at each school with the highest rate of active or shared transportation received a Golden Sneaker trophy crafted by the program team.

This year's celebrations included special visits from San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and San Mateo County Police Department community engagement officers, who brought their trained dogs, Ben and Rookie, to meet students in the winning classrooms. Students learned about the officers' roles in community safety and enjoyed meeting their dedicated canine partners.





### Crossing Guard Appreciation Week

Crossing Guard Appreciation Week remains a meaningful part of the Safe Routes to School mission, offering schools, students, families, and community members a chance to honor the dedicated crossing guards who help keep children safe every day. The Safe Routes to School team developed a resource toolkit with activities, ideas, and materials to support schools in expressing their gratitude. The toolkit also included “World’s Best Crossing Guard” reflective stickers and whistles for students to share as small tokens of appreciation. In addition, the week provided an opportunity to highlight the Safe Routes to School small capital infrastructure and special project grants, which can help schools enhance and support their crossing guard programs.



## Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

In 1960, at just six years old, Ruby Bridges captured national attention as the first and only African American child to integrate William Frantz Elementary School in Louisiana. Her courageous act became a defining moment in the civil rights movement, and its impact continues to resonate in schools across the country. Inspired by Ruby's story, the fifth-grade class at Martin Elementary launched a campaign at the start of the 2017-2018 school year to create a day honoring her legacy. They petitioned the South San Francisco Unified School District, the City of South San Francisco, the San Mateo County Office of Education, and the City of San Mateo, ultimately gathering 1,000 signatures. In 2021, their efforts were realized when State Senator Josh Becker officially designated November 14 as Ruby Bridges Day.

The Safe Routes to School program was instrumental in helping the students and their teacher shape this day into a Walk to School Day, ensuring that Ruby's legacy would be honored through meaningful, student-centered action. Each year, Safe Routes to School encourages students across San Mateo County to walk and roll to school and partners with AAA to provide banners, flags, stickers, and beanies featuring the Ruby Bridges logo. This year, Costaño Elementary School in East Palo Alto celebrated with a spirited school-wide walk complete with music and hot chocolate, while Music Notes performed an energetic rendition of "Walk to School Like Ruby Did" in front of South San Francisco City Hall. Safe Routes to School also hosted a poster and poetry contest, inviting students to explore themes of diversity, courage, equity, inclusion, social justice, and standing up against prejudice. The submissions were powerful and inspiring.

For the first time, Safe Routes to School partnered with the Redwood City Main Library to host a reading of *I Am Ruby Bridges*, written by Ruby herself, for children ages three to five. The young audience gathered for storytime and a brief discussion about how they, too, could identify with Ruby's bravery. By expanding participation to younger audiences, the Safe Routes to School program continues to build on the momentum first created by the students at Martin Elementary and looks forward to growing this celebration each year.



## **International Walk to School Day**

Every year on the first Wednesday of October, Safe Routes to School celebrates International Walk to School Day. Students, schools, and community members come together to walk and roll to school. Safe Routes to School encourages students to use active modes of transportation each year by choosing a theme to honor this day. The theme this year was “Join a Magical Quest...Walk and Roll Around the World to be Your Very Best.” More than 1,300 students actively commuted across San Mateo County. Of those students, 987 walked, 201 rolled on bicycles or scooters, and the rest carpooled or used public transit. Students were encouraged to dress up as magical characters and creatures while practicing safe and sustainable transportation options. This celebration not only promoted physical activity and environmental awareness but also made walking and rolling to school a fun, imaginative, and memorable experience for students across the county.

## **Sustainability and Earth Month**

Sustainability is inherent within the mission of Safe Routes to School, as active and communal modes of transportation such as walking, biking, carpooling, and public transit have a much lower carbon footprint than single-family vehicles. During the 2024-2025 school year, however, the team made an effort to integrate environmental education more deliberately into program services. The team approached this on an internal level, being more mindful with purchasing and printing, as well as on a community level by adding a “Sustainability” section in the monthly (paperless) newsletter. The section highlights various seasonal connections between the environment and transportation, for example, the contributions of Black historical figures to sustainable transit during Black History Month or summer-focused tips for reducing carbon emissions in June.

