



San Francisco Safe Routes to School 2019 - 2020 Evaluation Highlights

Prepared By:



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SFMTA

Letter from the Director



London Breed, Mayor

Gwyneth Borden, Chair
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Jeffrey Tumlin, Director of Transportation

Summer 2020

Dear Safe Routes to School Supporters:

The 2019-2020 school year was the first year that the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) had the pleasure of overseeing the San Francisco Safe Routes to School Partnership. It was a year of growth and expansion for the program, extending the program from 27 schools to 103 schools with on-site outreach and education. Internally, we enhanced and strengthened the coordination and collaboration with all of the school safety related services and ensured that schools received comprehensive information about all of the SFMTA's school-related programs, including the Crossing Guard Program, Free Muni for Low-Income Youth, and the Muni Transit Assistance Program.

Although we made great progress with Safe Routes to School, the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound changes to our city's transportation system and our school communities will continue to feel the impact of this change. Now, more than ever, the San Francisco Safe Routes to School Partnership will need to help students, particularly transit-dependent students, navigate our streets safely and sustainably during these unprecedented times. Now is also the time for us to help people walk/bike to school in order to reduce the impact that COVID-19 will have on our transportation system. With new initiatives, such as the SFMTA's Slow Streets Program, we are creating more opportunities for students to walk and bike safely to school. Given the new needs that our students are facing during this pandemic, the San Francisco Safe Routes to School Partnership has introduced several virtual trainings to help students and their families navigate our streets safely during shelter in place.

The SFMTA team is working hand in hand with our Safe Routes to School city and non-profit partners to ensure that all our students have access to affordable, safe, and reliable transportation options during this time of great uncertainty.

Sincerely,

Jeff Tumlin
Director of Transportation



SF Environment



San Francisco
Department of Public Health



SFUSD SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



**YMCA OF
SAN FRANCISCO**



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Program Overview

About Us

SF-SRTS is a partnership between city agencies and nonprofit partners, including the following among other partners:

- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)
- San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)
- San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH)
- San Francisco Department of the Environment (SFE)
- San Francisco Bicycle Coalition
- Tenderloin Safe Passage
- Walk San Francisco
- YMCA's YBike Program

SFMTA supports the city's children and families by building a coordinated framework for efforts that provide safe and effective options for school transportation.

This collaboration has resulted in...

- Increased focus on the program's core goals
- Improved coordination to promote sustainable transportation and support safety
- Improved communications to parents and stakeholders

Background

This report provides a high-level summary of the successes of the San Francisco Safe Routes to School (SF-SRTS) program in fiscal year 2019-2020 as well as opportunities for reflection, learning, and growth. We acknowledge the unprecedented context and challenging times in which this report is produced. The ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic has led to school closures, transformed in-person education to distance learning, and has resulted in numerous health, social, emotional and economic impacts for students and families, particularly for communities of color. SF-SRTS remains committed to enhancing children's health and well-being by creating opportunities to incorporate active transportation into their everyday lives, with equity and safety as top priorities.

The programming and data referenced throughout this report was implemented and gathered from September 2019 through mid-March 2020, before the shelter-in-place orders and school closures went into effect. After shelter-in-place, the program has pivoted to providing distance learning opportunities for SFUSD students.



"Alexa likes to draw and enjoyed drawing all the kids walking and rolling to school, especially because we were not able to this year. Alexa really enjoys Bike and Roll to School Week because it is good for the environment."

*-Parent of First Place Middle School Winner**

** An art contest was launched in 2020 to celebrate Bike and Roll to School Day. When schools were canceled due to the shelter-in-place order, the art contest provided an opportunity for students to participate in transportation-related activity that they could safely do from home. There were 44 entries from 27 schools, and prizes were given to selected winners.*



Goals

Goal 1 - Mode Shift

By 2030, the program will reduce single family vehicle trips from 48% in 2018 to 30%



Goal 2 - Safety Support

By 2030, the program will reduce school-related collisions by 50% from an annual average of 2 severe and 32 total injury collisions per year, which aligns with the city's Vision Zero initiative to eliminate all traffic deaths in San Francisco.

Objectives

- Increase the number of students and families using one of “Four Fun Ways” (FFW)
- Greater positive awareness of FFW among school communities and policymakers
- Greater capacity and knowledge of how to use FFW
- Expand the impact of limited resources



Four Fun Ways are defined as the four sustainable modes of transportation SF-SRTS promotes: walking, biking, transit use, and carpooling.

Expansion

Program outreach expanded from 27 schools to **103** non-charter public schools in SFUSD.

