



Safe Routes to Schools
Ross School District
Meeting notes 10-3-2022
[Meeting Recording](#)

Attendance: Wendi Kallins- Safe Routes to Schools- Program Coordinator, Gwen Froh- Safe Routes to Schools Program Director, Raffaello Pata- Ross Chief of Police, Christa Johnson, Ross- Town Manager, Alexandra Hudson-Ross Property Association, Jennifer Shriber - Parisi Transportation Engineer, Jolie Jacobs- Assistance to the Ross School District Superintendent, Richard Simonitch- Public Works Director , Julie McMillan- Ross Town Council member, Laura Delaney Nichol -Team Leader and PTO member, David Rice - Acting Superintendent/Principal 5-8.

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Task Force Overview

Link to [Safe Routes to School Travel plan presentation](#)

The following notes were made from this presentation.

A goal for SRTS is to increase the number of students using active (walking, rolling etc) and green (carpooling and buses) modes of transportation by 1% per year in Ross School District. To instill healthy habits in children, reduce congestion around schools and create a safer and cleaner environment. SRTS would like to maintain an average of at least 50% for elementary, 60% for middle school age students.

Currently Ross Schools green travel is 54% percent with 46% being active travel. This is very good. This information came from the SRTS Student Travel Surveys. This is in the top percentages of the schools in Marin County

Safe Routes tracks progress by conducting a Student Travel survey two times a year in classrooms.

Bicycle and pedestrian education is offered for all grade levels and encouragement programs/events are presented to support walking and rolling to school. In addition, SRTS will work with the administration to approve a Safe Routes to Schools Policy for the district.

Developing a Safe Routes to Schools Travel Plan

Tasks/Resources include:

- Dot Maps- developed to learn when students live within walking/rolling distance to school. SRTS does not share or include any names or addresses of residents in any information developed for SRTS travel plans. The data collected is used for geographical needs only.
- Suggested Route Maps- developed after identifying routes students are currently using and what infrastructure issues exist to influence safe travel. These are suggested routes; safety cannot be guaranteed.
- Issues List- developed to identify and track proposed improvements to issues pertaining to safe travel to the schools. Local issues are being collected by parents and will be added to a spreadsheet for this task force to review in the future.
- Walk Audit - Task Force members, DPW and parents would be invited to attend a scheduled walk to observe issues. Ross has a good track record for addressing issues quickly.
- Issues- are prioritized and presented to the DPW for improvements. Conceptual plans with recommendations are developed; if approved funding is identified. This process can take time.

History of SR2S Projects in Ross

Richard Simonitch went over the history of projects completed or are underway. The current project is the Laurel Grove Ave walkway. This project covers the entire length of Laurel Grove within the town limits. Phase one is completed and phase two is in pre design and environment review. A grant has been awarded including phase three. This is a huge project that is supported and very important to the community.

There is supposed to be a crossing guard (funded by the Town Council since 2017) for Drake Blvd assisting students from the Winship neighborhood and students traveling to Branson. This needs to be confirmed; some task force members had not seen the guard.

The DPW is looking into a capital improvement project for the frontage road for Banson. This would include pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The town does have a bike/ped master plan. SRTS will request Branson have a representative attend future task force meetings. Branson has a new staff person, Todd Bickel, who is in charge of parking, traffic and security. They actively encourage students and staff to cycle to school. Ebike education will be important if they are supporting Ebike travel.

SRTS will request a County DPW and/or a representative from Katie Rice's office to attend future meetings.

The town makes a strong effort to manage the construction projects going on around the town. Task Force members and residents are encouraged to contact the town office to request support if they identify any issues that could prevent students and residents from walking or cycling on the local streets safely; blocked sidewalks and roadways for example.

The Ross School District includes some residents/families from San Anselmo and Kentfield. If there were issues that crossed over into other school districts, they would be included in planning including the County of Marin.

Safe Routes requested the district's "enrollment map". This would help as facilities and issues are identified.

In summary SRTS will ask task force members to work with Jen Shriber to develop the Dot map. In addition, SRTS will work to contact the superintendent to develop a Safe Routes to Schools Policy. This policy helps to ensure Safe Route education and encouragement events are implemented each school year. It does not request anything the schools are not already doing.

Collecting data for the district's suggested route maps will be another project the task force will be asked to support. SRTS will develop the actual maps and share them with the school once the DPW approves them.

Safe Routes to Schools Programs

[The Safe Routes to School website](#) is a key resource to learn about encouragement programs, task force meeting dates and meeting notes and education resources.

Safe Routes Education and Encouragement Fall 2022

Volunteer meeting was held in August, this was the first in-person meeting in three years. Topics discussed included: [International Walk and Roll Day](#) (October 12, 2022 and [Walk & Roll Wednesdays](#)). There will be monthly encouragement events in September to December. Parent volunteers will distribute buttons to participating students. International Walk and Roll Day annually has about 1000 students/families participate county wide.

Laura offered via meeting chat to support SRTS efforts this school year. Please contact cooper@marinbike.org to learn more.