Safe Routes also celebrates Earth Month throughout April to highlight the many intersections between environmental consciousness and the transportation landscape. This year, the team designed an interactive virtual calendar to build sustainable habits and get students and families excited about Earth Month. Each day featured a different opportunity to learn, explore outdoor environments, or get involved in community events like cleanups, plantings, and resource fairs. The team also engaged individuals directly by hosting tables at Earth Month events across the county, distributing resources like seed pencils, bike lights, and pedestrian visibility gear to community members.





# Engagement

## Farmworker Family Bike Night

The theme of the second Farmworker Family Bike Night, held in August 2024, was Fields of Gratitude: Celebrating Farmworkers. The first event was launched in 2023 in response to the tragic farmworker shootings in Half Moon Bay as a way to honor the vital contributions of farmworker families. Building on its success, Safe Routes to School again partnered with Ayudando Latinos A Soñar (ALAS), Cabrillo Unified School District, the City of Half Moon Bay, San Mateo County Health and Human Services, San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools and Supervisor Mueller’s Office to host another impactful event this year. The celebration featured children’s activities, a resource fair with local agencies, music, food, and a raffle with donated bicycles from the City of South San Francisco, as well as other prizes. It was a heartfelt tribute to the farmworker community and their essential role in the region.

This year’s celebrations included special visits from San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office and San Mateo County Police Department community engagement officers, who brought their trained dogs, Ben and Rookie, to meet students in the winning classrooms. Students learned about the officers’ roles in community safety and enjoyed meeting their dedicated canine partners.

Click the button or scan QR code to view short video about the event.

[Watch Video](#)





## **CHOICES Project**

San Mateo County Health’s CalFresh Healthy Living team, in collaboration with the San Mateo County Office of Education, was selected to participate in the **Childhood Obesity Intervention Cost-Effectiveness Study (CHOICES) Learning Collaborative Partnership**. This statewide initiative, led by the California Department of Public Health in partnership with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, provided an opportunity to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of Safe Routes to School as a public health intervention.

Through participation in the CHOICES Learning Collaborative, the team received training, technical assistance, communications support, and implementation funding. The partnership also resulted in the development of practical communication tools — including policy briefs, presentation materials, and handouts — and strengthened the team’s capacity to effectively share findings and recommendations with decision-makers and community stakeholders. This work helped demonstrate the value of Safe Routes to School strategies in supporting youth health outcomes and informed future program planning and investment. Learn more about the [CHOICES Project](#).

## **San Mateo County Health and SMCOE Safe Routes to School Collaboration**

San Mateo County Health works in close partnership with the Safe Routes to School program to address the health and wellness needs of students and families throughout the county. This cross-sector collaboration aligns public health and education expertise to support safe, healthy, and supportive school environments.

This partnership advances initiatives that promote physical activity, nutrition, and mental well-being while addressing broader public health priorities. Additional joint efforts, such as the School Travel Fellowship and school walk audits, bring together schools, cities, and technical experts to design and pilot infrastructure demonstrations and programmatic strategies that improve walking and bicycling conditions. By working collaboratively, San Mateo County Health and Safe Routes to School strengthen the connection between health and transportation planning, expanding opportunities for students and families to thrive in safe, healthy, and equitable communities.

## High School Advisory Board

While much of Safe Routes to School’s safety programming has traditionally focused on elementary and middle school students, the program began planning this year to expand youth engagement at the high school level through the creation of a High School Active Transportation Advisory Board. This new initiative is designed to engage high school students from across the county in projects and policy discussions related to school transportation, with a particular emphasis on active and shared modes of travel.