- In 2019-20, SF-SRTS conducted broad outreach to nearly all 60,000+ students in the district to increase awareness of the program and increase parent and school engagement

Coordination improved among school transportation efforts and created community feedback channels:

- Coordinated efforts with the Muni Transit Assistance Program, Crossing Guard Program, and MTA's school-site engineering team
- Partnered with SFMTA's Low Income Programs to increase outreach and support applications for Free Muni for Youth
- Hosted a Transit Day event with SF Transit Riders and directly engaged with middle and high school students through transit tabling

Prioritization

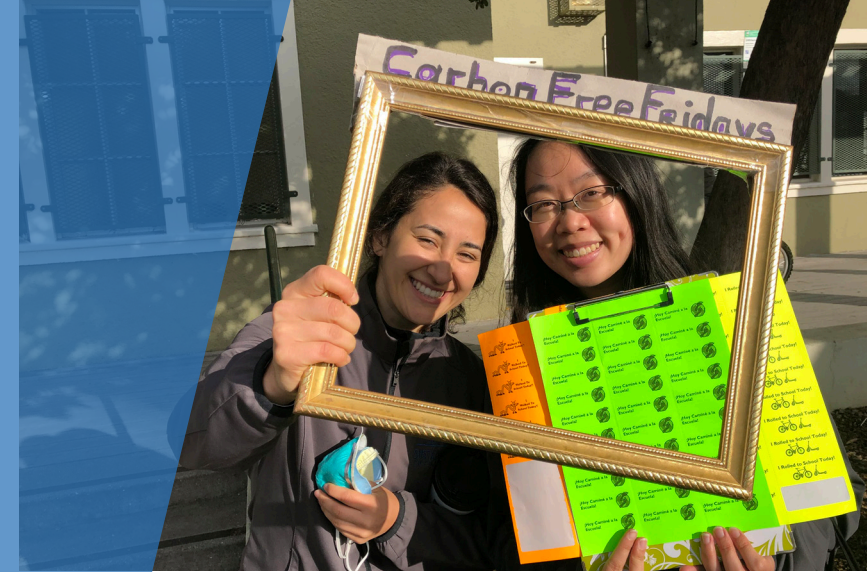
SF-SRTS prioritized deep engagement at 33 schools (serving approximately 21,237 students) based on:

- **Mode shift goals:** Schools where many students are driven to school in a family car despite living nearby. SF-SRTS used data from the 2017-2018 Commute Study for this prioritization.
- **Equity goals:** Schools where there is a high percentage of students eligible for free and reduced price meals in areas with a history of collisions.

Commitment to Equity

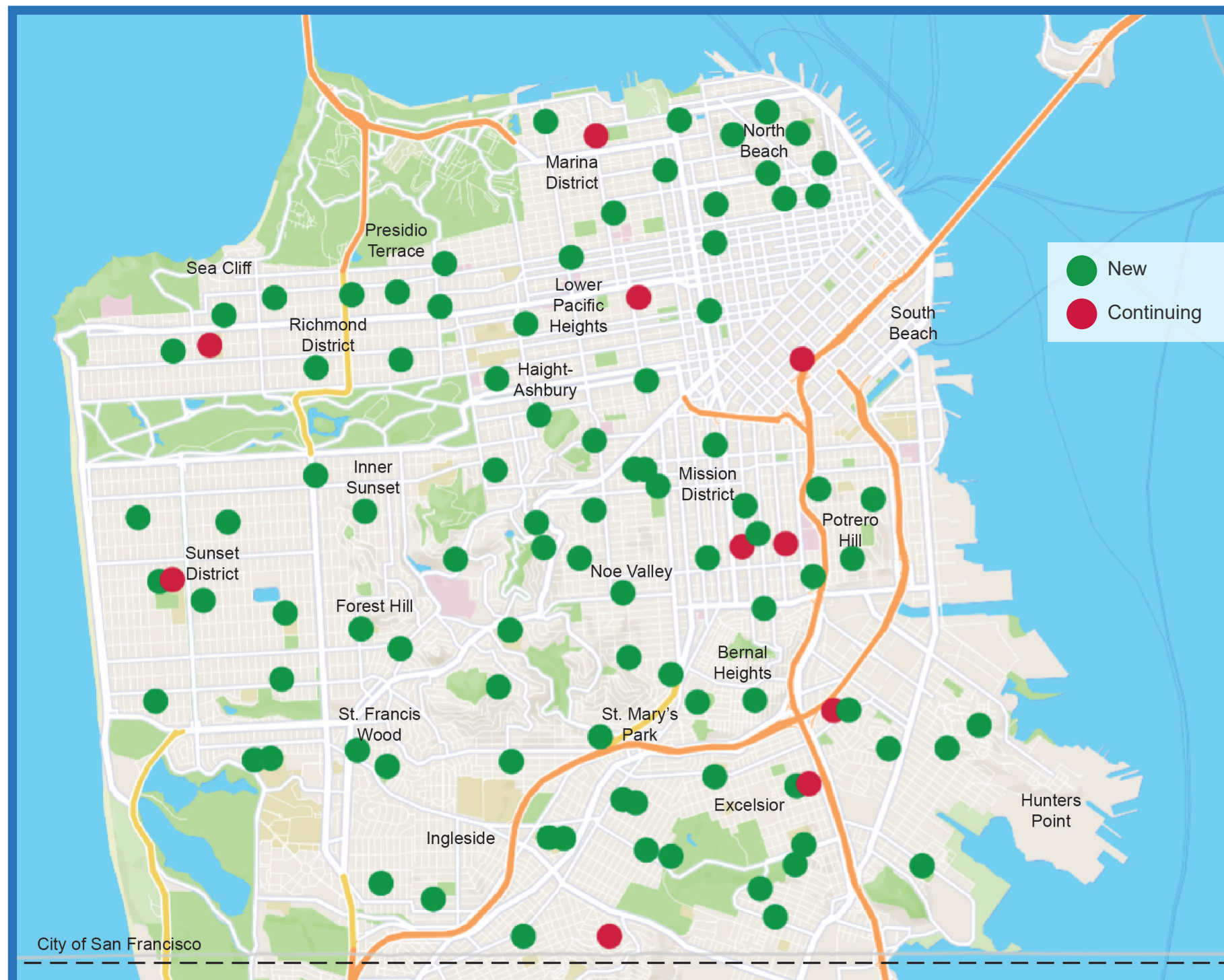
SF-SRTS uses a data-driven approach to prioritize schools in under-resourced neighborhoods where families face significant collision and personal safety challenges on trips to and from school. Equity-focused strategies include:

