

SRTS Caregiver Survey

2024-25 Results Report



What is the SRTS Parent Survey?

Richfield Public Schools is unique because it has an active and exciting Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program led by a dedicated SRTS Coordinator. The program works to make it easier, safer and more fun for our students to walk or bike to school. The SRTS Caregiver Survey is a tool used by SRTS programs to learn about student family perceptions of walking and biking as it relates to their school-aged children.



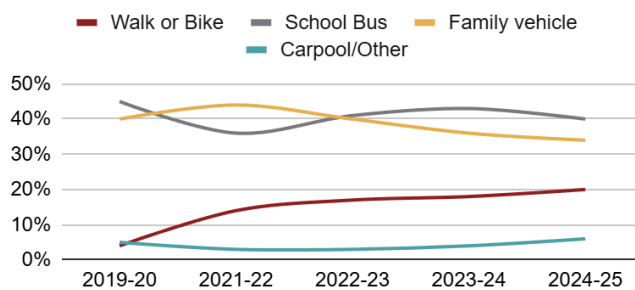
How was the survey conducted?

The SRTS Parent Survey was distributed to families of Richfield Public Schools in November 2024, via digital communications platforms and on-site at Centennial Elementary's school conferences. It was administered in both English and Spanish. The district received 494 responses—477 from our elementary and secondary schools. 19% of our responses were in Spanish-language. Broadly, we saw proportionate response rates compared to our district enrollment population, although white student families were overrepresented and our high school student families were underrepresented.

What survey results encourage us the most?

For the first time since we started facilitating this survey in 2019-20 the percentage of student caregivers reporting their student walks or bikes home from school reached 20%! This number is up from 4% in 2019-20 and tells us walking and biking to school continues to increase even as the Covid-era bike boom recedes into the past.

How does your child leave from school?



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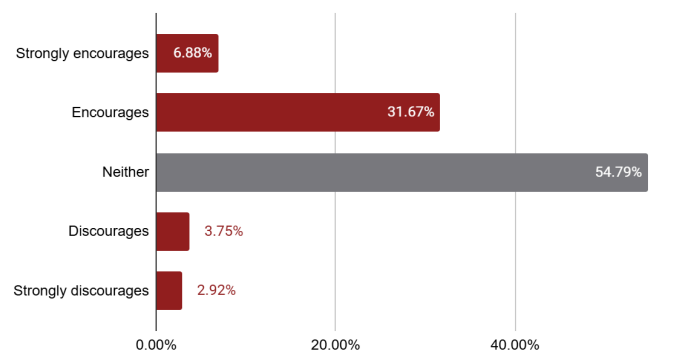
Other encouraging results we observed in this year's survey include 46% of caregivers indicating walking/biking to school is either fun or very fun for their child. Last year we were at 41% for these categories. It is clear Richfield student families increasingly see walking/biking as a fun way for students to travel to and from school.

What survey results challenge us the most?

The number of caregivers indicating which grade they would allow their student to walk or bike to school for elementary students dropped significantly this year, from 38% to 26%. An initial theory for the decrease was that doubling our Spanish-language respondents painted a different picture of caregiver concerns than we have seen in the past, however a deeper dive into the data reveals the decrease is driven by English-language respondents from families identifying as white. More evaluation will be needed to determine why these caregivers have changed their minds and how we can persuade them to change their minds again.

Another challenge we saw is that even though Richfield's SRTS program is now in our sixth year, over half (55%) of survey respondents feel like their school neither encourages or discourages walking and biking to school. While this number is down from 59% last year and 67% in 2022-23, we know our SRTS program must do a better job letting caregivers know Richfield Public Schools does encourage walking/biking to school.