Development of the Advisory Board began organically, as several high school students independently reached out to program staff seeking support for student-led projects. These projects included developing a carpool resource toolkit for schools, advocating for district-level active transportation policies, and addressing emerging issues such as safe e-bike use. The initiative, leadership, and sustained engagement demonstrated by these students throughout the school year formed the foundation of an Advisory Board Planning Team.

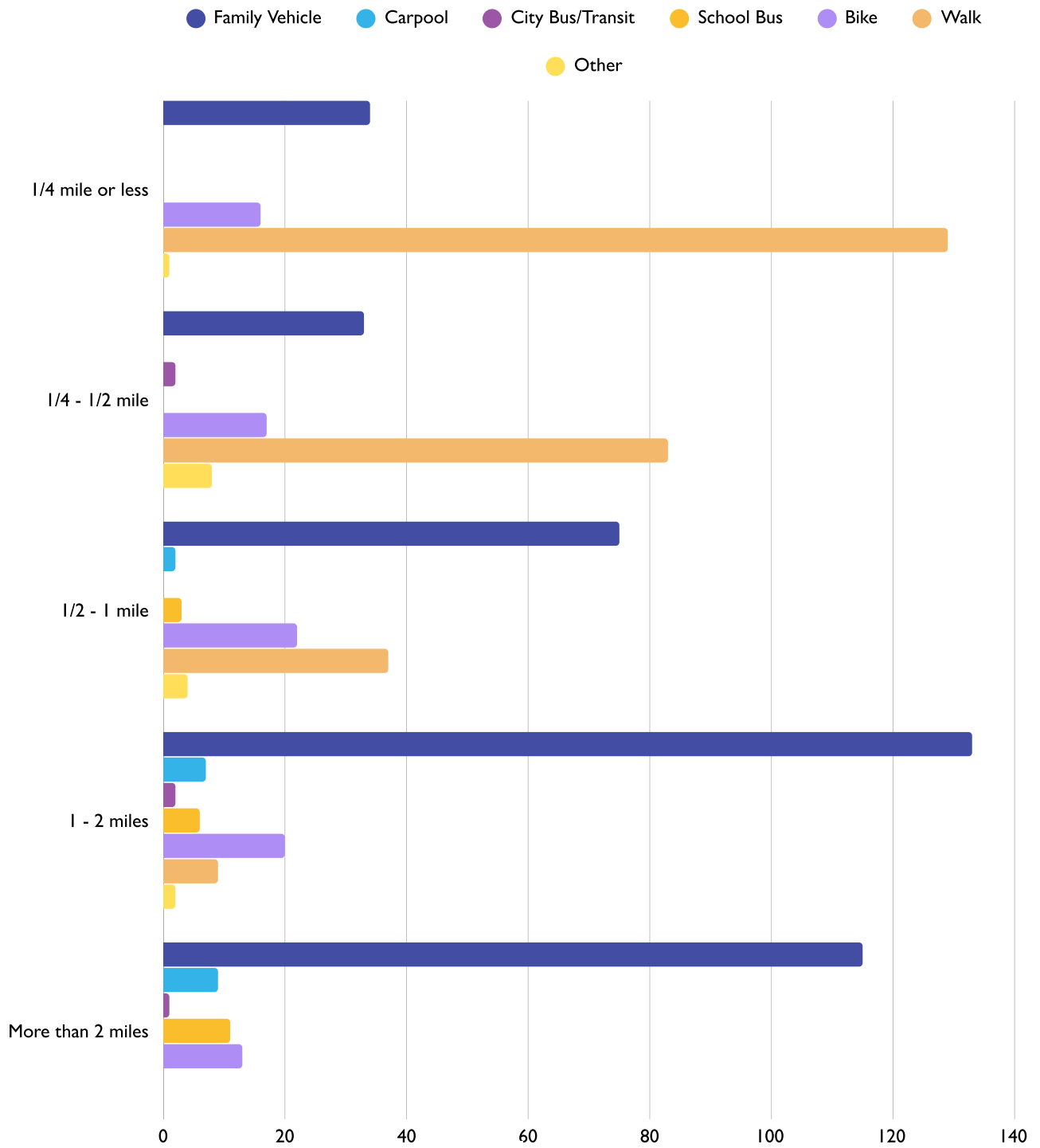
The Safe Routes to School program is currently gathering youth feedback and developing program materials in preparation for launching the High School Active Transportation Advisory Board during the next school year, with applications opening in early fall. This program is intended to strengthen understanding of the transportation needs and motivations of high school students, foster youth leadership in community and environmental issues, and elevate student voices in transportation planning and decision-making processes that directly impact their daily lives.



