

Ross School District

Safe Routes to School Task Force Meeting Notes

Monday, January 22
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

[View Recording](#)

Participants

- Wendi Kallins – SR2S
- Gwen Froh – SR2S/MCBC
- Misty Gibbs – Co-Chair, Walk & Roll, Ross School PTO
- Julie McMillan – Ross Town Council, Liaison to Safe Routes Task Force
- Christa Johnson – Ross Town Manager
- Raffaello Pata – Ross Police
- Maria Lubarmersky – Ross Middle School Principal
- Mira Schwartz – SR2S Volunteer Coordinator
- Jen Shriber – SR2S/Parametrix
- Richard Simonitch – Ross DPW

Poll

The group was polled on whether they would like to meet online or in person for the spring task force meeting. 67% could go either way, 33% prefer virtual, and 0% want to meet in person. Based on the poll the next meeting will remain virtual.

Safe Routes Presentation (Gwen Froh, SR2S/MCBC)

See the [attached presentation](#) on walking and bike buses and park and walk.

Discussion (Wendi Kallins, SR2S)

Student Tally Survey

The Fall 2023 student tally results show that the Ross School is doing well compared to other schools in the county. Slightly more middle school students (over 50%) walk and bike to school compared to elementary school students (just under 50%). Almost one-third of middle school students are driven, compared to 44% of elementary school students. Approximately 15% of middle school students use “other” modes, such as scooters and skateboards. This success speaks to the town’s good infrastructure and students’ general proximity to school.

The latest student tally survey results are available on the Safe Routes [website’s Resources page](#).



New Dot Maps

Individual dot maps were created for elementary and middle school students showing their distances to school. Approximately 19% of elementary school students live within one quarter mile of school, while 58% live within one half mile and 96% live within one mile. Approximately 17% of middle school students live within one quarter mile, 51% live within one half mile, and 93% live within one mile of school.

Identify Park & Walk Locations

The Art & Garden Center is a good potential location for park and walk, particularly for families from Laurel Grove. Students would still need to cross Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, but they would do so at a signalized intersection with a crossing guard.

The post office was used for a Jingle All the Way event. While it is close to school, this could be a good park and walk location for families with younger students.

A location had previously been used for Winship families near the bridge before the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard crossing.

There has been a lot of involvement in events from families who live in the hills. Misty and others organized selectively chose spots coming down the hill to allow the group to grow as it progressed. Misty can share a map of these locations.

Opportunities & Challenges

The Ross School currently has an issue with tardy students; time management challenges may contribute to more students arriving via family vehicles. Information on where these students live and what modes they use can be obtained through reviews conducted by the school.

After-school activities could lead to more students being driven home in the afternoon.

Messaging is important to get more families involved. Walking school buses and bike trains can reduce the burden on parents when they take turns leading them.

Inclement weather makes families less likely to walk and bike to school. Organizers can promote walking on rainy days with special themes, activities, or messaging.

Updates

Education & Encouragement (Gwen Froh, MCBC/SR2S)

A number of spring activities are planned, and more information can be found on the



[Safe Routes website](#). These include Walk and Roll Wednesdays, Rainbow Quest Challenge, National Bike to School Day on May 8, and the Bike Hero contest in May.

The parent volunteer luncheon will be held on January 25 from 10:30-12:30 in San Rafael. RSVP to Mira@marinbike.org.

E-bike safety messaging and guidance can be found on the Safe Routes website.

E-Bike Education

The Town partnered with the school on e-bike education last year and continues to do so this year. This year police department efforts are mainly on the enforcement side of things, to provide more visibility and encourage safety. Police are more visible in certain locations such as the new pathway. Police officers are seeing positive change in behaviors.

Assemblyman Connelly introduced a bill that would make Type II e-bikes legal only to people ages 16+.

Marin County has published a new data dashboard to track e-bike crashes involving emergency response in the county. The dashboard is continuously updated and can be found here: <https://www.marinhhs.org/bicycle-safety>.

Town Updates

The Town is getting closer to getting right-of-way reconfiguration adopted to move forward with the next phase of the Laurel Grove safe pathway project. The goal is to begin construction of the pathway extension past Canyon in the spring to provide a continuous pathway to SFDB. The pathway will be ready for new school year in fall 2024.

New Issues

AB413 (Wendi Kallins, SR2S)

New state legislation has gone into effect prohibiting parked cars within 20 feet of the approach to a marked or unmarked crosswalk and within 15 feet of a crosswalk with a curb extension. The law will go into full effect in 2025; in 2024, drivers can be issued a warning for parking too close to a crosswalk. This law would require enforcement even in locations where there is no red curb.

The town's pre-existing municipal code bars parking 20 feet from an intersection, but people often violate this. Enforcement can be difficult when there's no paint or signage. The police will step up enforcement and look into where it makes sense to paint curbs



red. Enforcement is a priority along walking school bus routes, particularly locations where there are sight distance issues.

Next Steps

- Add the Ross suggested route map to the Safe Routes website
- Misty will share the walk and roll locations with Safe Routes
- Determine locations of tardy students
- Establish a park and walk location at the Art and Garden Center and look into a Winship location
- Devise rainy day encouragement strategies for park and walk, walking school buses, and bike trains
- Report from police on Education programs

Next Meeting Date

- April 22 at 10 AM

