



## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TASK FORCE NOTES

**Date:** June 17, 2020  
**Time:** 9:00-10:30 AM  
**Virtual meeting**

### 1) Introductions

- Allison Silvestri, TIDE Academy
- Andre-Anne Cadieux, Safe Routes to School Coordinator
- Carol Houle Parker, Menlo Park Fire District
- Ellen Kraska, Laurel Elementary School
- Hanieh Houshmandi, San Mateo County Public Works
- Jen Wolosin, Parents for Safe Routes
- Jim Benz, Peninsula School
- Joel Slavit, San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- Joyce Massaro, Las Lomas Elementary School District
- Julia Malmo-Laycock, San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- Kristen Fielding, Las Lomas Elementary School
- Lydia Lee, Complete Streets Commission
- Madeline Hardcastle, Menlo Park Fire District
- Marites Fermin, Menlo Park City School District
- Nell Curran, Las Lomas Elementary School District
- Nicholas Muys, Menlo-Atherton High School
- Nicholas Yee, Menlo Park Public Works
- Ruven Trabanino, Menlo Park City School District
- Theresa Vallez-Kelly, San Mateo County Office of Education
- Tina Smith, TIDE Academy
- Vanessa Castro, San Mateo County Office of Education
- Victoria Trask, Menlo Park Police Department
- Wendy Valencia, Menlo Park City School District

This is the third and last Task Force meeting of the school year. The March meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19.

It was suggested to add to the agenda the Safe Routes to School National Partnership's decision to drop "Enforcement" from the SRTS "6 E's" framework.

### 2) SRTS Program Updates

- Administration School Survey: School surveys were sent to all public and private schools in March 2020 to help understand the schools' challenges, opportunities and needs and to identify focus areas for the SRTS Strategy and ways to improve the implementation of activities.
  - 10 public schools have answered the survey. Some of the results are included in the Annual Report.
- Annual Report: The Annual Report describes the activities organized in 2019-2020. Many events planned for the Spring were cancelled due to Covid-19. It also includes recommendations and area of focus for the next years of the program.
- School Summaries: School Summaries were created for each public and private school in Menlo Park. They include demographic data, travel data from student hand tallies, SRTS champions, challenges identified by the schools, barriers to walking and biking from the Parent Survey, etc.

Both the SRTS Annual Report and School Summaries will be on the SRTS website.

- Pedestrian Safety Curriculum : A Pedestrian Curriculum for PE teachers was created for the City of Menlo Park. It is broken out in six lessons that meet California learning standards for physical education and health education.
  - Vanessa Castro (SMCOE) asked if the curriculum could be shared with other schools in the County and how it will be adapted to comply with physical distancing or distance learning? Nicholas Yee (City of Menlo Park) mentioned that the curriculum was created for the schools in Menlo Park but will be available on the SRTS website and could be shared in the future. The lessons in the curriculum allowed for physical distancing and some could be adapted for distance leaning.
  - Lydia Lee asked if a training for teachers could be scheduled. The webinar could be recorded and available for school staff in the future. She added that having safety education taught by teachers is probably better than by parents or volunteers. From the bike rodeo experience, it's not sustainable to rely only on parents and it will be hard next school year to have have volunteers and parent on campus.
  - Ellen Kraska (Laurel School) mentioned that a meeting with Laurel PE teachers could be scheduled in August to go through the curriculum.
  - Schools interested in implementing the curriculum can reach out to [saferoutestoschool@menlopark.org](mailto:saferoutestoschool@menlopark.org).
- Activity Book: A SRTS Activity Book with walking and biking safety tips, activities and games for students and their families was created to complete the Pedestrian Curriculum. Due to budget cuts, Menlo Park won't be able to provide hard copies to the schools.
- Next year overview: Nicholas Yee provided an overview of the upcoming year for the SRTS
  - Program:
    - SRTS budget halved for FY2020-21 due to budget deficits
    - Few engagement events if any at all

- Emphasis next year more on coordination/support rather than events
- Using budget to retain SRTS Coordinator to assist schools and districts with educational materials, engagement, grant applications, etc.
- Stakeholder meetings will continue quarterly.

### 3) Student Transportation and SRTS Priorities for school year 2020-21

#### Menlo-Atherton High School Updates

Nick Muys, Assistant Principal at Menlo-Atherton High School, gave an overview of the SRTS efforts, the improvements regarding active/alternative student transportation and goals for 2020-21.

Theresa Vallez-Kelly (SMCOE) asked if donated bikes from the bike shed program (M-A on the move) come with a helmet. SMCOE can help with helmet if needed.

The Task Force members discussed bike safety and how to provide a space for teenagers to do bike tricks. Having regular events to encourage kids doing bike tricks (e.g. popping wheelies).

Bike thefts is also a significant problem at the school.

Nick Muys mentioned a collaboration with the program “Our Voice” from Stanford to involve students in Safe Routes, e.g. chart their route to school.

Covid-19 and Public Transportation:

The school doesn’t know how many students will be on campus next year. Public transportation is a challenge. SamTrans’ protocols for passengers and students to respect physical distancing will enable to accommodate only a fraction of the students it usually transports to M-A on Bus 296 (from East Palo Alto) or on its other buses around town. Students that can no longer take the bus will have to bike or walk to school. Jen Wolosin suggested that the SRTS program should help the kids who usually take the bus to have access to a bike next school year. Mapping impacted bus routes and the nearest safe routes form new bus routes could be a task for the program.

#### Las Lomas Elementary School District

Nell Curran, Wellness Coordinator at LLESD, provided an update on the school district’s priorities and needs, based on data from parent survey and student tallies.

