



## Evaluation and Data Collection

This implementation Appendix provides further details and recommendations for accomplishing a key goal of the Menlo Park Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Strategy: supporting school districts in collecting data about how families get to school. In SRTS programs, evaluation is traditionally accomplished through parent surveys, student hand tallies, tracking outreach activities and events, and using outside data sources.

Typical data about families' school commute habits include:

- **Student hand tallies** collect information on how students traveled to and from school over a 2-3-day period. This information provides a snapshot of how students get to school for each school and grade and can track mode shift over time to determine how SRTS activities impact families' transportation behaviors.
- **Parent surveys** provide information about families' school travel behavior as well as parents' attitudes about walking and biking. Schools can use surveys to determine specific safety concerns and opportunities to provide activities to overcome barriers to walking, biking, and other shared modes.

The National Partnership for SRTS has developed consistent guidance for collecting data related to student travel and parents' perceptions.

In addition, programs should collect information about participation and track events and activities at schools to continually improve the program offerings and better reach the community.

### Data Collection Guidelines

Typically, hand tallies are collected every spring on an annual basis, while parent surveys are collected every 2-4 years. These methods can be supplemented with formal school administration and/or parent champion surveys or informal interviews with key stakeholders.

### Hand Tally Data Collection

It is important to establish a baseline of how students travel to school through hand tallies. The City should aim to reach every participating school in April/May of each year. The National Center for SRTS has a standardized survey form that should be used, so the data can be uploaded and stored, and reports downloaded from the online database.

Schools should have at least two classrooms per grade complete the surveys. The SRTS Coordinator can work directly with school administration to deliver paper surveys for teachers to fill out during class time or the Coordinator or parent volunteers can offer to assist in data collection.

Schools are encouraged to conduct their travel tallies on a typical Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday; not on a day with a big event or incentives.

### Elementary Schools

Elementary schools are encouraged to complete the travel tallies during the same timeframe (week of April 15<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>rd</sup>) to minimize differences in weather. Students are typically in the same classroom all day so classroom teachers can choose when to conduct the tallies.

### Middle Schools

Middle schools should be instructed to designate a class period for all classrooms to complete the travel surveys. In middle school, students rotate teachers, so choosing a single period eliminates the risk that students will be counted twice. Homeroom, or P.E. classes could be good options. Web-based/online options can be strongly promoted.

### High Schools

High school students can complete a slightly modified High School Arrival and Departure Survey. High schools can choose to have two classes per grade to do the paper survey. An online option should be made available for students and/or classroom teachers to complete an online hand tally form.

### Parent Survey Data Collection Guidelines

Parent surveys supplement the hand tallies with information about parents' concerns and perceptions of walking and biking. A 30 percent response rate is a reasonable target to aim for.

Parent surveys should be collected at elementary, middle, and K-12 schools (K-8 grades). Schools should be encouraged to distribute parent surveys to all parents through established channels, such as through the school website, a school newsletter, or emails to each parent. Flyers can also be included within the templates that schools can distribute through PeachJar or a similar service.

### How did you get to school?

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Monday's Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total number of students enrolled in class \_\_\_\_\_



	Weather	Student Attendance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tues. A.M.									
Tues. P.M.									
Wed. A.M.									
Wed. P.M.									
Thurs. A.M.									
Thurs. P.M.									

*Travel tally posters can make it easier for teachers to record how students got to school each day.*

### School Administration and Parent Champion Surveys

SRTS programs can track feedback from key stakeholders at schools and parent volunteers with unique surveys or focus groups targeting those groups. Questions should collect information about perceptions of the SRTS program, the challenges of implementing activities or events, ways the SRTS program could improve event delivery, and other feedback. The SRTS Coordinator should track this information over time, in order to improve how SRTS messages and activities reach the community.

## Strategies to Increase School Participation

### Teacher Incentives

All teachers who conduct student travel tallies with their class can be eligible for a prize, such as sports equipment, school supplies, or SRTS technical assistance.

### Parent Incentives

Parents completing the survey can be entered into a raffle to win prizes. Parent prizes could include gift cards, a pizza party for the class, or SRTS resources.

## Data Entry and Reporting

The SRTS Coordinator should enter the hand tally data into the National Center for SRTS's online database. The database can be used to create automatically-generated school reports. Results of the parent surveys from SurveyMonkey can be incorporated into the annual evaluation and reports.

Other non-standard surveys should be administered online via SurveyMonkey or GoogleForms and the SRTS Coordinator should download raw data as well as reports, to archive the information for the future.

### Citywide Annual Reporting

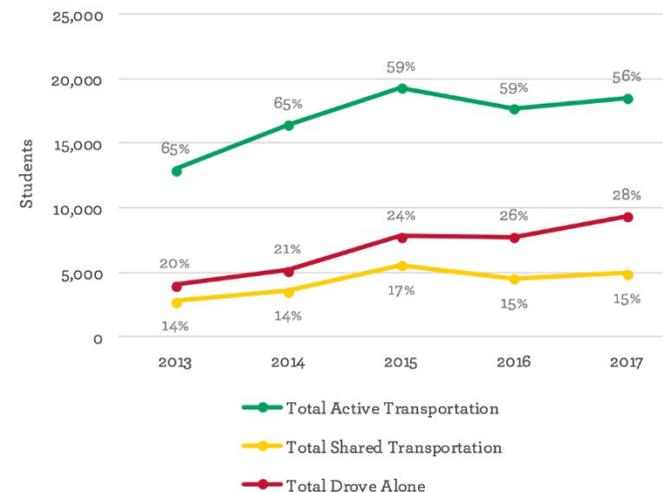
The tally and survey results, combined with tracked activities and outreach at each school, can show progress toward the stated SRTS program goals. An Annual Report can summarize the SRTS activities of the year, highlight successes, and identify areas to improve or opportunities to pursue in the following year. It should include both the activities (number of events and participation numbers) as well as outcomes (mode split, perceptions of walking and biking, etc.).

## School Snapshots

Reports should also include snapshots or one-page summaries of activities by and at individual schools. They can highlight school-specific activities and successes, and can be a valuable tool to discuss next steps and potential activities with the school administration and parent volunteers.

### Coordinator Reporting

The SRTS Coordinator should generally track time spent engaging with each Menlo Park school, such as documenting meetings, phone calls, and event planning. These numbers can be reported to the City on a bi-annual basis. In addition to identifying the schools that have needed the most attention, this can also help determine how much time is expected to be spent on each school in the future.



*School Participation in International Walk and Roll to School Day, Alameda County Safe Routes to School 2017-18 Annual Report*