



Slater Middle School SRTS Walk Audit

Wednesday, September 18th, 2024

Note: *This report documents observations from the morning of 9/18/24. It was determined that additional data is required in order to provide a more comprehensive overview of the concerns/barriers to walking & bicycling to Slater Middle School, as well as potential solutions. See below for concerns/solutions documented on 9/18/24, as well as plans for gathering additional data to fully assess how to best improve travel to/from Slater Middle.*

In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Alexander Ocegüera (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Mike Vanmidde (City of Santa Rosa Traffic Engineer), Yuri Koslan (Santa Rosa City Transit Planner), Ryan Partika (Slater Principal), Sgt. Summer Gloeckner (Santa Rosa Police Department), Officer Brian Mann (Santa Rosa Police Department), Amanda Dalton (Slater Parent/PTO Representative)

Route: Met at school entrance. Observed drop off from the school frontage on Sonoma Avenue. Walked east to Carley Road, discussed travel to/from school in the neighborhoods from various directions, entered school campus & viewed bike racks.

Pick up/Drop off: Morning drop off and afternoon pick up for the middle school takes place primarily in front of the school on Sonoma Avenue, with the busiest period taking place between 8:00 am-8:10 am. 3 full size buses drop off/pick up students in the school parking lot. There are also City Public Transit stops at the corner of Sonoma & Carley Rd. and also at Sonoma & Yulupa Ave.

Parent drivers also pick up/drop off on Carley Rd.

Parents are not permitted to drop off or pick up in the school parking lot.

There is a large secure bike parking area in back of the school, but very few (approximately 5) bicycles were parked there.

Principal Partika acts as school crossing guard at the crosswalk in front of the school every morning and afternoon. He prefers to have this role to connect with students and parents in the morning, and to continue to audit/monitor safety at drop off/pick up.

School Information:

Address	3500 Sonoma Avenue, 95405
Morning Bell(s)	8:10am
Afternoon Bell(s)	2:10pm (12:30pm on minimum days)
Grade levels	7-8
Enrollment	683 (23-24)

School type	Traditional
Student's proximity to school	2023-24 GIS Map Data 683 Geocoded Students (23-24) 304 live within 2 miles of the school (45%) 132 live within 1 mile (19%) 63 live within ½ mile (.09%) 21 live within ¼ mile (.03%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	Limited
Student Travel Mode info	TBD
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	International Walk & Roll to School Day (2024) Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day (2023, 2024)

CONCERNS &/or POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

Please note that all recommendations on the following pages are meant to capture potential solutions to issues or ideas raised during the walk audit. Each of these recommendations are subject to additional design, analysis, outreach, funding, prioritization, and approval by the City and/or Santa Rosa City School District prior to implementation.

Active Transportation Observations and Concerns:

- Morning drop-off was relatively smooth, despite the volume of traffic. Principal Partika indicated that he regularly sends messages out to parents/students re: pick up/drop off behavior, such as reminding students to exit on the right side of the vehicle (which they were doing).
- The main concern(s) expressed about Sonoma Avenue were the traffic volume and speeds, as well as parent drivers making u-turns on Sonoma Avenue between Colorado Blvd. and west of the crosswalk at Jacqueline Drive. We observed over 15 illegal U-turns.
- Students do not appear to bicycle to/from school along Sonoma Avenue – they enter the site from either Colorado Blvd. or Carley Rd., to access the secure bicycle racks in the back of the school.
- Although there is a pedestrian-activated overhead flashing beacon for pedestrians at the crosswalk on Sonoma Avenue and Jaqueline Drive, the principal expressed concern that the lights and signage is not bright enough and wanted to know if blinking lights could be added to the signage.
- The bushes on the property on the nw corner of Jacqueline Dr. and Sonoma are overgrown and may block sightlines for drivers and/or pedestrians at that intersection.