## Evaluation

[Travel Tally  
Data Summary](#) >>

## Method of Transportation by Distance





# Engineering

## Walk Audits

Walk audits provide a valuable forum for community members, school staff, local government representatives, and transportation experts to collaboratively identify and prioritize safety improvements for schools and their surrounding neighborhoods. Facilitated walk audits result in detailed reports that summarize key site conditions and recommend actionable strategies to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety. These recommendations include both infrastructure and programmatic solutions, recognizing that comprehensive approaches are essential to improving walkability, bikeability, comfort, and overall safety. Walk audit reports also serve as important planning tools, supporting grant applications and informing the prioritization of future transportation projects. In addition, the walk audit process strengthens community connections and builds momentum among stakeholders working toward shared safety goals.

Between February and May 2025, the Safe Routes to School program hosted nine walk audits, serving a total of 11 schools across San Mateo County. Four walk audits were facilitated by Alta Planning + Design at Aspire EPA Charter School (East Palo Alto), Cabrillo School (Pacifica), Westborough Middle School (South San Francisco), and Menlo-Atherton High School (Atherton). Two additional walk audits were conducted by Alta Planning + Design through the School Travel Fellowship program at Farallone View Elementary School (Montara) and Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School (East Palo Alto). Three walk audits were facilitated by national public health and transportation consultant Mark Fenton at Orion Elementary School (Redwood City), MH Tobias Elementary School (Daly City), and a combined audit serving three neighboring Redwood City schools: McKinley Institute of Technology, North Star Academy, and Sequoia High School.

Equity considerations were central to walk audit site selection. Four participating schools—Cabrillo School, Westborough Middle School, Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School, and MH Tobias Elementary School—are located within Equity Focus Areas with scores between 8 and 10. An additional five schools—Aspire EPA Charter School, Orion Elementary School, Sequoia High School, North Star Academy, and McKinley Institute of Technology—are located within three blocks of an Equity Focus Area with scores between 8 and 10. Prioritizing walk audits in these communities helps ensure that safety improvements are directed to areas with the greatest need and that voices from historically underserved neighborhoods are meaningfully included in transportation planning and decision-making.

## 24-25 List of Walk Audits

Alta Planning + Design facilitated four walk audits:

- Aspire EPA Charter School (East Palo Alto)
- Cabrillo School (Pacifica)
- Westborough Middle School (South San Francisco)
- Menlo-Atherton High School (Atherton)
- Farallone View Elementary (Montara)
- Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School (East Palo Alto)

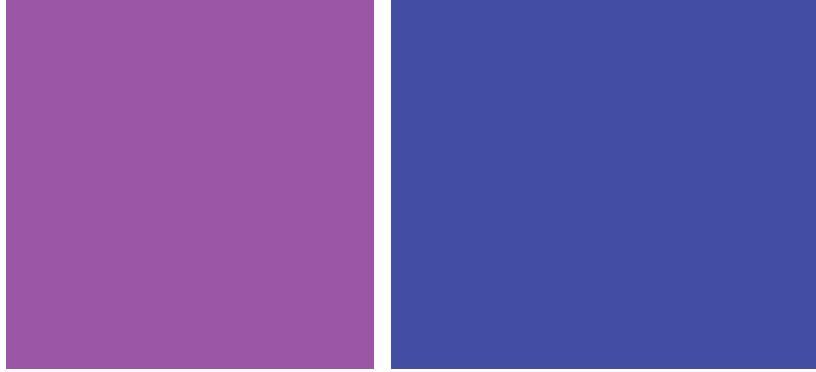
National public health and transportation consultant Mark Fenton facilitated three walk audits:

- Orion Elementary (Redwood City)
- MH Tobias Elementary (Daly City)
- Combined audit serving three nearby Redwood City schools: McKinley Institute of Technology, North Star Academy, and Sequoia High School

## Community Science Leadership Academy

The Community Science Leadership Academy (CSLA) is a youth-centered, place-based learning initiative designed to empower students to examine and improve the health and safety of their school communities through community science. Implemented as an eight-session pilot program, the CSLA was held at MH Tobias Elementary School in the Jefferson Elementary School District and engaged 19 fifth graders who voluntarily participated during their lunch period. The students demonstrated a strong level of dedication and motivation to improve conditions in their school and the surrounding neighborhood.





The curriculum focused on community health, access to food and healthcare, and the ease or difficulty of walking and biking in the area around the school. Sessions were held on campus and introduced students to the principles of community science, active transportation, and the social and environmental factors that influence daily travel choices. Instruction was delivered through a collaborative partnership with the Stanford Our Voice initiative, San Mateo County Public Health, and the Safe Routes to School program, with lessons tailored to be age-appropriate and interactive.

As part of the program, students participated in a facilitated walking field trip in the school neighborhood, where they collected real-world data using the Our Voice Discovery Tool mobile application. Students documented both barriers and assets related to walking and biking, including sidewalk conditions, traffic behavior, crossings, and access to destinations. Following data collection, students reviewed their findings, developed recommendations, and connected their observations to formal walk audit processes.

A key outcome of the CSLA was the elevation of student voice in local decision-making. Students were invited to present their findings and recommendations to walk audit stakeholders and to their city council, providing a meaningful opportunity to engage directly with local leaders and contribute to discussions about infrastructure improvements and community safety. Through this experience, students developed leadership, communication, and advocacy skills while contributing valuable insights to efforts aimed at improving walkability, bikeability, and overall community safety.

The Community Science Leadership Academy demonstrated the value of youth-led community science as a tool for advancing equity, strengthening cross-sector partnerships, and fostering safer, healthier, and more inclusive school environments.

### **School Travel Fellowship**

Five teams were selected to participate in the School Travel Fellowship - Cycle 4, which began in February 2025 and concluded with final presentations in September 2025. The fellowship, led by the Safe Routes to School program, aims to strengthen collaboration among municipalities, schools, and community partners to improve safety near schools and promote active transportation. Cycle 4 teams received technical support to identify safety concerns around schools and develop community-driven solutions.

The projects showcase a variety of creative approaches, including demonstration projects, quick-builds, and plans for permanent infrastructure. For instance, Millbrae developed plans to make a previous quick-build project at Green Hills Elementary School permanent. In South San Francisco, the team focused on streets around Westborough Middle School, reducing turning radii on two streets to slow cars and improve visibility for both drivers and pedestrians.

The San Carlos team collaborated with multiple partners, including the City of San Carlos, SamTrans, and three schools on one campus (Tierra Linda Middle School, Mariposa Upper School, and Charter Learning Center), to relocate a bus stop that could not safely accommodate the number of students using it. They also worked with the city to remove parking on Dartmouth Avenue near the schools and created a safer pedestrian walkway through the school parking lot.

These examples are only a sample of the innovative projects completed through Cycle 4, reflecting the fellowship’s commitment to creating safer, healthier, and more accessible routes to school. Fellowship teams implemented creative solutions tailored to their communities, from quick-build demonstration projects to long-term infrastructure plans, all aimed at improving safety, promoting active transportation, and fostering stronger collaboration between schools, cities, and community partners.