Education Update

[Safe Routes to School Curriculum Guide](#)

Annually classes are conducted in all schools throughout the county either during PE or classroom teachers. SRTS staff are scheduled to teach the Pedestrian and Bicycle Ed curriculum. Prior to COVID Ross School education was scheduled during PE. *Safe Routes needs to learn who the school contact is for scheduling classes moving forward.* Ross 6th grade education will be scheduled this fall.

Buddy Up Contest- New Encouragement Event

[BUDDY UP](#) is a new contest to get students to walk (park and walk), bike, carpool or ride the bus together. Now through October 31, sign up your group of two or more

Regardless of whether students are scootering, biking, or carpooling, we would like families to submit their Buddy Up Story. This is similar to the Bike Hero award; prizes will be awarded.

Family Biking Events

Events will be scheduled throughout the year- [Link to events](#)

This Family Biking class helps to prepare students for riding on roads. Students ride on our courses to practice bike handling skills and learn the rules of the road on a mock street. Family Biking shows parents, first hand, how instructors teach safe cycling skills and pro-tips for reinforcement. An optional local ride is usually included.

E-Bike & E-Scooter Safety Information

Safe Routes to School has heard from many people in our communities regarding ebike safety concerns as students are riding them to school. SRTS includes e-bike safe education in our campus presentations.

In this [flier](#), we clarify the different types of e-bikes and recommend parents research and assess their student's ability to manage the increased speeds and challenging maneuverability of a heavy e-bike before purchasing one. There is information on e-scooters as well. Please read and share this flier with your family and friends. This flier has been shared with principals throughout the county. Local police agencies have also been sending out information on the safety concerns and are providing education.

The average speed of an average adult cyclist is 12 miles per hour (mph), and 9.7 mph for 14-year-olds. Yet e-bikes can travel 20 mph (Type I and II) and 28 mph (Type III).

Communities are worried about students e-biking at twice the speed of regular cyclists, many carrying helmet-less passengers, and dodging between and around vehicles, pedestrians and other cyclists. The Type II; throttle Ebikes can cause unique issues because it takes away the organic nature of pedaling a bicycle. E-bikes can go up hills with pedal assist only; a throttle is not required.

The popular Type II throttle e-bike offers riders the option to travel up to 20mph without pedaling. Many manufacturers state that "children under the age of 16 may lack the necessary judgment and skill to safely operate the e-bike." Many will not sell their bikes to individuals under the age of 16 yrs even though CA law does not have age restriction for Type 1 & 2 Ebikes. Type 3 Ebikes are restricted to 16 yrs and above; this Ebike can reach a top speed of 28mph. They are not recommended for middle school age students by the manufacturers.

The flier is on the SRTS website and can be shared by anyone. SRTS has collected information for popular type two throttle manufacturers. They are clearly stating on their website, and when we called in person, that students should be 16 years of age to ride that Type II throttle Ebike.

Task Force members did report they have observed students riding double dangerously - with and without helmets - in roadways and parking lots. The [Safe Routes to Schools newsletter](#) has an article that could be shared as well. The Central Marin Police department did send out a notice that they would be issuing citations when illegal behavior is observed.

Street Smarts Campaign Overview- “Eyes Up Marin”

** The Town of Ross will not be hanging roadway banners; however the lawn signs will be available for residents to display.

This PowerPoint presentation [Street Smarts Campaign](#) provides a complete overview of the program.

[Street Smarts](#) is a traffic safety program run by the Transportation Authority of Marin.

The goal is to provide education to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists about safety issues. It is designed to make streets safer and friendlier and reduce the number of traffic related collisions.

The prior campaign focused on speeding, stopping drivers from running red lights and stop signs, addressing distracted driving, crosswalk safety and bicycle violations. The signs and banners aged out and needed to be replaced.

The new campaign has engaged more community partners. New data is available that identifies roadway hotspots where collisions occur and the most common types of collisions. This data will help engineers develop roadway designs to help prevent collisions.

Collision factors = the main behavior that caused the collision. The trends identified are: speed, improper turning, driving or cycling under the influence, and pedestrian right of way violations. Distracted driving is unfortunately not recorded in crash reports; however, surveys have found that more than 54% of California drivers say that they had been hit or were nearly hit by a driver who was talking on a cell phone or texting. Ignoring traffic signs and cycling on the wrong side of the road is also an unsafe trend noted.

A Task Force was created with representatives from many cities and towns including TAM, school districts and other community leaders to focus on six target behaviors and help develop the messaging. This new campaign has over 120 partners to help spread the word using their organization resources and social media. Marin Transit will have messaging on buses in the future. Email signatures are available along with information for web pages for the public to view.

The new banners and yard sign design will be distributed in many cities and towns and the unincorporated counties starting in mid-October-November. It will come back in the spring of 2023 (annually Spring/Fall). This is a behavior change program. Residents can contact their local DPW for lawn signs in English and Spanish. Messaging will be focused on driver and cycling behavior and to help people who are walking.

The committee will discuss how the program can be tracked and what the impact is. All materials will be emailed to all the task force members and is available at streetsmartsmarin.org. If you have additional questions, please contact jennifer@parisi-associates.com.

Next Zoom Meeting Date

Monday January 13, 2023 10 am