- Engaging families in multilingual program planning and implementation including direct outreach by multilingual staff and translated collateral resources
- Increasing access to culturally appropriate resources guided by community requests
- Providing on-the-ground support by SF-SRTS staff for events and programming
- Directing support to access low income transit services



SFUSD Schools Participating in SF-SRTS

All 103 SFUSD non-charter schools now participate in SF-SRTS.



Focus Areas

Core Programming



Encouragement

Communications, events, and support provided to families and students outside of the school day.



Environmental Safety

Programs and efforts to improve street safety and the perception of safety for families travelling to school.



Education

In-school, student-focused education on transportation safety and multi-modal transportation options.

Adjacent Infrastructure Support



Engineering

Physical engineering and planning work. Includes: traffic operations, traffic engineering, traffic calming, and walk audit program.



Transportation Services

Public transportation options. Includes Muni and school trippers, yellow school bus, and Free Muni for Youth.

Program Evaluation



Data-Driven Approach

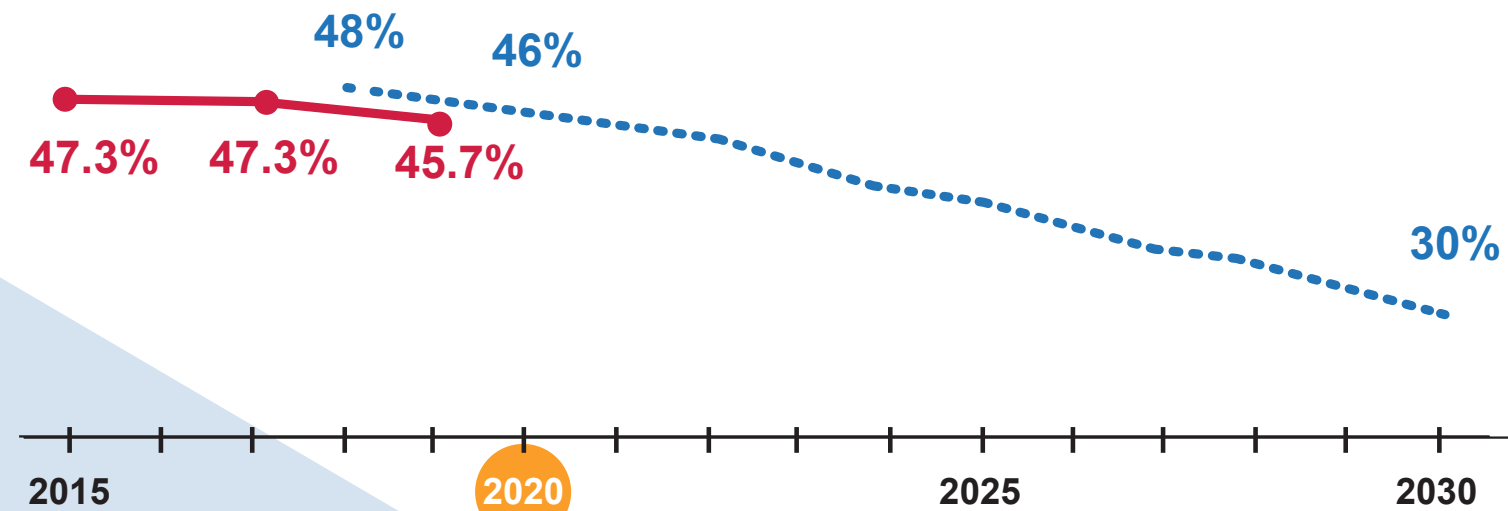
Program evaluation builds on SF-SRTS' data-driven approach to prioritization and engagement by:

