



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



Transportation Authority of Marin  
www.tam.ca.gov

## **Kentfield Task Force**

### **Meeting Notes**

**January 25, 2012**

#### **Present (10)**

Wendi Kallins – Program Director for Safe Routes to School; Laura Kelly –Volunteer Liaison for Safe Routes to School; Katie Rice – Marin County Supervisor; Laurie O’Hara – Aide to Katie Rice; Eric Hohmeister – California Highway Patrol; Dan Cherrier – Project Manager for Transportation Authority of Marin; Billy Cameron – Vice Principal at Bacich Elementary School; Paul Miller – Facilities Manager for Kentfield Schools; Marnie Ganong –Bacich School Team Leader; Heather McPhail –Bacich School Team Leader; Jenny Walsh – Assistant Principal at Kent Middle School.

#### **Counting walkers, bikers and carpools in 2012 using a barcode scanning system**

The Kentfield School District is moving forward with plans to use an on-line student travel-tracking program beginning in February. The program will track the number of walkers, bikers and carpools using a barcode scanning system. The system is Active4.me and is an offshoot of Save-A-Gallon. Save-A-Gallon was used by Safe Routes to Schools in 2011 by Miller Creek Middle School. The Active4.me system will be used to electronically count the number of students at Bacich and Kent School who are using their feet to get to school, or carpooling. Bacich will have children register by neighborhood, rather than by classroom.

Students will receive a small plastic tag with a barcode to attach to their backpack. To obtain the barcode key, students under the age of 13 must complete a permission slip. Electronic parent signatures are not an option. The upfront paperwork is time consuming to gather at first, but once done, then the Active4.me program will be in place for many years to come. Only incoming Kindergarten students will need to complete new permission slips at the start of every school year.

Safe Routes to Schools will provide two scanning devices to use at school arrival time to scan students as they arrive and check-in. Students who are members of green teams and environmental school clubs will assist in launching the program. Tracking miles, CO2 prevention, calories burned, money saved and gasoline saved are all part of the benefits of using the program.

### **Crossing Guard Program TAM Presentation**

Dan Cherrier provided the Task Force with a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the Marin County Crossing Guard Program. The initial program paid for 54 guards; TAM now has 75 active crossing guards. Dan distributed to the Task Force the master list used by the county to rank crossing guard locations. A total of 126 locations appear on the list, which was created on December 1, 2011. The top 75 on the list have crossing guards; four crossing guards are assigned to the Kentfield School District out of the 75.

The Public Works Director determines location recommendations to forward to TAM for crossing guards. Input is received from towns, police departments, California Highway Patrol, school districts and town public works departments. TAM hires a consultant to conduct vehicle and pedestrian counts and to analyze the data. Scores are assigned to each location. The final data is then ranked and the TAM Board then approves a location assignment list. The next time the list is re-evaluated will be 2014. It is an expensive process to review every location.

The criteria to select locations are based on an individual scoring on each crosswalk. The highest scoring crosswalk is the score for that intersection. Several non-adjacent crosswalks in the same intersection scored relatively high and would have more qualified more than one guard for the site. Last month the Board adapted a new policy regarding requests for a crossing guard at a new location, based on changed conditions (school closing, major construction, etc.).

Evaluation Process of Guards – TAM conducts unannounced audits at least once a month to verify guard attendance and performance. 96% of the respondents to an evaluation survey indicated that the crossing guards are a good way to spend Measure A funds. Dan has a copy of the evaluation report for anyone who would like to review it in detail.

There is a way to request a crossing guard mid-year, but the school must direct the request through the Public Works Director. Dan said it costs us money to evaluate a new area. Emphasize the “changed data” to warrant a new evaluation, such as increased enrollment at a school and/or a marketing encouragement program for more

walkers and bikers. It was mentioned that the Kentfield School District does not have a local Public Works Director to advocate for us. The person to assist in the process is Craig Tackabery.

Wendi said that there are intersections that don't have a crossing guard, and that's why these areas are rarely used. Wendi asked Dan what is your experience on this front. He said the numbers do not reflect an increase if a new crossing guard is put in heavy traffic sections. Ranking is skewed higher when there is a traffic light and stop signs so that those areas without controlled intersections score higher and are more likely to get a guard as the need there is greater.

### **Safety Issues List**

Heather updated and prioritized the safety issues list, which was distributed to the Task Force for review and discussion. The list focuses from the school site, then corridors leading to the school site and then spreads out from there. Wendi suggested creating a list of criteria to prioritize the list. The Task Force brainstormed and developed the following criteria for evaluation of an area:

#### ***Criteria:***

Proximity to school (Billy feels that this is the most important criteria on this list)

Corridor

Seriousness of safety issue

Number of complaints

Reported incident

Number of students served

#### ***Solutions:***

Easy fix

Under School Control

Long-term project

Wendi asked how do we create rankings? Dan said use your gut instinct. Don't get too scientific about it. Billy said that 80% of complaints are McAllister and the Acacia

school entrance. Paul said it's hard to come up with criteria, and instead focus on individual situations.

Wendi asked based on the criteria, do we want to move any up or down on the list? Billy – Maybe the neighborhood captains can review this list and prioritize it. He also said that the three most important issues are at the top of the list. Neighborhood captains will review this revised updated list and sign off on it. Wendi reinforced that the criteria provides an objective way to analyze the issues, the neighborhood captains might have a personal opinion regarding an issue because it's their home turf. Billy suggested educating parents more about the areas of concern. Get more parent discussion and input.

At our next meeting the final list of safety issues will be reviewed and approved by the Task Force. After approval, Paul will contact the Public Works Director to present the approved list for their review.

**Our next Task Force Meeting is scheduled for February 15 at 9:00 am at the Kentfield School District Office.**