Active Transportation & Public Transportation Ideas and Potential Solutions:

District/School:

- Assist the city/SRTS program in gathering additional data and information to have a better understanding of the barriers to walking & bicycling to school at Slater, and to be able to identify additional potential solutions:

- Conduct student arrival/departure tallies this September/October (not on a Walk/Roll Day) to gather data on the number and percentage of students who walk, bike, scooter/skateboard, carpool, bus and travel in single-family vehicles in both the morning and afternoon on a typical day.
- Distribute a parent/student survey to collect more comprehensive feedback on the barriers to walking & bicycling as well as preferred routes to school.
- Consider enrolling in/participating in the County SRTS program to participate in ongoing Walk/Roll initiatives (including but not limited to International Walk & Roll to School Day and Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day), and to be eligible to receive SRTS services such as bicycle and/or pedestrian safety education programming, the Bay Area Bikemobile, and more.
- Consider establishing & promoting “Walking School Bus” (WSB) or Bike Train meet up spots, and identifying a school “SRTS Champion” (may be school staff or a parent or a team that includes both) to facilitate promotion and community participation. School administration, teacher(s), or even college students may lead a group of students on the Walking School Bus or Bike Train in the morning on special event days, and also encourage students & parents to walk together on non-event days and as well as model safe walking behavior. Walking School Buses can operate a couple times a year, once a month, or even once a week during certain months, depending on capacity.
 - Potential meet-up spots that were discussed at the audit were the nearby Church (not clear on which one) and Whole Foods.
- Share information with students and parents about students being able to ride the City Bus and SMART Train for free.
- Consider sharing the following SRTS tip-sheet(s) and videos to support safe walking, bicycling, drop-off, and parking & walking:
 - Walking Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Bike Safety Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Driver Awareness for Safe Arrival/Dismissal [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - E-Bicycles Tip Sheet [English](#) [Spanish](#)
 - Park & Walk Video [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Report incidents to Santa Rosa Police Department when they occur (i.e., if someone is hit in a crosswalk but not hurt, etc), as well as ongoing concerns, near misses, etc.

City of Santa Rosa Public Works:

- Decrease speed limit on Sonoma Avenue from 35 MPH to 30 MPH (speed limit is and will continue to be 25 MPH in the school zone, when children are present)
- Extend the daylighting of the curb on either side of crosswalk at Sonoma & Jacqueline
- Contact code enforcement re: the overgrown bush at corner of Jacqueline Dr. & Sonoma Ave.
- Consider striping modifications to provide a westbound bike lane at the intersection of Sonoma & Jacqueline. This may include removal of the eastbound turn pocket, parking, or both. Additionally, consider modifications to decrease the crossing length and provide protection for both pedestrians and cyclists through the school frontage.

Santa Rosa Police Department:

- Enforce illegal u-turns, speed and other moving violations along Sonoma Avenue during morning and afternoon commute times.

Safe Routes to School Program Information

- The SRTS program coordinates a Safe Routes to School Task Force to bring together representatives from schools/school districts (school administration, staff and/or parents), city planning/engineering, law enforcement, and SRTS program staff. The goal of the Task Force is to:
 - Seek input from Task Force members and the public, in order to identify barriers to active transportation, opportunities for improvement and collaboration, and set priorities for future infrastructure projects within the city of Santa Rosa.
 - Provide a venue for sharing of program initiatives and projects in the city of Santa Rosa, as well as inter-agency collaboration.

Santa Rosa Task Force meeting notices, agendas, and meeting notes & handouts can be found on our SRTS Task Force page [HERE](#).

- Enrollment for participation in the SRTS program takes place in April each year (deadline is April 30th). Schools must enroll each year to be eligible to receive visiting education services & ongoing technical support. Enrolled, comprehensive sites agree to:
 - Meet with SRTS program staff 3x per year to discuss/plan programming
 - Collect student travel tally data in September
 - Provide data for the SRTS program to enable creation of an annual SRTS “study map” showing where students live in relation to the school
 - Engage with/implement a minimum of 5 walk/roll encouragement initiatives per year.
 - Support scheduling & implementation of education programming.
- SRTS encouragement “Walk/Roll” initiatives and promotional materials are emailed to enrolled school contacts every month via our SRTS E-Newsletter, and may also be accessed at www.sonomasaferroutes.org. To request to receive our SRTS E-Newsletter directly, email christina@bikeosnoma.org

Appendix: Walk Audit Pictures:



Principal Partika greeting a student as he monitors crosswalk in front of school



Drop off line on Sonoma Ave – unable to capture a picture of u-turn behavior, but most u-turns occurred in the area close to/behind the first car in the line.



Consider removal of left turn pocket?



Signage indicating no pick-up drop off in school parking lot (relatively effective)



Crossing at Carley Rd. and Sonoma



Large, secure bike parking area