

ALAMEDA COUNTY

Safe Routes to Schools

2020-2021 Year-End Report



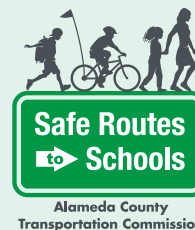
Healthy Kids



Safer Streets



Strong Communities



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The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program would like to thank all school district staff, school administrators and staff, teachers, Safe Routes champions, parents and students who support active and shared transportation to school.

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1 Introduction



Introduction

Even during the global pandemic, the Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program promotes safe, active, and shared transportation choices as fun and easy options for parents and students.

The 2020-21 school year was unlike any other. All public schools in Alameda County provided exclusively remote instruction for most of the school year. The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program, which traditionally focused on the school commute, shifted to support families during a very challenging year.

The Safe Routes to Schools Program (Safe Routes) has grown significantly since it began, from two schools in 2006 to 263 schools enrolled during the 2020-21 school year. The program is administered and managed by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) and funded by federal funds and local Measure B funds.

Program Changes

Safe Routes has a data-driven structure that focuses on activities that affect behavior change and address safety. The program's key desired outcomes are to increase mode shift to active and shared transportation modes and increase safety around schools.

During the 2020-21 school year, the program continued cultivating activities that support those goals, with a focus on families being active and learning about walking and biking safety while attending school virtually.

Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Most schools in Alameda County offered Comprehensive Distance Learning for much of the 2020-21 school year. School closures necessitated changes to Safe Routes activities which are traditionally delivered in-person.

The Alameda County Safe Routes team was able to offer virtual Safe Routes activities, including Virtual Alameda County BikeMobile, Virtual Bike and Pedestrian Rodeos, Virtual Concerts, Virtual Storytime, the Creation for Transportation contest, Bike to the Moon Week, Golden Sneaker Contest, and International Walk and Roll Week.

Desired Safe Routes Program Outcomes

The overarching goal for the Alameda County Safe Routes Program is to get more students to walk, bike, carpool, or take transit to school.

Adopted by the Alameda County Transportation Commission in 2017, the two desired program outcomes below guide the Alameda County Safe Routes Program:

- » **Mode shift:** Increase use of active and green transportation modes to reach schools (biking, walking, taking transit, and carpooling) and promote walking, bicycling, and taking transit as viable, everyday transportation options.
- » **Safety:** Increase safe pedestrian/bicycling behaviors, decrease incidence of collisions, increase student and parent confidence in safe walking/bicycling/transit riding abilities.

In addition, the Alameda County Safe Routes Program goals are to:

- » Provide a **comprehensive, equitable program** in a **fiscally responsible** manner,
- » Develop a core program where every student has access to **age-appropriate bicycle and pedestrian safety training**,
- » Establish and maintain **strong, effective partnerships**,
- » Support improvements to built environment near schools to **improve access and increase safety**,
- » Encourage **adoption of Safe Routes to Schools policies and curriculum** within schools,
- » **Evaluate the Safe Routes Program** at the school level so that it is context sensitive and allows the program to adjust, and
- » Engage **parents as transportation “decision makers.”**



Siblings from Pioneer Elementary School in New Haven enjoy International Walk and Roll Week.

About This Report

This report summarizes the Alameda County Safe Routes Program activities for the 2020-21 school year.

Chapter 2. Participation and Outreach summarizes school participation in the activities offered.

Chapter 3. Education and Encouragement provides more details about the specific Safe Routes pedestrian, bicycle, and transit safety education and countywide encouragement activities, as well as the high school program.

Chapter 4. Safety Impacts outlines the School Safety Assessments, parent/caregiver concerns that are barriers to walking and biking, and other safety-focused activities.

Chapter 5. Equity Impacts presents the equity approach and updates to the Access Safe Routes Pilot Program.

Chapter 6. Program Sustainability summarize Safe Routes Program engagement with Safe Routes Champions, Task Forces, and other partnerships that will sustain momentum for Safe Routes in the future.

Additional documents are available that support this report:

Appendix A: School Participation Matrix summarizes the programming provided at Alameda County schools enrolled in the program.

[School Snapshots](#) provide a two-page summary of how each enrolled school participated in the 2020-21 program.

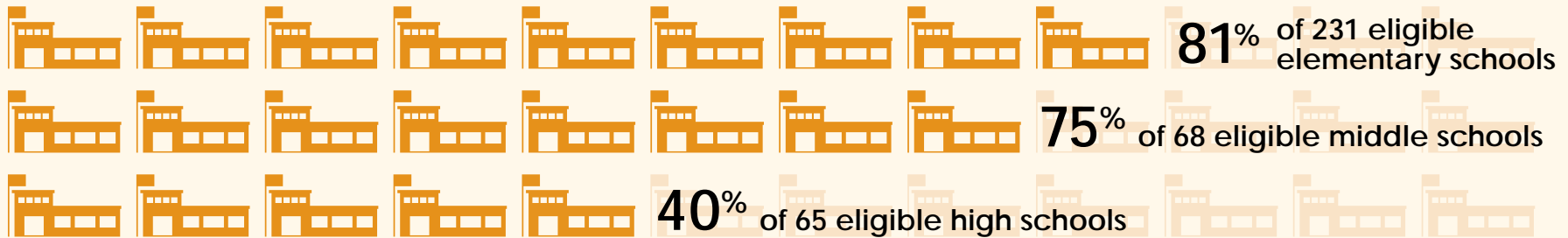
[District Snapshots](#) provide a two-page summary of how each district participated in the 2020-21 program.



Celebrating the Golden Sneaker trophy at Eastin Elementary School in New Haven.

2020-21 School Year Highlights

Over two-thirds of the eligible* schools in the county are enrolled in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program as of June 2021. See below for the percentages of eligible elementary, middle, and high schools that are enrolled in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program.



263 total schools enrolled

Includes 186 elementary schools, 51 middle schools, and 26 high schools.**

64 percent of enrolled schools participated in at least one Safe Routes program element, and 12 percent participated in more than five activities.



52% of schools participated in countywide encouragement events***

- » 43 percent of enrolled schools (112 schools) celebrated **International Walk and Roll Week**.
- » 25 percent (67) participated in the **Golden Sneaker Contest**.



More than 258 parents, school staff, students, and community members volunteered

- » 258 **Champions** were recorded.
- » Eight adult **Safe Routes Task Forces** and six youth Task Forces met nine and six times respectively over the course of the 2020-21 school year.



