



SAN MATEO
COUNTY
OFFICE OF
EDUCATION

School Safety Assessment Technical Memorandum

Daniel Webster Elementary School

Jefferson Elementary School District

October 2019

Prepared by: Alta Planning + Design



Daniel Webster Elementary School

Staff and school partners convened a school safety assessment (SSA) at Daniel Webster Elementary School in Daly City during the morning arrival on October 22, 2019. The assessment included representatives from the City of Daly City, the Jefferson Elementary School District, San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE), CalFresh, and Alta Planning + Design.

Participants included:

- Pamela DiGiovanni – Daly City City Councilmember
- Shirley Chan – City of Daly City
- Bill Heath – Jefferson ESD
- Vanessa Castro – San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE)
- Ruth Wallace – San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE)
- Jennifer Knopf – Principal, Daniel Webster Elementary School
- Marisela Ceron – UCCE CalFresh
- Ginny Lucca – Daniel Webster Crossing Guard
- Rhoderick Banda – Parent/Staff Member
- Theresa Vallez-Kelly – SMCOE
- Briana Thuramn – SMCOE/SRTS
- Beth Martin – Alta Planning + Design
- Nick Aguilera – Alta Planning + Design

The SSA was funded through Caltrans ATP Cycle 1 Grant to SMCOE for the Safe Routes for Health and Wellness program. As one of the pilot schools, Daniel Webster Elementary School is participating in various non-infrastructure programs as well as this SSA.

School Information

Location & Enrollment

	Address:	425 El Dorado Drive Daly City, CA 94015
	Morning Bell(s):	8:20 am
	Afternoon Bell(s):	1:45 pm (PreK & Kindergarten); 3 pm (1-5)
	Grade Levels:	PreK-5
	Enrollment	370
	School Type (neighborhood/magnet/charter):	Neighborhood

Daniel Webster Elementary is located on the west side of Daly City in San Mateo County. The school is located in a largely residential area of Daly City and is primarily accessed via El Dorado Drive to the west side of the school. Students walking to school can access the property using the existing gate and informal path on the grass area located north of the school at the intersection of El Dorado Drive and Casa Avenue. Additional pedestrian access

is located on the south side of the school utilizing the existing concrete stairway connecting to Cerro Drive.

While there are a number of pedestrian-only access points to the site, all automobile drop-off and pick-up occurs along El Dorado Drive. This has led to a number of safety concerns and conflict points between motorists and pedestrians at the intersections of El Dorado Drive and Cerro Drive as well as the intersection of El Dorado Drive and Southgate Avenue, both of which have recorded bicycle and pedestrian collisions between 2014 – 2018 according to the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS).

Existing Conditions

The following existing conditions were observed or reported by participants during the school safety assessment (SSA).

1. El Dorado Drive at Staff Parking Lot

- ◆ Automobile access to the staff parking lot is restricted during morning arrival times. Orange flexible delineators are set down to create a temporary drop-off lane along El Dorado Drive. Volunteer staff were observed opening car doors to facilitate a safe and expedient student loading process.
 - Walk audit participants perceived the process as efficient. However, some congestion and automobile buildup at the intersection of El Dorado Drive and Cerro Drive was reported during peak arrival periods.
- ◆ Most students arrive at school using the eastern sidewalk along El Dorado Drive. While the sidewalk meets ADA requirements, audit participants noted that the sidewalk is too narrow for the pedestrian traffic volumes experienced during the morning arrival. Further, SSA participants recorded sidewalk obstructions caused by parked cars where passengers open their doors onto the sidewalk.
- ◆ Walk audit participants observed student drop-offs occurring along the western sidewalk of El Dorado Drive. Students crossed the street at unmarked locations, posing a safety risk. Occasional U-turns and cut-arounds were noted along El Dorado Drive.
- ◆ As motorists drop-off students, the drop-off lane narrows the existing travel lanes which provides a traffic calming element by reducing vehicles speeds.



Figure 1: Drop-off zone in front of school; there is limited sidewalk space for pedestrians during peak hours.



Figure 2: Traffic backups along El Dorado Drive experienced during peak drop-off times.



Figure 3: Traffic backs up down El Dorado Drive as students are dropped-off.



Figure 4: Pedestrians crossing at unmarked locations across El Dorado Drive.