Select the button below or scan QR code to see all of the projects that were completed in 2024 - 2025.



## 2024 - 2025 STF Teams

City of San Carlos and  
Tierra Linda Middle School,  
Mariposa Elementary and  
San Carlos Charter  
Learning Center



City of East Palo  
Alto and Cesar  
Chavez  
Ravenswood  
Middle School

City of  
Millbrae and  
Green Hills  
Elementary  
School



County of San  
Mateo and  
Farrallone View  
Elementary

City of South  
San Francisco  
and  
Westborough  
Middle School

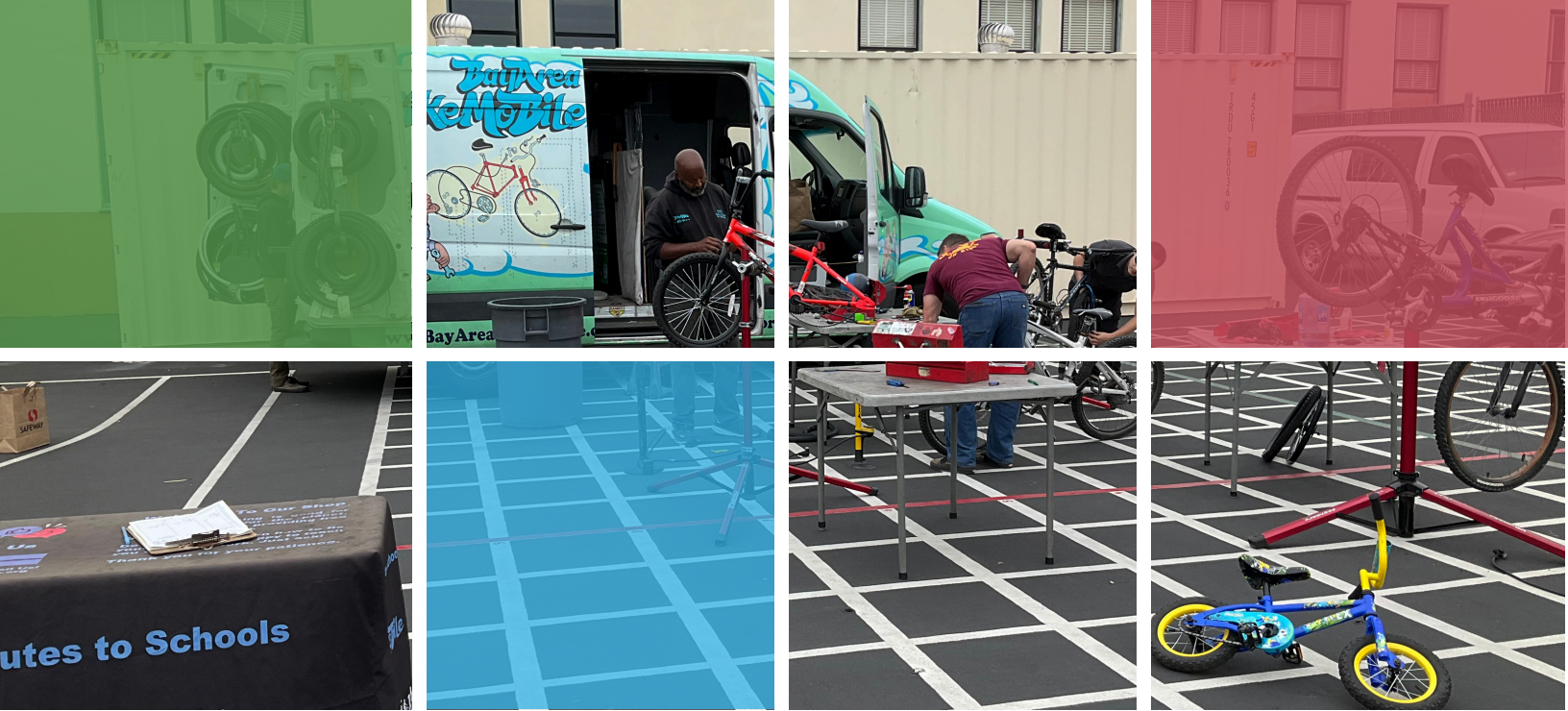
## Traffic Safety Kits

Traffic Safety Kits (TSK) were distributed to schools to support safe arrival and dismissal and to reinforce a culture of safety around school campuses. Each kit included practical tools such as bollards, reflective traffic cones, looper poles, and traffic calming and driver/pedestrian education signage — ready-to-use materials to improve visibility, organize traffic flow, and reinforce safe behaviors. These resources empowered school communities to promote walking and biking, enhance on-site traffic management, and create safer, more welcoming environments for students and families.

Number of Schools That Rcv'd TSKs	
	Number of Schools
CCAG Schools	21
OTS Schools	8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>29</b>

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority provided funding for a range of small capital infrastructure improvements and special projects, as detailed in the chart below. This funding is made possible through local sales tax revenue generated by Measure W, San Mateo County's transportation expenditure plan, which invests in projects that enhance safety, mobility, and sustainability countywide. A dedicated portion of Measure W funds is specifically allocated to support school-focused transportation safety improvements, ensuring that students have safer, more accessible routes to walk and bicycle to and from school. Through this investment, schools across the county are able to implement small capital infrastructure or special projects that address school-related traffic safety concerns, reduce congestion during arrival and dismissal, and promote active transportation in alignment with Safe Routes to School goals.