- Tracking progress to achieving mode-shift and safety goals
- Recording activity and outreach metrics to measure school-level impacts
- Ensuring that program components are meeting identified metrics for success

Goal 1 Findings: Mode Shift

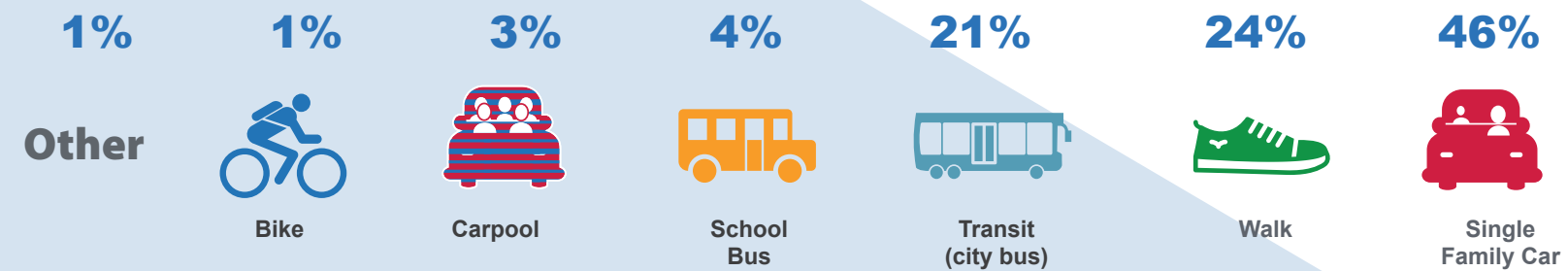
Goal 1: Reduce single family vehicle trips from 48% in 2018 to 46% in 2020.