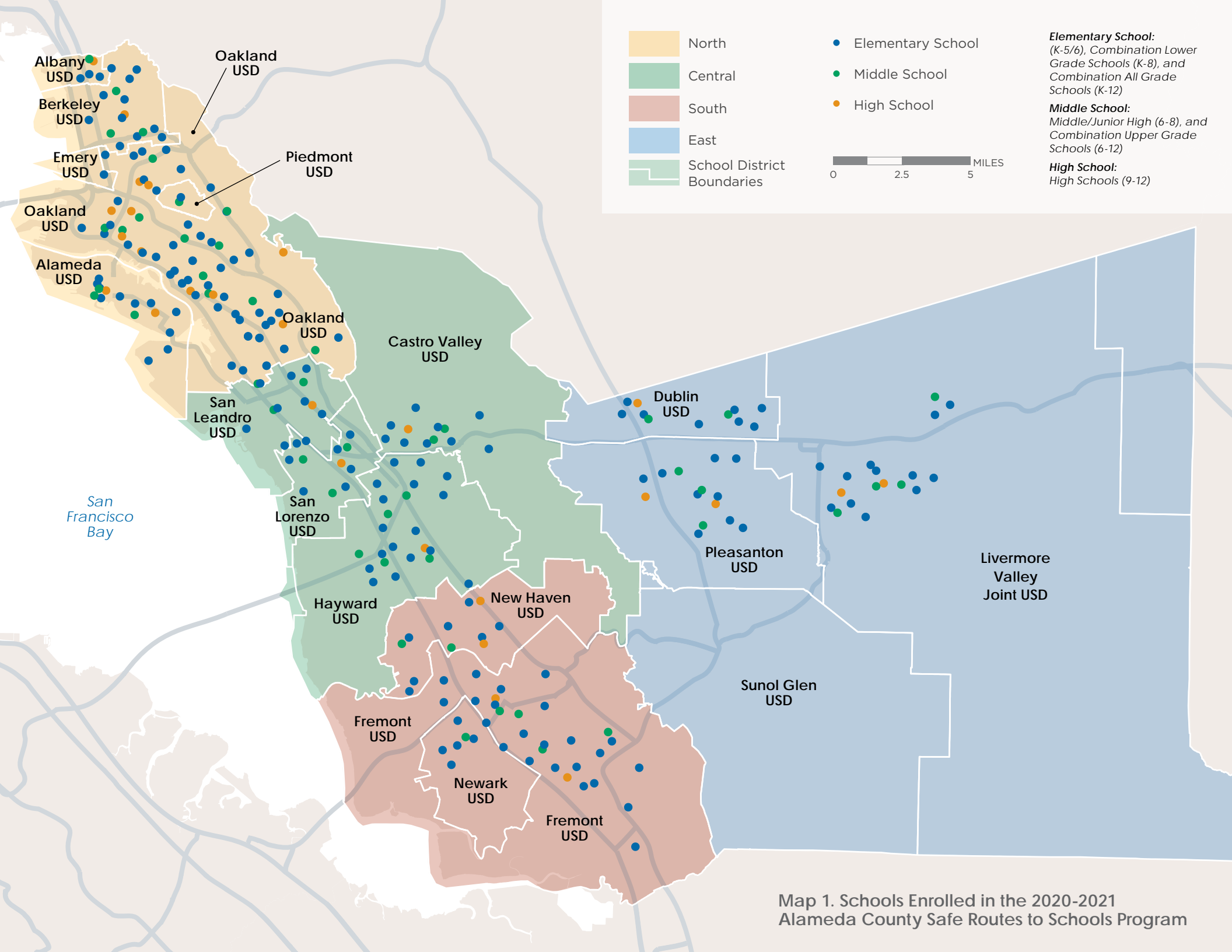
16 high schools

16 high schools participated in at least one Safe Routes activity, such as the Youth Task Force, countywide encouragement events, or regularly scheduled events.

* All public K-12 schools in Alameda County with a physical campus whose students travel to and from school are eligible to enroll in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program via a simple online form.

****Elementary School:** (K-5/6), Combination Lower Grade Schools (K-8), and Combination All Grade Schools (K-12); **Middle School:** Middle/Junior High (6-8), and Combination Upper Grade Schools (6-12); **High School:** High Schools (9-12)

*** The three standard countywide encouragement events are International Walk and Roll to School Day, the Golden Sneaker Contest (elementary and middle schools only), Cocoa for Carpools (high schools only) and Bike to School Day. However, due to remote-school this year, the Alameda County Safe Routes team supported International Walk and Roll Week, the Golden Sneaker Contest (elementary/middle), Creation for Transportation (high), and Bike to the Moon Week.



The 6 Es Framework

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program is guided by the 6 Es Framework that is the hallmark of successful Safe Routes programs. Enrolled schools participate in different types of activities based on their unique transportation needs, challenges, and goals.



EDUCATION

Education activities, such as pedestrian mini-cities and bike rodeos, teach key messages about pedestrian and bicyclist safety, health, and the joys of active transportation. Classroom activities teach students how to navigate busy streets and make the connection between active transportation, health, and the environment.



EQUITY

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program works to ensure that program resources and activities are equitably spread throughout the county. Equity efforts also aim to reach the school communities that need the program the most due to safety and health concerns.



EVALUATION

Evaluation activities help schools measure their success at encouraging active and shared modes of transportation. Alameda County Safe Routes collects student travel data annually, conducts student surveys to evaluate how students get to school, and tracks resource allocation to continually improve the program.



ENGINEERING

Engineering activities aim to address physical barriers to shared and active travel. Alameda County Safe Routes conducts school safety assessments to identify infrastructure improvements that help families get to school. Local jurisdictions can take these recommendations and implement improvements.



ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement activities, such as Walk and Roll to School Days, Golden Sneaker Contests, and others, provide incentives and support to help children and their parents try walking, bicycling, carpooling, or taking transit instead of single family driving.



ENGAGEMENT

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program engages families by working alongside students, caregivers, teachers, school leaders, and existing community organizations to build long-term capacity and sustainable programming.

Safe Routes Program Activities Overview

Activity Participation

Schools enrolled in the Safe Routes Program receive support from Alameda County Safe Routes Program staff, who work with each school's administration and Safe Routes Champions to organize activities and events. In middle schools, students increasingly plan and implement Safe Routes activities at their schools and high school students are active champions of the Safe Routes Program.

Table 1 shows the activities available to schools enrolled in the Safe Routes Program during the 2020-21 school year.

Table 1: 2020-21 School Year Safe Routes Activities

	Elementary	Middle	High
Education Activities			
Pedestrian Safety Activities			
Virtual Pedestrian Rodeos	•	•	
Virtual Music Notes Concert	•	•	
Bicycle Safety Activities			
Bicycle Rodeos	•		
Virtual Bicycle Rodeos	•	•	
Virtual Drive Your Bike	•	•	•
Virtual Alameda County BikeMobile	•	•	•
Encouragement Activities			
Countywide Encouragement Events			
International Walk and Roll Week	•	•	•
Golden Sneaker Contest	•	•	
Creation for Transportation	•		•
Bike to the Moon Week	•	•	•
Ongoing Events			
Walking School Bus	•		
Rail Safety Training		•	
Travel Training		•	•
Story Time Event	•		
Go Green Event	•		
Educator's Guide Presentations	•		
Equity Activities			
Access Safe Routes Program	•	•	•
Engineering Activities			
School Safety Assessment	•	•	•

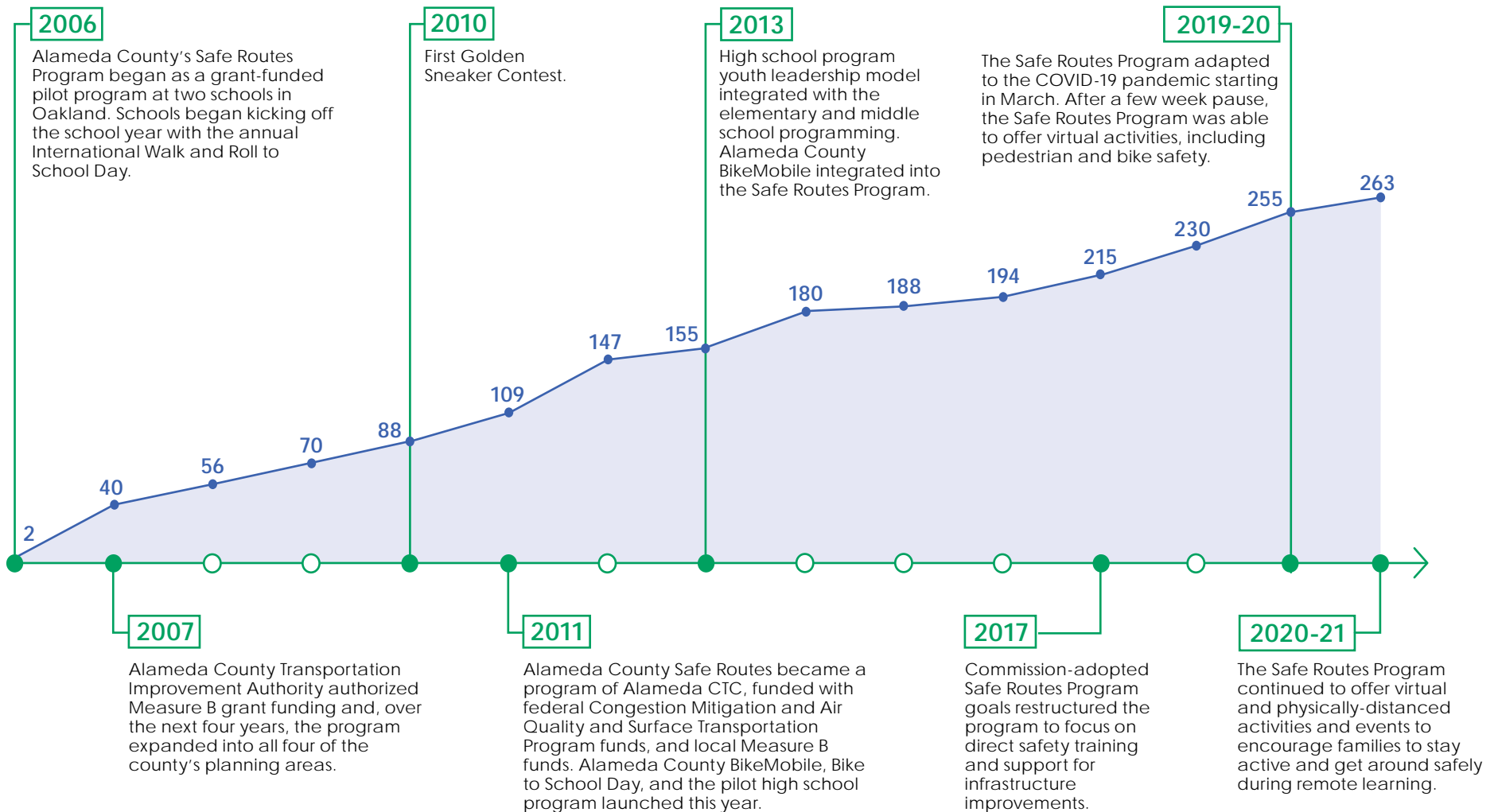
Program History

The program has grown from two schools in 2006 to 263 in 2021. Though organizational structure, programming, and funding have shifted, the program continues to provide robust support for students and families seeking to safely and sustainably get to school.