# Future of Safe Routes to School

The 2024-2025 grant cycle focused on program implementation and intentional engagement around the growing concerns related to youth and e-bike use. Substantial effort was dedicated to research, material development, and the creation of educational resources addressing e-bikes, micro-mobility, and emerging traffic safety challenges. This cycle also included continued refinement of the Community Science Leadership Academy curriculum to strengthen youth leadership, applied learning, and community-based problem solving.

Through core initiatives such as the School Travel Fellowship, pedestrian and bicycle safety education, and targeted outreach to equity-priority communities, the Safe Routes to School program reinforced its commitment to safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation. Educational activities, including interactive traffic safety assemblies, hands-on bike rodeos, and walking field trips supported skill-building while promoting physical activity as part of students' daily routines. Community events, such as the second Farmworker Family Bike Night, further reflected the program's dedication to addressing the needs of historically underserved populations and supporting healthier, more resilient neighborhoods.

# Program Goals Moving Forward

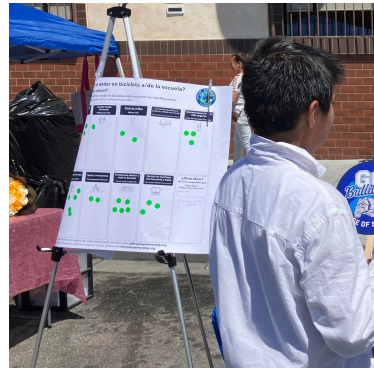


## Expand Community Engagement:

Deepen partnerships with schools, municipalities, and community-based organizations to broaden participation and amplify the impact of Safe Routes to School programs countywide.

## Enhance Educational Opportunities:

Continue developing research-informed curriculum and educational materials that address e-bikes, micro-mobility, and traffic safety while integrating movement and wellness into everyday school travel.



## Advance Policy and Infrastructure Advocacy:

Collaborate with local and state agencies to support infrastructure improvements, traffic safety policies, and sustainable transportation solutions, including efforts to help schools respond to challenges related to e-devices and emerging mobility trends.



## Strengthen Public Health Partnerships:

Continue to position Safe Routes to School as a public health strategy that increases physical activity, supports active transportation, and contributes to the prevention of childhood obesity.