 **Goal met for 2020! On track to reach 2030 goal.**

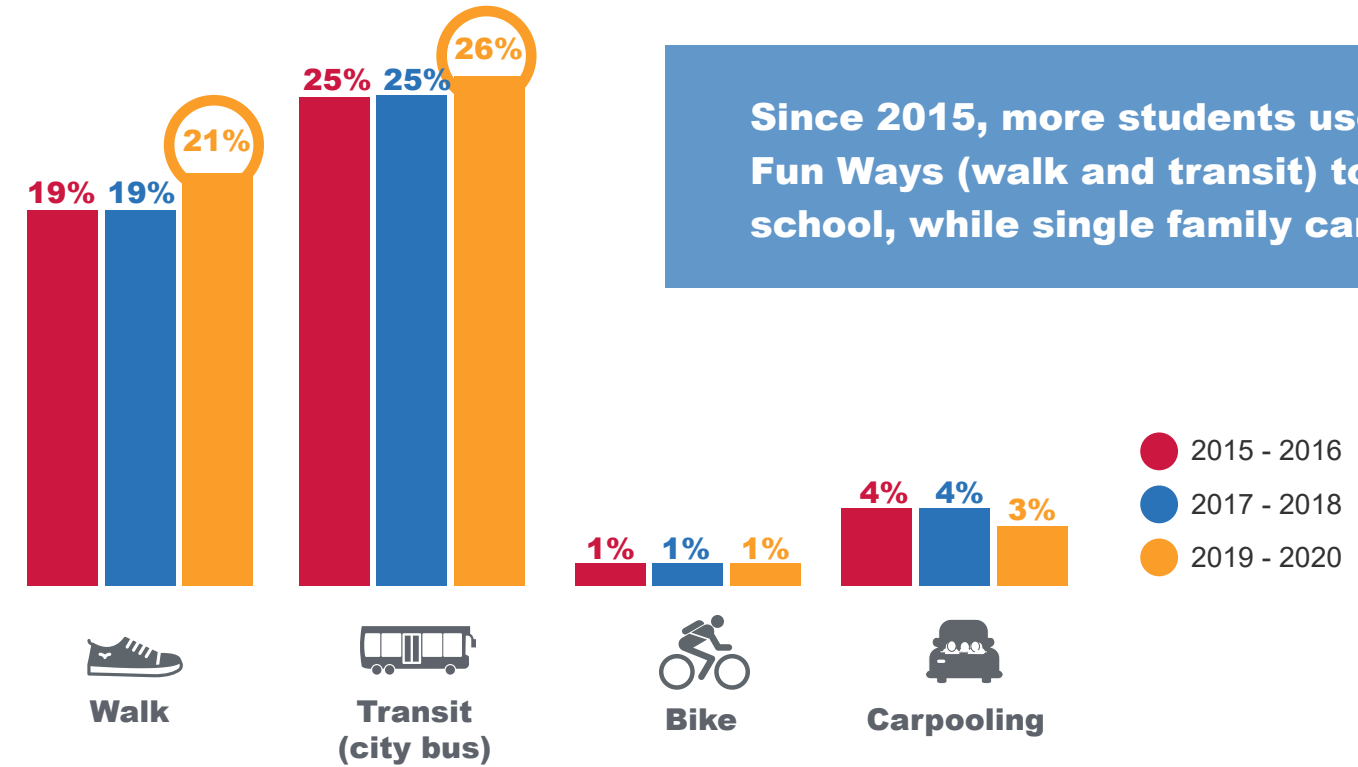


— Single Family Car
 - - - Goal

Distribution of Transportation Modes to Get to School



All data comes from biannual travel tally survey.



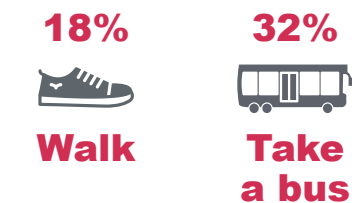
Since 2015, more students use two of the Four Fun Ways (walk and transit) to travel to/from school, while single family car use has declined.

Elementary school students were more likely to walk to school; and middle and high school students were more likely to take the bus to school.

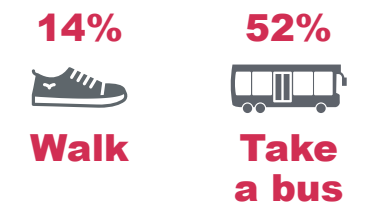
Elementary Students



Middle School Students



High School Students



Goal 2 Findings: Safety Support

Goal 2: By 2030, reduce school-related collisions by 50% from an annual average of 2 severe and 32 total injury collisions.

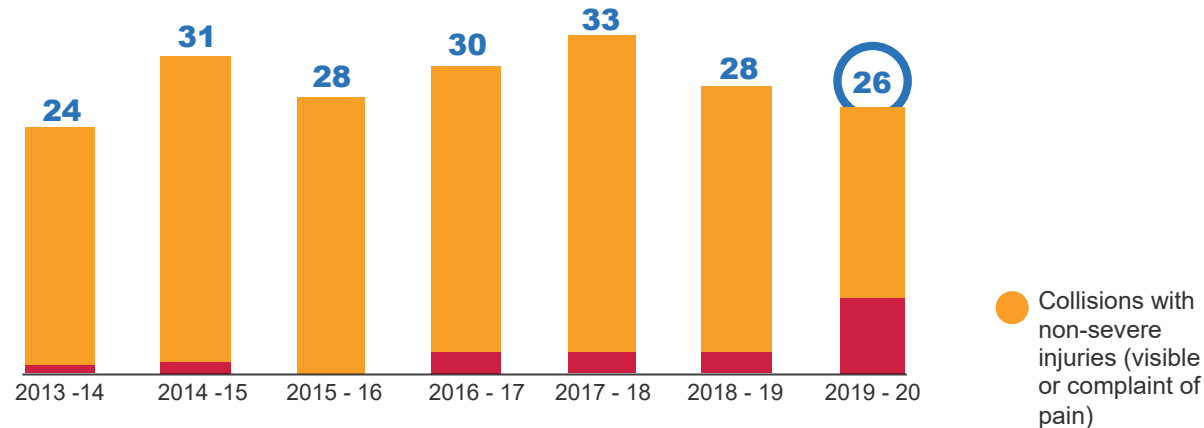
In other words, by 2030 there will be an annual average of 0 or 1 school-related collisions resulting in severe injuries.