Student participants in a Walking School Bus at Proctor School in Castro Valley.

Figure 1. Schools Participating in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program



2 Participation and Outreach



Participation and Outreach

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program offers schools across the county a wide variety of fun, educational activities. This chapter outlines school participation in each of the Safe Routes activities offered during the 2020-21 school year.

School Enrollment in the Safe Routes Program

Schools participating in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program can tailor their programming to meet their specific needs and unique challenges. Safe Routes seeks to reach as many people as possible, boost participation in countywide events, such as International Walk and Roll to School Day, and help schools identify and implement activities that will help them achieve their Safe Routes goals. Some activities are organized and run by Safe Routes Program partners, while others are organized by school officials, teachers, Program Champions, and students themselves.

In order to receive services from the Alameda County Safe Routes Program, public schools in Alameda County enroll via a simple online form. Once enrolled, schools are considered part of the program and are eligible to

receive all services free of charge, including support from a school Site Coordinator who will work with the school to develop an implementation plan, identify Safe Routes Champions, and provide technical support related to Safe Routes implementation.

School enrollment is different from school participation. Sometimes, enrolled schools are not active participants (see Figure 2, page 14). This can be due to various factors including Safe Routes Champion or school administrator turnover, competing priorities, or a lack of other resources. Safe Routes Site Coordinators work with these schools to understand the barriers to participation and identify solutions to support their participation. Ninety-seven enrolled schools did not participate in any activities this year.



The Safe Routes Program supports all forms of safe, active rolling transportation including scooting and skateboarding.

Program Activities

Table 2 shows the number of schools participating in each program activity. In addition, the Safe Routes Program hosted two Bicycle Rodeo community events and eleven Alameda County BikeMobile community events, which involved families from multiple schools.

Note that not all activities are available for every grade level. See Table 1 on page 8 for information on which activities are offered at elementary, middle, and high schools.

Table 2: School Participation in Program Elements, 2020-21 School Year

Program Element	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Combined Schools*
Education Activities				
Pedestrian Rodeos**	13	1		
Bicycle Rodeos	26	1		1
Drive Your Bike		11	5	2
Alameda County BikeMobile	26	10	1	1
Music Notes Concert	32	1		
Rail Safety Training		1		
Travel Training		4	1	
Go Green Events	3			1
Educator's Guide Presentations	2			
Encouragement Activities				
International Walk and Roll Week	86	14	9	3
Golden Sneaker Contest	56	7		1
Creation for Transportation			5	1
Bike to the Moon Week	50	6	4	1
Walking School Bus	2			
Story Time Event	17			1

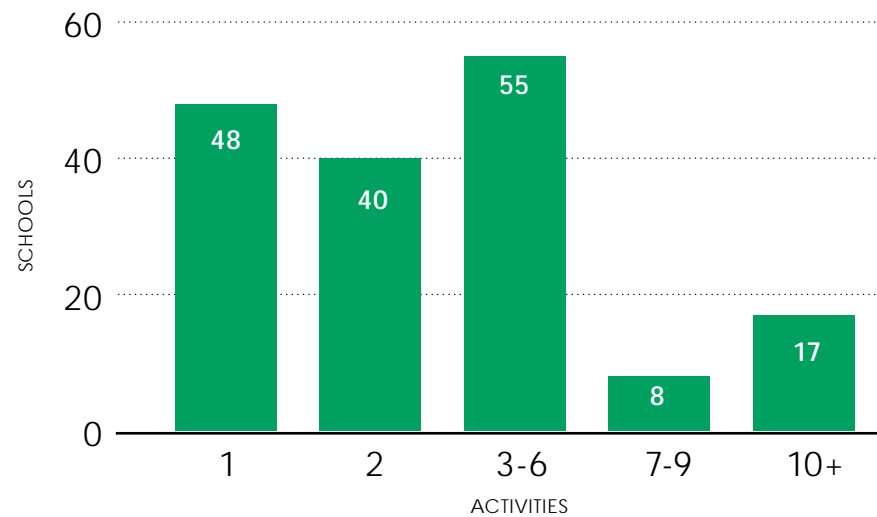
***Elementary School:** (K-5/6), Combination Lower Grade Schools (K-8), and Combination All Grade Schools (K-12);
Middle School: Middle/Junior High (6-8), and Combination Upper Grade Schools (6-12); **High School:** High Schools (9-12).

Activities by School

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program seeks to reach students and their families with safety education and training about how green transportation options can be safe, fun, and easy to use. Enrolled schools may participate in the countywide encouragement events, as well as age-appropriate safety training activities, and other educational activities based on school needs and concerns.

Figure 2 provides a breakdown of how many activities were held at the schools enrolled in the program, counting weekly, or monthly Walk to School Days as separate events. Each instance of a regularly scheduled event counts as one activity at that school.

Figure 2. Number of Activities at Participating Schools



Volunteer Safe Routes Champions

Once schools enroll in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program, the extent of their participation varies, as shown in Figure 2. Schools that enroll are eligible to receive educational services and support from Site Coordinators, who work with each school's administration and volunteer Safe Routes Champion(s) to organize activities and events. Safe Routes Champions are volunteers who can be either family members or school staff. Champions host events, promote green transportation options, and work with students on education and encouragement activities. In middle and high schools, student Champions are increasingly engaged in the planning and implementation of Safe Routes events.

One of the most important drivers of a school's level of participation is the engagement and time commitment of Champions. Schools that have active and passionate Champions, who can dedicate time to Safe Routes, typically participate in more events than schools that do not have Champions or have Champions who cannot dedicate time to Safe Routes. New schools and schools with new Safe Routes Champions typically require additional support to organize and plan events.

During the 2020-21 school year, 258 designated Safe Routes Champions helped implement Safe Routes activities. The number of Champions increased by 52 volunteers this year, a 25 percent increase from last year. While not every school has a Champion, 114 schools (43 percent) had two or more.

In addition, many more parents, teachers, and members of the school community volunteered in support of Safe Routes activities over the year.



Mother and son are excited about their new bike seat during Bike to School Month. Photo submitted through the #ridethedistance Twitter hashtag.

3 Education and Encouragement



Education and Encouragement

This chapter reports on the activities and events that were implemented during the 2020-21 school year.

The Alameda County Safe Routes Program offers a wide range of fun encouragement events that make walking, biking, transit use, school bussing, and carpooling to school safer and more accessible for families. Encouragement activities combine with engaging educational programming, safety engagement, and engineering solutions to help increase the number of students who choose these modes.

Schools enrolled in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program can participate in a variety of safety education activities and fun countywide encouragement events. Every school community has different needs and challenges to promoting active and shared transportation modes, so individual Safe Routes programs may involve different activities at each school. The Alameda County Safe Routes Program seeks to tailor activities to address a school's specific needs.

Education Activities

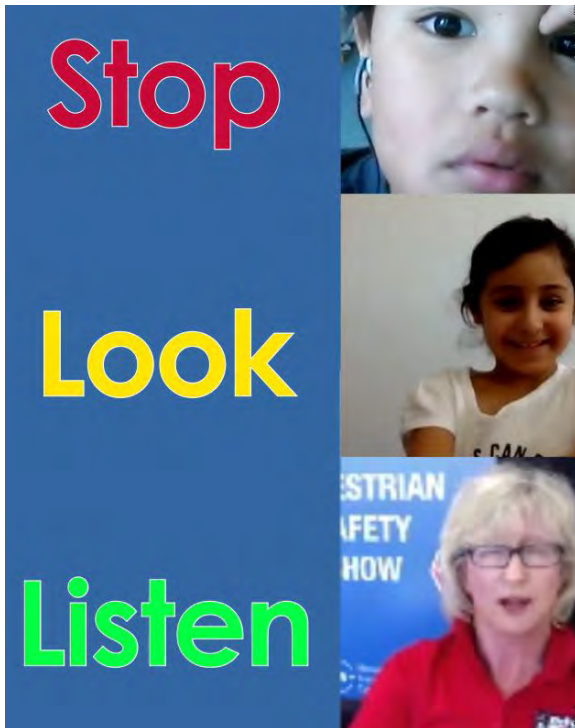
Safe Routes education activities teach students how to safely and comfortably walk, bike, and take transit to get to school. Activities are both hands-on and educational, often taking students from the classroom to the streets. Even while in-person events were not possible, students and families were able to take part in interactive education through virtual presentations.