How much does student's school encourage or discourage walking/biking to school



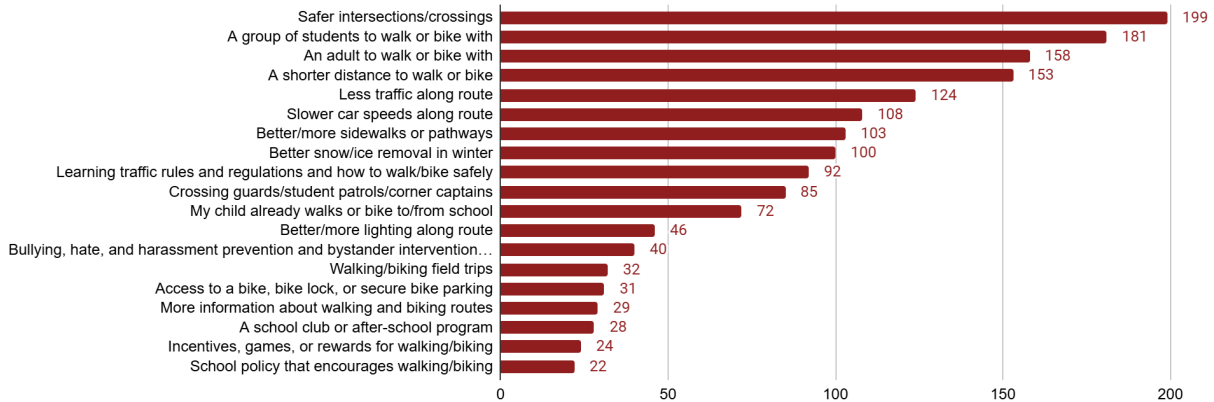
What else did we learn from the SRTS Parent Survey?

The richest information we gleaned came from the open-ended question at the end of the survey. (We won't share those responses here, to protect respondents' privacy.) Popular themes emerging from the comments though were Infrastructure perceived to be unsafe for walking and biking, Having trained students or adults to help with street crossings, and Stranger danger.



One of our most helpful data points always comes from asking caregivers what factors inform whether they will allow their children to bike and walk to school, and whether improving those factors would change their minds. This year our caregivers stated Safer walking/biking infrastructure and their Student having someone to walk or bike with (adult or student peer) as factors to make them more comfortable allowing their students to travel to school by walking or biking.

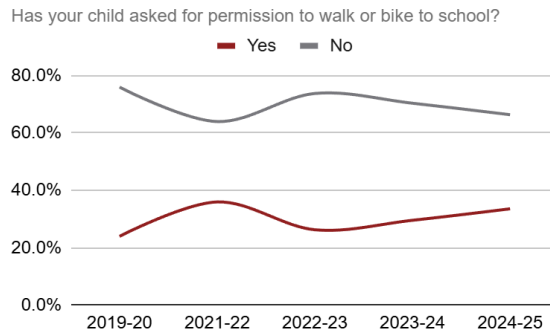
Help child walk/bike to school more often:



What trends are emerging?

Now that the SRTS program is in our sixth year and we have completed five SRTS Caregiver Surveys, we are better able to notice emerging trends for the SRTS program—how effective the program has been at accomplishing our mission and where we need to work harder to see better results.

One encouraging trend we have discovered is the amount of students who have asked their caregiver for permission to walk or bike to school. The respondents answering Yes was 24% in 2020 and is now 34%. With the exception of the Covid-era bike boom, this number had remained stubbornly in the 20's until this year.



Another encouraging trend from the SRTS perspective is that after the City of Richfield lowered speed limits this year, the amount of caregivers identifying Speed of traffic along route as a barrier to allowing their student to walk or bike to school dropped to 29% this year, from 34% last year and 43% two years ago. Limited data does indicate earlier school start times as a reaction to the lowered speed limits has resulted in a significant increase in tardiness at some of our schools, so further evaluation will be needed to determine if the lowered speed limits are an overall net positive for the school district and our SRTS program.

A stubborn trend we noticed is four of the top-5 reasons preventing a caregiver from walking/biking to school have remained the same—Distance from school, Safety of intersections or crossings, Amount of traffic along route, and Weather or climate. However, over the past three years we have seen a consistent decrease in the amount of survey respondents selecting each of these concerns. Most notably Amount of traffic along route has decreased from 49% to 35% since the 2019-20 school year and Safety of intersections or crossings has decreased from 55% to 43% over the same time period.

A caveat?

Traditionally, we have conducted our annual SRTS Caregiver Survey in February and moved the survey up to November this school year due to scheduling considerations. It could be that caregiver perceptions (and memory) changes the deeper we get into the winter months. However, given there are no statistically significant deviations from previous surveys the probability these results are accurate is still very high.

How do we use survey data?

We take the responses provided by our caregivers seriously. The primary purpose of the survey is to inform and guide the work of the SRTS Coordinator. Survey data is also evaluated and discussed by the district's SRTS Committee—a team of school district employees, staff of various local government departments and other community members. This collaboration has led to community improvements away from school district campuses—including new crosswalks near schools and fun summer programming at Richfield parks.

All the data is divided into school-specific reports and shared with building principals. Anonymous data is also shared with state and federal SRTS agencies to track national trends as well.

What else should you know about SRTS?

You can always share additional feedback or learn more about the program at richfieldschools.org/depts-progs/safe-routes-to-school