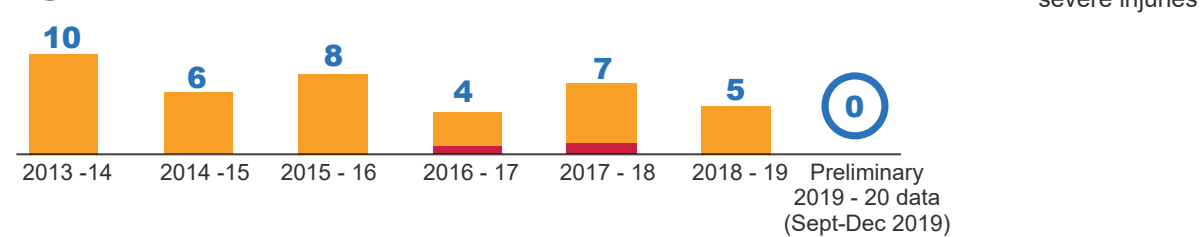
Working to meet 2030 goal.



School-Related Collisions Involving Pedestrians



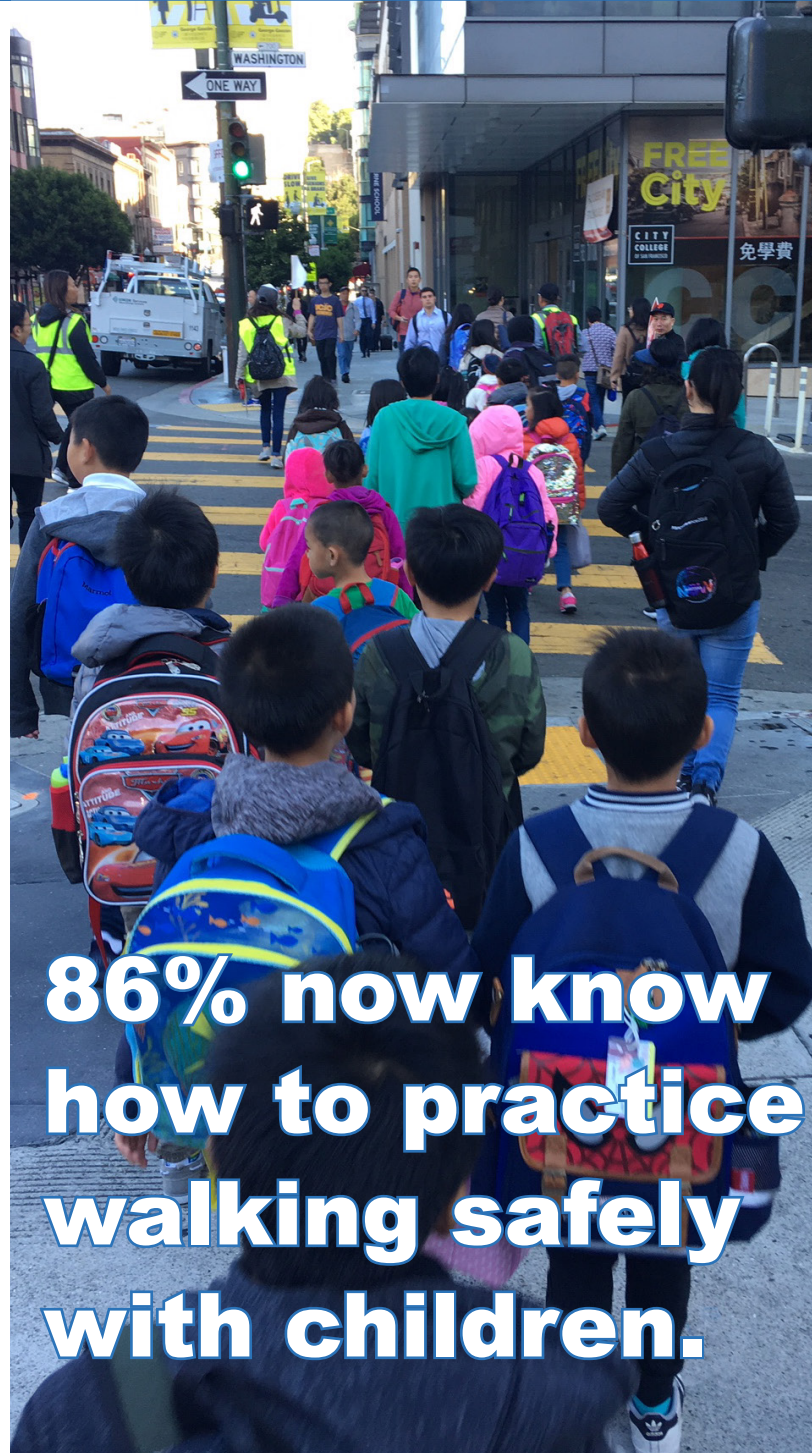
School-Related Collisions Involving Bicyclists



School-related collisions are those that involve 1) a child or young person 5-18 years old and 2) either a pedestrian or bicyclist (who may be the child), and occurred on a weekday during the school year (September - May) between 6:00 am and 6:00 pm.