Education activities offered by the Safe Routes Program include Alameda County BikeMobile, Bike and Pedestrian Rodeos, Drive Your Bike trainings, and educational concerts.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, service providers adapted each of these activities in order to offer them virtually. Some of the ways the Safe Routes Program adapted to remote learning include:

- » Developing engaging online presentations
- » Creating more opportunity for students to talk to the presenters, share their ideas, and ask questions
- » Incorporating movement into the presentations to keep students engaged and help them learn by doing

Pedestrian Safety Activities



Students attending a virtual pedestrian rodeo practice essential skills for walking safely.

Pedestrian Rodeos

WHAT IS IT?

In 2020-21, all pedestrian rodeos were conducted virtually. In these interactive online presentations, students learn about how they would make their way through real-life traffic, learning traffic safety and lawful pedestrian behavior along the way. Students learn traffic signs and signals, pedestrian safety practices, how to cross the street safely, how to recognize and avoid hazards, and the laws governing pedestrians, as well as the environmental, financial and physical advantages to walking. Multiple sessions can be held throughout the school day to reach multiple classes.

IMPLEMENTED BY

Safe Moves

AUDIENCE

This activity is best suited for elementary schools.

BY THE NUMBERS:

21
PEDESTRIAN RODEOS

14
SCHOOLS SERVED

1,676
STUDENTS SERVED

"[The pedestrian safety webinars] were a big success, and it's not only because the content was well suited for the students' age group (and the timing perfect for their attention span), but also because you made the webinars fun and engaging...."

Mohr Elementary PTA President

Bicycle Safety Activities

Bicycle Rodeos

WHAT IS IT?

Rodeos are fun-filled, hands-on training courses that focus on introducing elementary and middle school students to safe bicycle handling skills and safe riding techniques for on-the-road riding. The training incorporates bicycle handling drills and a simulated city streets course where students learn proper starting and stopping technique, hand signaling, how to fit a helmet, how to perform bicycle safety checks, how to ride in a straight line and how to ride safely and predictably. Sessions can be 30–45 minutes.

During distance learning, Cycles of Change modified their teaching to bring Bicycle Rodeos to students online in a way that was equitable, engaging, and physical. Educators included kinesthetic components in the virtual presentations, such as stretching and movement practice, to give students a break from long periods of sitting.

IMPLEMENTED BY

Cycles of Change



Screen shot from Virtual Bicycle Rodeo presentation

AUDIENCE

This activity is best suited for grades 3–8 (in class), or for a school festival or community event.

BY THE NUMBERS:

25
SCHOOLS SERVED

2,351
STUDENTS SERVED

39
VIRTUAL BICYCLE RODEOS

9
BICYCLE RODEOS

1
COMMUNITY EVENT

Bicycle Safety Activities



Hula hoops placed on the ground remind students to maintain social distancing during an in-person Drive Your Bike event.

Drive Your Bike

WHAT IS IT?

Drive Your Bike 101 prepares students to bicycle safely to school and around their neighborhoods, and encourages them to start riding more often. The Drive Your Bike series prepares students to bicycle safely – whether to school or around their neighborhood – and encourages them to start riding more often. The online classroom presentation series covered aspects of bike safety (helmet and bike fit), getting on the road (including pre-ride safety check and bike handling skills), and navigating streets safely (rules of road).

IMPLEMENTED BY

Cycles of Change

AUDIENCE

This activity is best suited for middle and high schools.

BY THE NUMBERS:

18
SCHOOLS SERVED

4,388
STUDENTS SERVED

"The presenters were all great and knowledgeable, and the presentation was engaging and informative."

Middle School Teacher whose students attended a Virtual Drive Your Bike Training

Bicycle Safety Activities

Music Notes Concert

WHAT IS IT?

Founded by two middle school teachers from South Central Los Angeles, Music Notes is an educational music company that has created a custom walking and biking-themed assembly for Alameda County SR2S that teaches walking and biking safety through hip hop songs and videos. The Music Notes program can be delivered virtually (streaming video presentation with live chat followed by

a Meet and Greet with the artists over video call) and, when it is safe to do so, in-person at a school assembly.

IMPLEMENTED BY

Music Notes

AUDIENCE

This activity is best suited for elementary and middle schools.

BY THE NUMBERS:

33

SCHOOLS SERVED

8,107

STUDENTS SERVED



Virtual Music Notes Concert presentation on walking and biking safety

Bicycle Safety Activities



Theft prevention presentations cover different types of locks for securing a bike.

Alameda County BikeMobile

WHAT IS IT?

In a typical year, the Alameda County BikeMobile team would visit schools in person to help students learn basic bicycle ownership, maintenance, and repair. Virtual Alameda County BikeMobile presentations were adapted from these events and formatted to be interactive and engaging. Topics covered include choosing the right bike, preventing bike theft, performing safety checks before riding, and repairing a flat tire. These presentations are geared toward elementary and middle school students.

DELIVERED BY

Local Motion

AUDIENCE

This activity is suited for all students.

BY THE NUMBERS:

38
SCHOOLS SERVED

11
VISITS TO COMMUNITY-WIDE EVENTS

17,647
STUDENTS SERVED

"They did a great job of presenting the information, engaging the students, and making them feel that they could participate and ask questions."

Middle school teacher whose students attended a Virtual Alameda County BikeMobile presentation

Transportation Activities



A sticker for travel training participants advertises the Safe Routes Program.

Travel Training

WHAT IS IT?

The Travel Training workshops use fun and interactive lessons and activities to encourage students to use active and shared transportation to get around. The basic Travel Training is designed for middle school students and covers topics such as making decisions about how to get around, taking public transportation, getting a Clipper card, and linking walking and biking trips with transit. The advanced Travel Training connects transportation choices to climate change and includes an optional student project.

DELIVERED BY

Toole Design Group
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AUDIENCE

This activity is best suited for middle and high schools.

BY THE NUMBERS:

50
TRAININGS HELD

1,382
STUDENTS SERVED

Encouragement Activities

Encouragement events inspire and motivate families to try a new mode for the first time, or celebrate families' ongoing commitment to active or shared transportation. The events bring the school community together to celebrate how fun walking, biking, transit use, and carpooling can be.

Each year, Alameda County Safe Routes implements four countywide encouragement events: International Walk to School Day in October, the Golden Sneaker Contest in late winter/early spring, Bike to School Day in May, and Cocoa for Carpools (just for high schools).

“My students loved the competition. It gave them something to look forward to during this time. They mostly enjoyed getting outside and being active with their families.”

Elementary school teacher whose students participated in the Golden Sneaker contest

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the Alameda County Safe Routes Program adapted these events to fit the remote context:

- » International Walk and Roll to School Day became International Walk and Roll Week, during which students logged their physical activity and participated in the daily themes such as exploring their neighborhood or dressing up as a character from their favorite book.
- » The Golden Sneaker Contest was held remotely this school year. Players from the Golden State Warriors made a special workout video for the winning classroom.
- » In place of Bike to School Day, the Safe Routes Program hosted a Bike to the Moon challenge where students tracked their minutes and miles of bicycling (as well as other physical activities), which contributed “moon miles” toward a collective trip to the moon.
- » Cocoa for Carpools was replaced with a Creation for Transportation contest. High school students contributed original creative submissions (such as drawings, paintings, or poetry) on the theme of active transportation.



A student from Pioneer Elementary School in New Haven Unified School District shows off their scooter during International Walk and Roll Week.

Countywide Encouragement Events

International Walk and Roll Week

While students throughout Alameda County were distance learning and COVID-19 safety precautions were necessary, the annual Walk and Roll event was transformed into International Walk and Roll Week, which took place the week of October 19-23, 2020. This effort incentivized students to walk, roll, and engage in physical activity while staying safe and socially-distanced in their own communities.

Instead of collecting mode split data for a one-day event, students tracked their daily activity using multi-lingual “passports.” Participants could fill out either digital or hard-copy passports, which collected activity data and also entered participants into a drawing for prizes.

