

Miller Creek School District

Safe Routes to School Task Force Meeting Notes

Monday, October 10

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Next meeting dates

- January 29 at 3:30 PM
- April 29 at 3:30 PM

Recording available on request wkallins@igc.org

Participants

- Leo Bezard – College of Marin intern at TAM
- Elizabeth Foehr – Principal Vallecito
- Gwen Froh – SR2S/MCBC
- Matthew Hartzell – WTB-TAM
- Langston Hazen – Marin County DPW
- Marie Henrio – MCSD Chief Business Official, in charge of bus program
- Brad Honsberger – MCSD trustee
- Wes Howell, Mark Day Director of Facilities
- Wendi Kallins – SR2S
- John Neville – Marin County DPW
- Julia Reinhard – Aide to Supervisor Sackett
- Mary Sackett – Marin County Supervisor, Miller Creek parent
- Mike Schulist – Miller Creek teacher
- Jen Shriber – SR2S/Parametrix
- Carrie Wurlitzer – Vallecito parent/SR2S rep

Safe Routes presentation (Jen Shriber, SR2S/Parametrix & Gwen Froh, SR2S/MCBC)

[See the attached presentation.](#)

The presentation included excerpts from the 2023 evaluation report showing progress countywide in maintaining and increasing active and shared trips to school. It then showed results from Miller Creek, comparing the percentage of students walking and biking to the percentage of students that live within walking and biking distance. At the district's elementary schools, there is opportunity to encourage students living near school to walk and bike. At Lucas Valley, 35% of students live within a mile but only 22% walk or bike to school. At Mary Silveira, 33% live within a mile and 26% walk or bike. At Vallecito, 83% of students live within one mile but only 32% walk or roll to school. Overall Miller Creek has the most positive results, with 67% green trips and 37%



active green trips. Mary Silveira has the highest percentage of green trips out of the elementary schools (49%), while Vallecito has the elementary schools' highest percentage of active green trips (32%).

Discussion (Wendi Kallins, SR2S)

School buses

A staff shortage at the district has led to reduced bus service during the 23/24 school year. Service is down to one route from five. No staff are currently certified to drive the district's large school buses. The district is starting a bus driver academy to get more drivers. It is partnering with Novato to help with training and hoping to have up to four drivers trained for the school year.

Miller Creek

The school's biking mode share increased to 33% in fall 2023, a response to bus service being decreased. A project in the unincorporated bike plan would add Class II bike lanes on Lucas Valley Road/Smith Ranch Road and could help connect students to school. Based on Caltrans guidance, a Class IV facility should be implemented on this road given its volume and speeds. This could be a good candidate for the next round of Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods federal grant in 2024.

Mary Silveira

The hill in front of the Marin County Office of Education is a barrier to students biking

Vallecito

Nova Albion & Montecito's crossing guard is funded through December 2023. The intersection will be reevaluated in the fall and the district may need to figure out how to fund it going forward. There's an opportunity to route pedestrians to another intersection.

Infrastructure barriers

The current street design encourages speeding and dangerous conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly on Las Gallinas Avenue. Drivers tend to not pay attention at the intersections of Oleander Drive and Las Colindas Road with Las Gallinas Avenue. Las Pavadas Avenue where it connects to Las Gallinas has blind turns, particularly as the sun is in drivers' eyes this time of year. Additionally, the highway is a major barrier for students walking or biking to school. Lucas Valley Road is challenging; however, there are alternatives to get to school so students can avoid this road.

Infrastructure barriers are exacerbated by the fact that many students are zoned to schools that are not the closest to their homes. One participant wondered if the student boundary lines could be reconsidered so students could attend the school closest to them.

E-Bikes

CHP and the Sheriff's department are helping with education and enforcement to encourage helmet use, particularly at Miller Creek Middle. The e-bike response in the district is multi-faceted and includes public health as well as education.



Park & Walk Program

Parents are encouraged to park and walk with students partway, or drop off older students equal to their grade (e.g. one block away for first graders). Some principals in the county are even closing the drop-off zone to make them accessible only for carpoolers and/or younger students, encouraging everyone else to walk at least some distance to school.

Updates

Street Smarts (Jen Shriber, SR2S/Parametrix)

The next Street Smarts rollout will be from October 2 through November and will feature educational messaging on banners, signs, and social media to promote safe driving, walking, and cycling behaviors. Visit www.streetsmartsmarin.org to download materials or learn where to get a yard sign.

Vallecito (Wendi Kallins, SR2S)

There have been no changes to the Vallecito concept since the last task force meeting. The proposed pathway proposal had been extended through the field to Vallecito Elementary School. This project has excellent potential to receive funding from the upcoming 2024 Safe Pathways to School grant application. The application would be submitted by the school district with assistance from Parametrix.

The next step is for Parametrix to develop cost estimates. There was a request to estimate the project cost in two parts – the pathway by Mark Day and the pathway through the field – in case not enough funds are available to construct the whole project.

Next steps

- Consider traffic calming measures on Las Gallinas and Miller Creek.
- Develop suggested route maps for schools that don't currently have them.
- Identify park and walk areas and incorporate them into the route maps.
- Advertise task force meetings in principals' newsletters.
- Coordinate as needed to prepare for Mark Day/Vallecito path Safe Pathways call for proposals in 2024.
- Advance Class II (or better) bike lanes on Lucas Valley Road/Smith Ranch Road. Consider applying for an RCN grant next year.
- Develop issues list

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