In 2019, there were zero child fatalities from school-related collisions in San Francisco.

86% now know how to practice walking safely with children.



What we did: Environmental & Traffic Safety

- **Tenderloin Safe Passage:** Maintained a group of “Corner Captain” volunteers who assist with safe street crossings during morning school commutes along the city’s high injury network.
- **Bayview Monthly Convener Meetings:** Built relationships with community organizations that promote safety for students during school commutes.
- **TransBASE:** Monitored collisions involving school-age children and youth to address locations and causes.

What we did: Community & Personal Safety

- **Conducted Deep Engagement:** Worked in priority neighborhoods to identify barriers or obstacles to 4 Fun Ways (walk, roll, bike, and/or access transportation without harm or intimidation).
- **Expanded Personal Safety Programming:** Developed a new Personal Safety training, started new walking school buses, and supported existing walking school buses at safety support schools.

Community Safety Training Findings

After completing the Community Safety Training, survey respondents indicated:

- **100%** would like to attend more trainings
- **86%** know how to monitor safety conditions of their walking paths
- **57%** feel safer walking to and from school with their children

How We Are Meeting Our Goals: Engagement & Education

What we did:

- Events and support for families and students
- Student-focused education on transportation safety and multi-modal transportation options:
 - Tabling
 - Walk & Roll to School
 - Bike Education
 - Outreach and student engagement toolkits (in development)



In 2019-2020 SF-SRTS successfully completed outreach activities at all 103 elementary, middle, and high schools.

95 schools were reached through tabling

15,026 students were reached through tabling events

over 2,500 parents and caregivers discussed the SF-SRTS program with staff

over 1,900 subscribers are now registered for the SF Kids On the Go newsletter

*Tabling at middle and high schools was interrupted by COVID19



"We have participated in the last 5 years, so we will definitely continue. [Also], once a month we will hold Walk and Roll to School with our students."

-School Coordinator

SF-SRTS held a successful Walk and Roll to School Day on October 2

89 schools registered

Over 11,000 students participated

10 schools hosted elected officials

YBike hosted 8 fun Learn To Ride events with 453 participants and delivered bicycle education at 11 schools in SFUSD

After participating in Learn to Ride events, survey respondents indicated:

- Increases in bike riding skills (from 9% riding bike on own to 26%; from 7% pedaling on two wheels to 23%; from 35% balancing on two wheels to 49%)

93% want to participate in future Learn to Ride or other biking events

Walk and Roll to School Day

94% of schools want to participate again next year

77% plan to host similar events in the future

1,003 students in 37 classes from grades 6-10 participated in YBike education

The average baseline knowledge score was 65% at baseline and 80% at follow-up

How We Are Meeting Our Goals: Transit Resource Fair



Goals of the Transit Resource Fair

1. Increase students' awareness and knowledge of transit resources
2. Increase access to Free Muni for Youth
3. Gather feedback on effective strategies for high school engagement

Data Highlights

A total of **316 students in grades 7-12 (from 13 middle and high school) participated** in the resource fair and completed transit surveys.

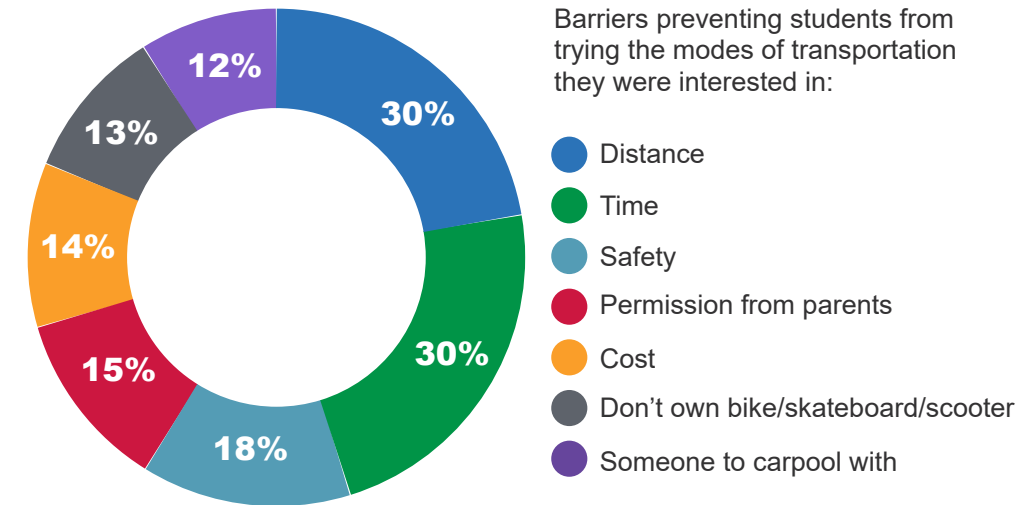
On the day of the survey, most students traveled to school by **Muni/BART (40%) or in a family car (39%)**.