Highlights of the 2020-21 event include:

- » **124 schools** registered
- » **2,047 students** tracked their physical activity using the passport
- » Approximately **70 percent of students** walked during International Walk and Roll Week
- » **Six elected officials** submitted media for promotion

IMPLEMENTED BY

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Toole Design Group

BY THE NUMBERS:

4,577
STUDENTS WALKED

2,501
STUDENTS BIKED

1,502
STUDENTS RODE SCOOTERS

736
STUDENTS SKATED

3,899
INDOOR ACTIVITIES

Countywide Encouragement Events

Creation for Transportation Contest

From February 1-28, 2021, the Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Program hosted a new contest called **Creation for Transportation: Art for Walking, Bicycling, Carpooling and Taking Transit** for high school students. The month-long contest encouraged students to explore the impacts of different transportation choices through creativity and art. Students submitted artistic pieces (i.e., videos, short stories, poems, painting and music) that considered the impacts of transportation choices and that inspire action around activities.

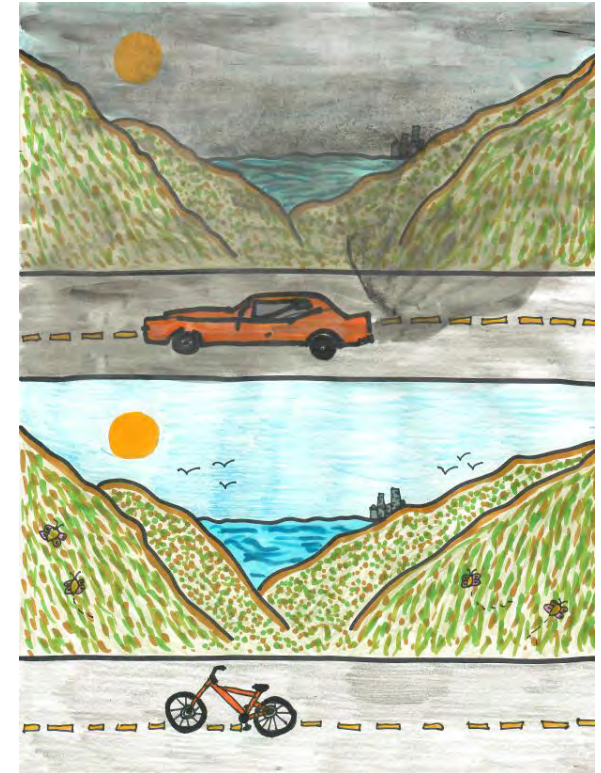
Highlights of the 2020-21 event include:

- » Students from the High School Youth Task Force helped plan, promote, and encourage participation in the event.
- » The event was promoted by the Mayor's Office at the City of Dublin.
- » Students from six high schools participated in the contest.
- » The winning entry was a short story about the impacts of air pollution on a family and a community, and how active transportation can create a safer future for all. This story was written by two students from McClymonds High School in Oakland.

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Lily Flagg from Castro Valley High School received second place for her illustration of the dramatically different environmental impacts of driving and bicycling.

Countywide Encouragement Events

Golden Sneaker Contest

From March 1 through 5, 2021, students from 64 schools participated in the Golden Sneaker Contest. This competition encourages students, parents, teachers, and administrators to make healthy choices by using active transportation as much as they can during the week and tracking their trips.

At the end of the contest, the classroom in each school with the highest percentage of students using active or shared transportation received a Golden Sneaker trophy. The trophies honored the students' efforts to support a healthier environment and healthy travel choices.

The 2021 participation numbers exceeded the 2019 participation numbers. However, due to COVID-19 and the associated school closures, reporting this year was significantly lower than usual. Given the low reporting rates this year—and the cancellation of the spring Alameda County Transportation Commission meetings, where the award is presented—there was no Platinum Sneaker Award this year.

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Toole Design Group



Goldie visits schools to encourage students to walk, roll, and share their ride during the Golden Sneaker Contest.

BY THE NUMBERS:

64

SCHOOLS PARTICIPATED:

57

ELEMENTARY/
COMBINATION*

7

MIDDLE*

77%

of trips completed by students in participating classrooms were by active or shared modes.

* **Elementary School:** (K-5/6), Combination Lower Grade Schools (K-8). **Middle School:** Middle/Junior High (6-8).

"My class LOVED this contest! They were very motivated to participate and loved sharing how they had exercised each day. We talk a lot about how important it is to move your body, especially right now during Distance Learning, when we're sitting a lot."

First Grade teacher whose students participated in the Golden Sneaker Contest

Countywide Encouragement Events



A preschool student enjoys dressing for Bike to the Moon activities.

Bike to the Moon Week

May is typically Bike Month. Due to continued school closures and the cancellation of the 2021 countywide Bike to Work Day, Safe Routes Program staff created a unique celebratory bike event.

During the weeklong Bike to the Moon event, students, families, and school staff tracked their miles and/or minutes of activity with the goal of “biking” all the way to the moon, which is 286,900 miles away. The event encouraged all active and shared modes of transportation including biking, walking, rolling, or taking transit.

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“Safe Routes to School is a fun, informative, and engaging program that promotes public transportation with culturally responsive books. My students really enjoyed the stories and Bike to the Moon Week, and I look forward to working with Safe Routes again next year!”

Teacher who hosted a Safe Routes Storytime during Bike to the Moon Week



During Bike to the Moon Week, Alameda CTC Commissioners participated in Transportation Storytime. In this photo, Pauline Russo Cutter, Mayor of San Leandro and Chair of Alameda County Transportation Commission, reads *Bicycling Rules of the Road* to participating students.

Ongoing Encouragement Events

Ongoing encouragement events and activities are those that occur multiple times throughout the school year. These activities may happen as part of Walk to School Day or independently.

Ongoing Walk and Roll Days

Regular Walk and Roll to School Days promote active and shared transportation throughout the school year and are excellent activities to sustain and maintain new travel behavior. Site Coordinators support these events by providing outreach materials, sample text for school newsletters and email announcements, and suggested activities and themes for each month, in English and Spanish. While schools were operating remotely, Walk and Roll Days were converted to Monthly Wellness Walks, encouraging students to stay active and get outside during the pandemic.

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Walking School Bus

A Walking School Bus is an organized group of students who walk to school together with adult leaders. The Walking School Bus program element provides a toolkit, accompanying materials, volunteer recruitment, route assessment and selection, suggested route maps, and training to interested schools.

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Virtual Safe Routes Promotion

To continue to support students and families staying active and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Safe Routes Program shifted to delivering some programming virtually. The Alameda County Safe Routes Program produced or customized remote resources related to bicycle and pedestrian safety tips, social-distancing tips, summer reading and movie lists, student-led videos, resources for teachers, flash cards, coloring sheets, scavenger hunts, self-guided walking and biking tours, and tips for learning to ride a bicycle.

112
SCHOOLS SERVED

High School Program

The high school program empowers students to work with their peers to foster active and shared transportation.

While elementary and middle school Safe Routes programming focuses on safety education and addresses parents' concerns about green transportation options, the high school program involves youth-led initiatives. During the 2020-21 school year, 27 of the 65 eligible high schools in Alameda County were enrolled in the Alameda County Safe Routes Program. Participating schools were involved in the Safe Routes Youth Task Force, countywide encouragement events, and ongoing events.

Youth Task Force

The Youth Task Force provides a forum for Alameda County high school students to learn how to lead Safe Routes programs at their schools and share implementation strategies to encourage mode shift among their peers. Students also discuss current transportation issues and activities at their schools while building a community of youth leaders, which strengthen the capacity and sustainability of the Safe Routes Program.

During the 2020-21 school year, there were six Youth Task Force meetings involving schools across the county, with 48 participants in the meetings over the course of the year.

At Youth Task Force meetings, students developed best practices for successful events based on their experiences organizing school events and considering their peers' interests, teen culture, and travel logistics at their schools.

Countywide Encouragement Events

Youth Task Force members worked with their school leadership classes to plan and host countywide encouragement events at their schools.

- » Nine high schools participated in **International Walk and Roll Week**
- » Six high schools participated in **Creation for Transportation**
- » Four high schools participated in **Bike to the Moon Week**
- » Castro Valley High School and Dublin High School participated in 3 of the 4 encouragement events

4 Safety Impacts



Safety Impacts

Improving safety for all students in Alameda County, whether walking, biking, taking the bus, or driving to school, is a fundamental focus and key goal of the Alameda County Safe Routes Program.

All students deserve to get to school safely. Per the 2017 goals and desired program outcomes adopted by the Alameda County Transportation Commission, the Alameda County Safe Routes Program has a renewed focus on addressing the safety concerns and infrastructure barriers that prevent students and families from walking, biking, carpooling or using transit to travel to schools.