##### Structural Safety

- Continued partnership with the town of Atherton to erect permanent pedestrian safety features (e.g., rapid flashing beacon at an intersection that has been a persistent safety concern)
- Given the new construction at the elementary school and given the physical distance requirements that will be imposed by COVID-19, the school district will need to develop safe systems for students to arrive and depart from campus (e.g. use of stanchions)

##### Commute

- The public health physical distancing and cleaning regulations imposed by COVID-19 will affect how the district can transport students via bus (significantly fewer students!) and will result in

increased traffic and the need to encourage more families to walk, scoot, or bike to school (possibly less carpooling too).

- Manage traffic at pick-up and drop-off
- Increase number of students who walk or roll to school (which may require pedestrian and bicycle safety education, creative incentives)

LLESD typically bused 400 kids per day. In Fall 2020, they will have the capacity to bus 88 (12 students per bus to maintain physical distancing). They will prioritize Tinsley Transfer Program students that live too far from the school to walk or bike.

The school district won't discourage carpooling but will strongly encourage and prioritize walking and biking to school.

**Crossing Guard**

- In light of potentially newly added safety features and a change in traffic flow, LLESD may need to enhance or leverage its crossing guard program to creatively and safely help students manage new arrival and dismissal systems

Lydia Lee asked if there were updates regarding the installation of a pedestrian flashing beacon device near La Entrada School. Joyce Massaro, Transportation Supervisor at LLESD, answered that the device will be funded and installed by the school district (10,000\$ to buy + installation) but they need to work with the Town of Atherton and with the neighbors to install the flashing beacon.

Menlo Park City School District: Laurel Elementary and Hillview Middle

Ellen Kraska, Assistant Principal at Laurel School, introduced the new MPCSD representatives that were attending the meeting: Wendy Valencia, Admin Assistant to the CBO & Director of Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation (MOT), Wilfin Morales, Lead of Transportation and Ruben Trabanino, Director of MOT.

Pre COVID-19, MPCSD typically bused 100 kids from the Tinsley Transfer Program and 150 other kids from the schools' attendance area that will be encouraged to bike and walk to school. Next school year, busses will have a capacity of 14 students. She added that safety education will be even more important since more kids will be in the streets.

Lydia Lee suggested that it would be good to know where those residential buses will stop and to map bike/walk routes near those.

	<b>Laurel Elementary</b>	<b>Hillview Middle</b>
<b>Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide biking safety instruction for incoming Upper Campus (grades 3-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide biking safety instruction for incoming 6th graders</li> <li>• Integrate biking safety and health curriculum into PE program</li> </ul>
<b>SRTS Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September Bike Rodeo for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade</li> <li>• September Bike Safety Education Class Lessons</li> <li>• September Bike Safety Classes during PE classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike rodeos for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students</li> <li>• In-house contests to promote walking/biking to school</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike Safety Assemblies (<i>TURNED INTO CLASS MEETINGS</i>) for 4th and 5th grade students</li> </ul>	
<b>Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike Safety classes in PE for grades 3, 4, 5</li> <li>• Parent/community communications to promote less driving and reinforcing of safe biking practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructional/curricular training for PE teachers</li> <li>• Parent/community communications to promote less driving and reinforcing of safe biking practices</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with Menlo Police Department to incentivize safe biking practices</li> </ul>
<b>Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued financial assistance from the County and District to put on bike rodeos</li> <li>• Potential PE curriculum from the County's SRTS program</li> <li>• Continued communication from the County program on walking/biking contests and upcoming professional development sessions</li> </ul>	

The school is still thinking of new guidelines to conduct bike rodeo. Hillview is working with partners (vendors e.g. YBikes) on what bike education/bike rodeo could look like next year. Lydia mentioned that the Palo Alto SRTS program has an online curriculum (<https://www.mybikeskills.com/>) with videoclip, organized topics, etc. That could be a good inspiration / starting point.

Theresa Vallez-Kelly asked the school staff what type of bike/ped digital content would you be interested in and how might it be used (e.g. In the classroom? At home? Both?)

- For Las Lomas, bike/ped digital content would be used mostly at home - staff would provide it to families for use on their own time.
- Theresa shared the SMCOE "at home website": <https://sites.google.com/smcoe.org/srtshome/>

#### 4) SRTS National Partnership's decision to drop "Enforcement" from 6 E's framework

Earlier las week, the SRTS National Partnership announced the decision to drop "Enforcement" from 6 E's framework. It was suggested to discuss what this decision could mean for Menlo Park SRTS Program.

Ideas mentioned: Menlo Park Police Department could help the crossing guard program (training, fill the gap), facilitate safer and comfortable options to walk and bike.

#### 5) City Project Updates

- Middle Avenue Pedestrian/Bicycle Rail Crossing Project: The City had applied to a grant to move forward with the project.
- Sharon Road Street Improvement Project (near La Entrada School): After a phase of public outreach, the preferred option is to install an asphalted pathway with parking restrictions (instead of an elevated concrete sidewalk). The project will be presented at the Complete Street Commission this Summer.
- Chilco Street Bike Lane: project is delayed. The bike lane should be installed by the Fall.

- Downtown Santa Cruz Avenue: to close a portion of the street to allow restaurants and shops to expand their activities outdoor onto the street and enable more physical distancing among customers. The project was discussed the night before at the City Council.

## **6) Announcements**

Lydia Lee shared some results from a survey on Menlo Park's streets completed by residents in the Spring, during the shelter-in-place order. Menlo Park residents and children are using a lot more the streets to walk and bike.