50% of students reported that the decision about their mode of travel to/from school was their parents' and **only 30% reported making the decision for themselves**.

For students whose parents made the decision about their mode of travel, the top reasons included **convenience (55%), time (29%), safety (23%), and cost (12%)**.

Many students expressed interest in using sustainable modes of transportation: **53% for Muni/BART, 34% in biking, 20% for skateboard/scooter, 18% in walking, and 17% in carpooling**.

Barriers preventing students from trying the modes of transportation they were interested in included: **distance (30%), time (30%), safety (18%), permission from parents (15%), cost (14%), and not having a bike/skateboard/scooter (13%) or someone to carpool with (12%)**.



Most students learned about the free Muni pass from their **school (33%), parent/guardian (31%), or friends (11%)**.



How We Are Meeting Our Goals: Walking School Buses

Focusing on safety, truancy, cultural responsiveness, and community building.

Our culturally responsive walking school buses support safety, regular school attendance, and community building.

Increased Safety

Addresses direct safety concerns such as traffic/ infrastructure issues or negative behaviors along walking routes.

Chinatown: Children and caregivers meet at a common place (like a local park) and walk together to stay safe while crossing some of the city's most dangerous streets. This Walking School Bus incorporates culturally responsive elements like language support and multi-generational family involvement.

Decreased Truancy

Reduces truancy at an individual school by ensuring a safe, structured way to get to school, organized by educators and/or SRTS chaperoned.

Malcolm X, Tenderloin, Bret Harte: Urban Ed educators in training host walking school buses departing from public housing complexes near Malcolm X. The program documented reductions in truancy for participants.

“Success is based on having dedicated, passionate champions at the schools they serve. They know the families in their local community and what’s needed to keep them participating.”

-Program Partner

Deepened Cultural Responsiveness

Celebrates a specific community's culture and traditions, and build on community strengths to participate in and support the WSB activity.

Excelsior: Bilingual educators host walking school buses in Spanish at the Excelsior Hub.

Strengthened Community Building

Unites school community members and serves as ways for parents, families, and students to become more familiar with one another.

Longfellow: Encourages families and students to try new modes while addressing community clean up needs.

“The Longfellow Walking School Bus and ‘Walk to Win Wednesdays’ played an important role in anchoring the launch of our San Francisco Safe Routes to School Program. I believe this is due to strong relationships between supportive school administration, teachers, and dedicated parents who took on leadership to serve their children’s health and create positive change in their community. That is to say that it is unique, and yet it is like many other Safe Routes to School stories.”

-Parent at Longfellow



Looking Ahead

Given the needs of students during the COVID-19 pandemic, the SF-SRTS program has adapted and introduced several virtual trainings to help students and their families navigate streets safely during shelter in place. With the introduction of SFMTA's new Slow Streets Program, which is designed to limit through traffic on certain residential streets and allow them to be used more as a shared space for foot and bicycle traffic, families in the city are venturing out to try biking for the first time!

As a result of the pandemic, the SF-SRTS Program has introduced new offerings, such as a virtual Biking with Young Children course to help families navigate streets safely while remaining socially distanced. The program has also introduced a virtual pedestrian safety class and will be revamping the SF-SRTS website to add more downloadable guides for distance learning during the 2020-2021 school year.

COVID Response Next Steps

In July 2020, the SF-SRTS team underwent professional development and discussed how to perform limited on-site instruction (following the guidance from the Department of Public Health) and virtual engagement with school communities for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit education.

The SF-SRTS team is actively involved in discussions with the SFMTA transit team to discuss how students can safely ride Muni should schools reopen in the Fall of 2020.

The SFMTA is working with various city partners to prepare for additional rolling drop-off education if there is a significant increase in parents driving their children to school should schools reopen in the fall.





San Francisco Safe Routes to School 2019 - 2020 Evaluation Highlights



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COMMISSION

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San Francisco
County Transportation
Authority

This project was made possible in part by Proposition K Sales Tax dollars provided by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority.



SFMTA