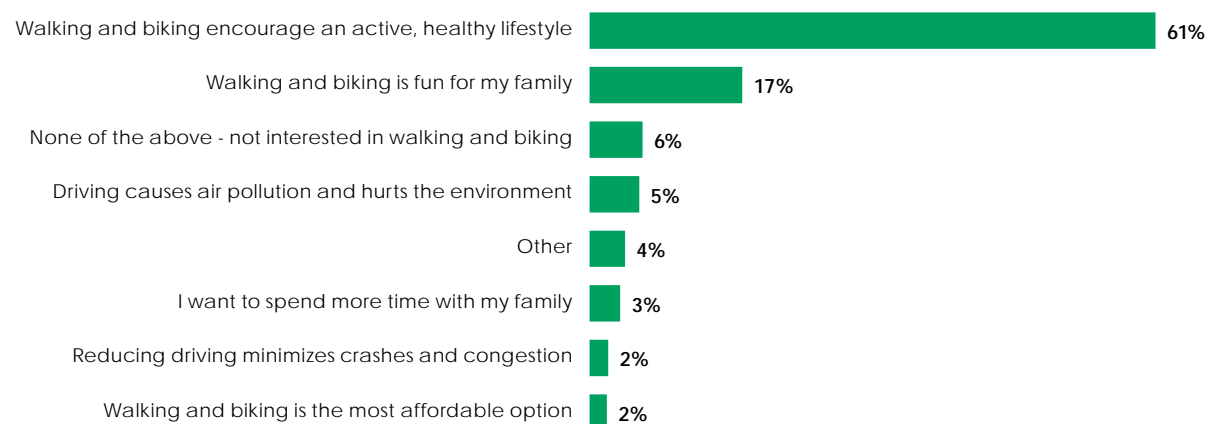
For parents and caregivers, the perception that active and shared travel are dangerous often deters families from walking or biking to school. Program staff work to increasingly engage parents as the transportation decision-maker via strategic communications campaigns and targeted education to address these concerns.

Additionally, School Safety Assessments (also known as walk audits) are an opportunity for Safe Routes Program staff to identify physical barriers and safety concerns around schools and recommend safety improvements for cities and schools districts to implement. Increased cooperation and partnerships with local jurisdictions are key components

of implementing safety improvements near schools. Program staff will continue to build and strengthen those partnerships.

However, education activities, outlined in Chapter 3, are also an effective way to increase safe student and family walking and biking behaviors.

Figure 3. Reasons Parents Allow or Consider Walking or Biking with Children



Over 2,400 parents were surveyed during the course of the 2020-21 school year to better understand their perceptions, priorities, and concerns related to children walking and biking to school.

The majority of parents surveyed reported that encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle for their family was a primary reason they would consider or allow their child to walk and bike to school. Similarly, more than three-quarters of parents believe that walking or biking to school is important to their child's health.

When schools resume in-person learning, 43 percent of parents plan for their children to walk to school, 21 percent plan for their children to bike to school, and 69 percent of parents wish that walking or biking to school is something they did more often.

Figure 4. Parent Concerns with Walking or Biking to School

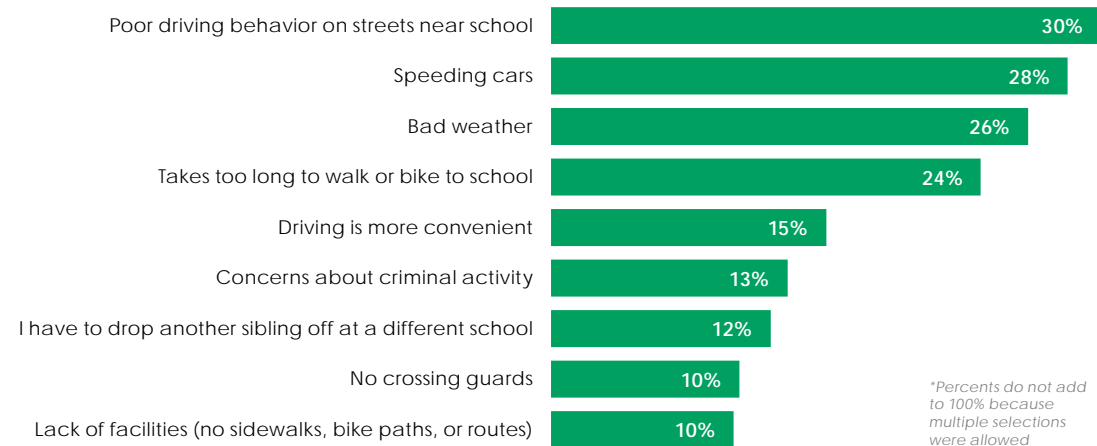
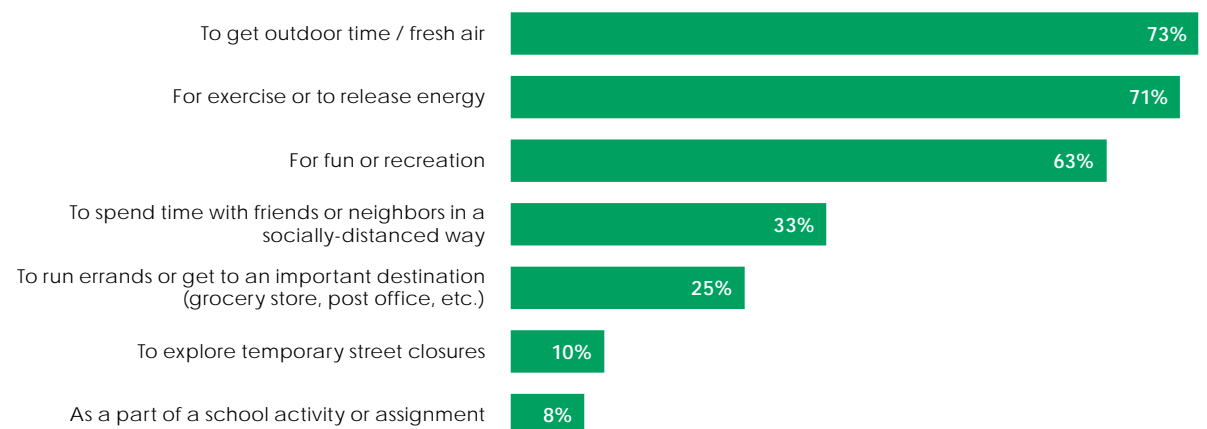


Figure 5. Reasons Why Families Choose to Walk/Bike During the COVID-19 Pandemic



School Safety Assessments

During a school safety assessment, school staff, community members, and transportation experts observe conditions and motorist behaviors around a school site to identify and evaluate safety issues.

As part of a school safety assessment, planners and engineers on the Alameda County Safe Routes team work collaboratively with city staff to develop a set of infrastructure recommendations that local agencies can use as a planning tool or to seek grant funding to make the improvements.

During the 2020-21 school year, Safe Routes staff worked with local jurisdiction staff to develop an interactive online input map to garner community feedback during the school safety assessment process. The goal of the interactive online input map is to allow for greater participation in school safety assessments by allowing participants to provide comments in four languages English, Spanish, Farsi, and Chinese.

2020-21 School Safety Assessments

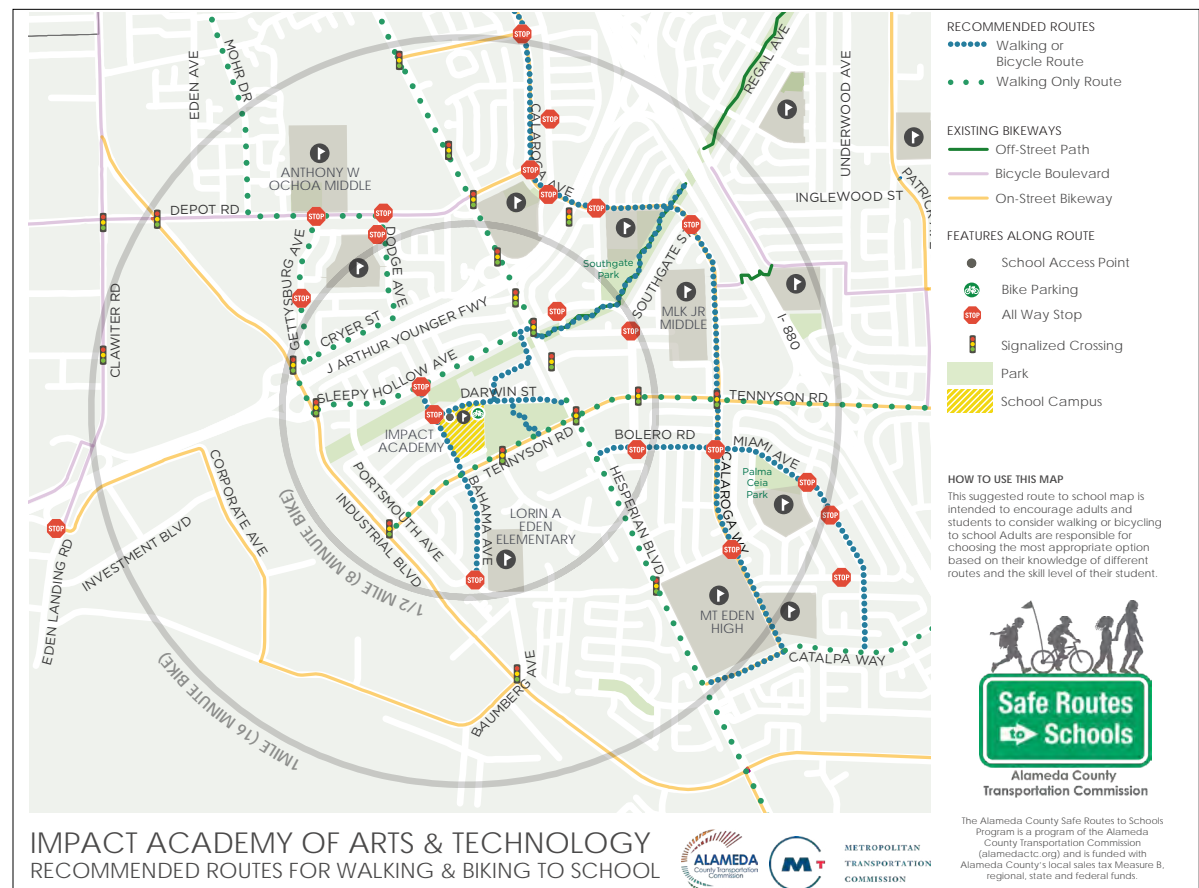
No safety assessments were completed during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19. Over the program's history, the Alameda County Safe Routes Program has conducted school safety assessments at 223 schools, reaching approximately 61 percent of schools enrolled in the Safe Routes Program.

"Just wanted you to know that the Edison Safe Routes maps are getting put to good use these days. I've started a walking/rolling word scramble scavenger hunt each week. I'd guess about 30-50 families were participating. I always include a link to the Safe Routes map so kids can map the addresses and plan their routes before they go out on the walk."

Parent Champion, Edison Elementary in Alameda

Planning and Engineering Technical Assistance

As part of school safety efforts, Alameda County Safe Routes Program staff provide technical assistance for schools upon request, often as a follow-up to the school safety assessment. Technical assistance includes mapping (suggested routes map, enrollment, demographic and socioeconomic data, collision data), and implementation of improved drop-off procedures.



Safe Routes Map created for Impact Academy in Hayward.

5 Equity Impacts



Equity Impacts

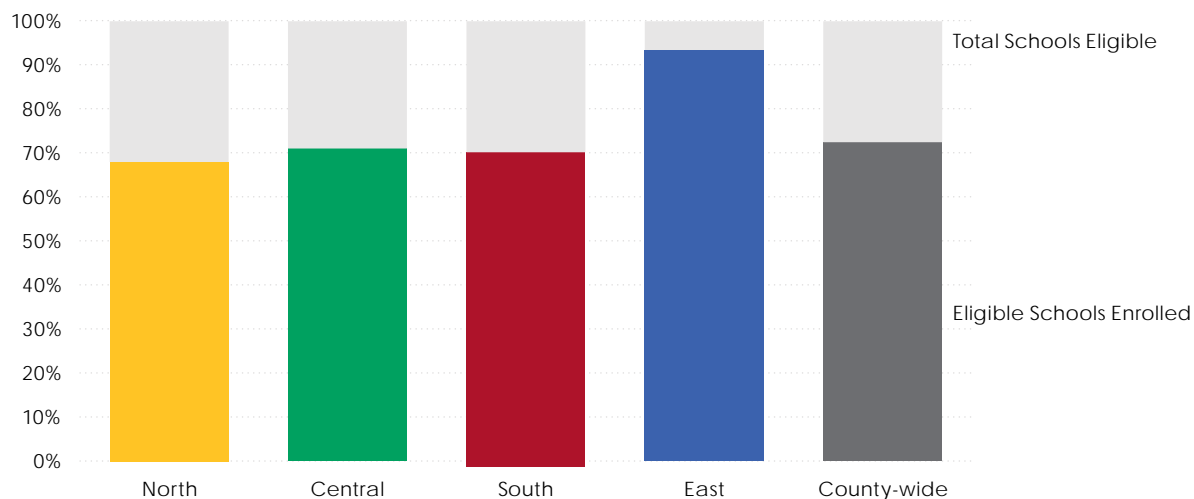
The Alameda County Safe Routes Program addresses equity by working collaboratively with communities to address their unique challenges, and providing these community members with resources to live healthy, productive lives.

Equity Approach

Transportation equity is particularly important for disadvantaged communities because of their common reliance on active and public transportation, which renders them more vulnerable due to poor infrastructure. The Alameda County Safe Routes Program seeks to balance fair geographic distribution of

resources with resource distribution based on need. Need-based equity refers to using demographic and economic indicators to offer additional Safe Routes resources to historically-marginalized communities. Figure 4 illustrates the current geographic distribution of enrolled schools.

Figure 6. Number of Enrolled Schools by Planning Area, 2020-21 school year



The Safe Routes Program uses a data-driven approach to offer comprehensive programmatic and technical assistance to schools with higher need, such as Spanish-language programming and helmet giveaways. A fall 2019 rail safety education grant from the Office of Traffic Safety funded the helmet giveaways. Families with lower incomes are already more likely to use active modes to get to school compared to those in more affluent communities. Based on these findings, there is a clear need for equity-focused Safe Routes programming that makes streets safer and more comfortable for lower-income students who use active modes. The Safe Routes Program also recognizes that personal safety concerns are barriers to walking and biking for families. Addressing these barriers is a priority for the 2020-21 school year. The Access Safe Routes Program, described in the next section, uses a strong equity lens to focus program resources on the highest need schools.



Students who qualify for Free/Reduced Price Lunch have **LOWER drive-alone rates** and **HIGHER use of active modes**

Students who do not qualify for Free/Reduced Price Lunch have **higher drive-alone rates** and **lower use of active modes**

Source: 2018–19 Hand Tally Data and California Department of Education Demographic Data.

33% OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

(87) are located in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Equity Priority Communities.¹

¹ Equity Priority Communities is a regional designation developed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to identify historically disadvantaged communities in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC defines communities of concern as census tracts that have a concentration of BOTH 70% minority AND 28% low-income households, OR that have a concentration of three or more of the following six factors: 12% Limited English Proficiency, 15% Zero-Vehicle Household, 8% Seniors 75 Years and Over, 12% People with Disability, 18% Single-Parent Family and/or 14% severely rent-burdened household, but only IF they also have a concentration of low-income households (more than the 28% threshold).



Helmets set out for students to use during a Drive Your Bike event.

Access Safe Routes Program

In July 2019, the Alameda County Transportation Commission was awarded a regional Active Transportation Program grant to implement a new program element that aims to address the Equity element of the 6 E's framework. The new School Travel Opportunities Program builds on the lessons learned from the Access Safe Routes Pilot Program to implement a comprehensive school travel program at seventy of the most disadvantaged and high-collision schools in the county that were not already enrolled in the Safe Routes Program. The new integrated program launched in early 2020, with program staff developing a comprehensive work plan for implementation. There were 27 schools in the Access Safe Routes Program during the 2019–20 school year, with the full seventy schools to be enrolled over the four-year grant period.

Access Safe Routes Goals

The goals of the Access Safe Routes Program are:

1. To encourage greater participation by under-resourced schools in the Safe Routes Program in the near term.
2. To understand how to build sustainable programs at under-resourced schools in the long term.
3. To deepen our understanding of effective methods and strategies to engage with and get results in under-resourced schools.

The Access Safe Routes Program provides targeted support to under-resourced schools in exchange for input and engagement from the school. This approach informed short- and long-term efforts to develop the culture and infrastructure necessary to maximize use of active and shared transportation modes for school-related travel.

Access Safe Routes Activities

In addition to the typical Alameda County Safe Routes Program offerings, schools participating in the Access Safe Routes Program receive additional technical assistance:

- » A school-specific assessment and maintenance plan for future school-led efforts.
- » A tailored approach to addressing the schools' needs, based on the unique circumstances that affect students' safe use of active and shared modes.
- » Assistance in building leadership capacity of the school community to implement an independent Safe Routes Program.

During the 2020-21 school year, 32 schools across the county participated in the Access Program. As illustrated in Figure 7, Access Program Schools are most heavily concentrated in the North Planning Area. Out of the four planning areas, the North Planning Area has the highest number of students, so will usually have more schools participate in Safe Routes programming. An additional eight Access Program Schools are located in the Central Planning Area and nine are located in the South Planning Area. Five schools are located in the East Planning Area.

Figure 7. Total Schools, High Equity Needs Schools, and Access Schools by Planning Area, 2020-21 school year

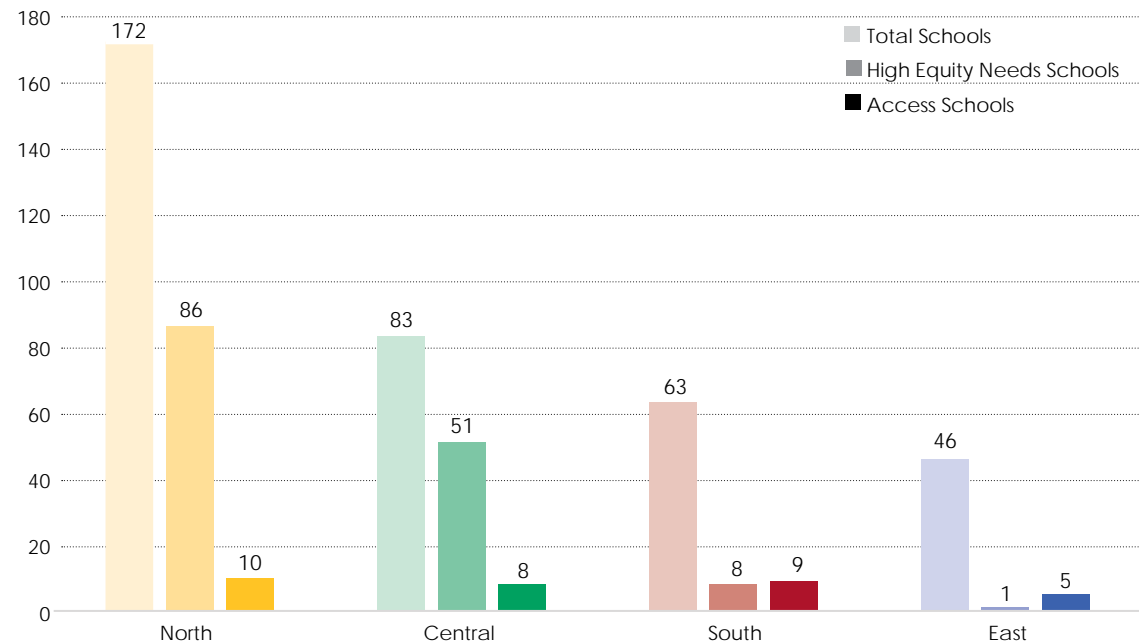


Table 3: Access School Activity Participation, 2020-21 school year

School Name	District	Pedestrian Rodeo	Bike Rodeo	Drive Your Bike	Alameda County Bike Mobile	International Walk and Roll Week	Golden Sneaker Contest	Creation for Transportation	Travel Training	Story Time	Go Green	Educator's Guide Presentations	Music Notes Concert	Bike to the Moon Week
Anthony W. Ochoa Middle	Hayward Unified				●	●			●					
Brookvale Elementary	Fremont Unified				●	●	●							●
Cox Academy	ACOE		●				●							
Dewey Academy	Oakland Unified			●										
Donlon Elementary	Pleasanton Unified					●							●	
E. M. Grimmer Elementary	Fremont Unified					●	●							●
Encinal Junior/Senior High	Alameda Unified					●								
Hillview Crest Elementary	New Haven Unified	●	●				●				●		●	●
Itliong-Vera Cruz Middle	New Haven Unified			●					●					
John Blacow Elementary	Fremont Unified						●							●
LIFE Academy	Oakland Unified			●										
Lorin A. Eden Elementary	Hayward Unified					●	●						●	
Newark Junior High	Newark Unified					●								
Sunset Elementary	Livermore Valley Joint Unified					●	●							●
Tennyson High	Hayward Unified								●					
The Academy of Alameda Elementary	Alameda Unified					●	●							
Vineyard Alternative	Livermore Valley Joint Unified			●				●			●			●
Winton Middle	Hayward Unified			●	●				●					

6 Program Sustainability



Program Sustainability



Students practicing safe bicycling skills during a Drive Your Bike event.

The keys to ensuring Safe Routes sustainability over time are: building strong institutional partnerships; relying on systems rather than individuals; supporting Program Champions and other volunteers; maintaining and increasing consistent funding; integrating Safe Routes into local policy; and celebrating successes.

To be sustainable in the long term, the Alameda County Safe Routes Program must address several challenges on an ongoing basis: ensuring program support in the face of changes in school leadership, competing priorities at schools, insufficient funding, and turnover of volunteer Safe Routes Champions. Participation in Alameda County Safe Routes offers schools ample opportunities to build institutionalized, thriving Safe Routes programs.

This chapter outlines several components of the Safe Routes Program that are designed to support program sustainability.

Safe Routes Task Forces

Safe Routes Site Coordinators, school staff, parents, teachers, district and city staff, and students convene quarterly in district Task Forces to discuss strategies for promoting Safe Routes to Schools and implementing successful school programs. Participants share information about planned activities, partner on events, and brainstorm solutions to common challenges. Due to the pandemic, many Task Forces decided to meet online to continue their work.

Eight Safe Routes Task Forces met over the course of the 2020-21 school year, shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Task Force Participation

Task Force	Average Participation (Schools and Cities)
Alameda	4
Albany	2
Berkeley	3
Central	4
Fremont	4
Newark/New Haven	4
Oakland	8
Trivalley	4

Safe Routes Task Force Highlights

» Despite the challenges the Champions faced this year, many who were able to participate in Safe Routes to Schools found the Task Forces to be a great space to think creatively about how to encourage active and healthy lifestyles among students. At the Fremont Task Force, Champions remarked how they noticed students were increasingly living sedentary lifestyles as a result of the virtual classroom. Preparing for International Walk and Roll Week helped to give students a break from screens which

was important for their mental health and wellness.

» Task Forces also served as a way for Champions to bond with one another during the challenging year. At the New Haven/Newark Task Force, there were three new Champions, all Assistant Principals from New Haven Unified Elementary Schools. Champions were able to share their expertise and tips for organizing the Golden Sneaker Contest and brainstorm ways to encourage teacher involvement.



Participants in the Alameda Safe Routes Task Force holding a meeting on Zoom.

Safe Routes Champions

Safe Routes Champions are parent or school staff volunteers who are critical to program success. Champions host events, promote green transportation options, and work with students on education and encouragement activities. Recruiting more Safe Routes Program Champions and ensuring that existing Champions are well-supported is essential for long term program sustainability.

258

TOTAL SAFE ROUTES CHAMPIONS
engaged with the program this year

81%

OF ENROLLED SCHOOLS (214)
had at least one Safe Routes
Program Champion

School Administrators

School administrator support and enthusiasm for the Alameda County Safe Routes Program is another essential component of long-term program sustainability. Alameda County Safe Routes worked with principals across the county to set goals for their program and create strategies to achieve those goals.



A Safe Routes to School Champion goes for a spin with his family.

Looking Forward to the 2021-22 School Year

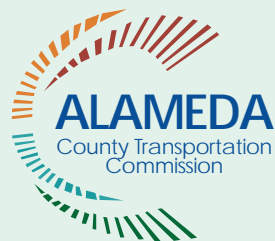
The Alameda County Safe Routes Program team is looking forward to new initiatives that will continue expanding services in more integrated, sustainable, and equitable ways while adjusting to school closures and the realities of life during a global pandemic.

The anticipated return of in-person education in Fall 2021 will present opportunities to reconnect with school communities through familiar and beloved Safe Routes events and activities. Through the challenging 2020-21 school year, Safe Routes staff also developed innovative methods to deliver programming, adding to the reach of the program and engaging with families in new ways.

During the 2021-22 school year, the Safe Routes Program intends to continue supporting schools, students, and their families with both in-person and virtual activities. Staff will continue to create opportunities to foster parent leadership and promote equity amongst race, ethnicity, income, access and ability at the school and district level. As necessary based on public health guidance, program staff will work with school partners to provide services that include physical distancing and to support the necessary changes the pandemic may bring.



Rolling to school for Bike to the Moon Week at Edison Elementary School in Alameda.



ALAMEDA COUNTY SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM 2020-2021 YEAR-END REPORT

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