2. El Dorado Drive at Cerro Drive

- ◆ High volumes of pedestrian traffic were experienced at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection. Existing curb ramps do not include truncated domes for ADA accessibility.
- ◆ Several students and their families were observed crossing the street along the existing crosswalk on the north side of the intersection. However, the eastern leg of the intersection does not include curb ramps for ADA accessibility.
- ◆ Existing parking extending to the intersection limits sight lines for street and sidewalk users.
- ◆ Existing sidewalks were perceived to limit pedestrian access, especially when passengers open car doors onto the sidewalk.
- ◆ While most motorists respect the pedestrian right-of-way on crosswalks, traffic builds up into and through the intersection during peak arrival times.
- ◆ While only one pedestrian collision involving students was recorded in the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) database, the school principal reported

to walk audit participants that there have been at least three pedestrian collisions at the intersection (two involving neighbors and one involving a student).



Figure 5: Existing traffic backs into intersection of El Dorado Ave and Cerro Drive.



Figure 6: Cars parked along Cerro Drive create visibility issues.

3. El Dorado Drive at Southgate Avenue

- ◆ Walk audit participants reported speeding along the Southgate Avenue corridor even as the posted speed limit is 25 mph.
- ◆ El Dorado Drive is stop controlled at its approach to Southgate Avenue. Traffic along Southgate Avenue is uncontrolled through the intersection, making difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to cross the street.
- ◆ Buses that stop at the bus stop located to the south and east of the intersection block visibility of pedestrians entering the east-side crosswalk.
- ◆ Motorists using the turning lane block visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalk, decreasing the safety of people in the crosswalk.
- ◆ Three total bicycle and pedestrian collisions involving parents and students were recorded between 2014 - 2018, according to data from TIMS.

- ◆ Existing wide curb radii at each corner of the intersection enable unsafe driving practices (i.e., speeding while turning) and increase the distance for people crossing the intersection.
- ◆ Audit participants and parents requested stop controls at each leg of the intersection, better police enforcement, and/or a crossing guard to help increase safety.

4. El Dorado Drive at Casa Avenue

- ◆ The existing crossing guard was effective at controlling left-turn automobile traffic and student movements across El Dorado Avenue
- ◆ Existing parking extending to the intersection limits sight lines for street and sidewalk users.
- ◆ Student drop-off occurs next to the stop sign on Casa Avenue.

5. Cerro Drive Staircase

- ◆ Existing stairway connecting to Cerro Drive remains open at all times representing a potential safety concern for students and teachers.
- ◆ No volunteers or school staff members were observed supervising the stairway entrance during arrival hours.
- ◆ Several students were recorded using the existing stairway to access the school grounds, most of them accompanied by adults.

Recommendations

Engineering Recommendations

Recommendations to improve infrastructure or operations surrounding Daniel Webster Elementary School can be seen on the conceptual improvement plan found on the following page.

Programmatic Recommendations

- ◆ Facilitate Walking School Buses
 - Walking School Buses (WSBs) are groups of students, led by parent/adult chaperone(s), that meet at designated locations and times to gather and walk and/or bike to school together. WSBs can be regular events, occurring daily, weekly, or monthly or occur in coordination with other events like International Walk and Roll to School Day or the Golden Sneaker Contest. Safe Routes to School staff can assist schools with the planning, coordination, and execution of the WSBs. Walking in groups with parental supervision can not only increase the visibility of these road users, but can reduce barriers to walking or biking for some families while making it fun and exciting for the students. Walking school buses require parent participation and leadership.
- ◆ Schedule Pedestrian and Bicycle Rodeo Events
 - Interactive pedestrian and bicycle rodeos are a great educational opportunity to teach and refresh safe walking and bicycling behavior. The workshop covers a wide range of relevant topics from understanding traffic signals and signs to how to safely cross the street. Pedestrian Safety Rodeos and Bicycle Safety Rodeos are geared towards elementary school students. The San Mateo County Safe Routes to School staff can assist schools with the planning and execution of a Pedestrian Rodeo.
- ◆ Additional School Staffing of Drop Off Procedure
 - Schools can ask their staff to help monitor arrival and dismissal procedures. Additional staff presence at arrival/dismissal times can promote and reinforce appropriate behaviors, whether families are traveling by foot, bicycle, or automobile.
- ◆ Engage in School Community Outreach and Education
 - School community and parent outreach can include newsletters, websites or in-person meetings, like Coffee with the Principal events. Schools can take these opportunities to share information about transportation, new infrastructure, upcoming programs, and remind parents about proper driving behavior and pick-up/drop-off policies. In-person meetings may offer a more conventional dialogue where parents can discuss their transportation-related concerns, although it is important to communicate information digitally as well.

Safe Routes to Schools Improvement Plan
Daniel Webster Elementary
Daly City, CA

School Safety Assessment held October 2019



- 1 El Dorado Drive at Staff Parking Lot**
 - Consider widening sidewalk near the school onto city right-of-way to east side of existing sidewalk.
- 2 El Dorado Drive at Cerro Street**
 - Short Term: Paint red curb around 15’ of the NE and SE corners of intersection to daylight intersection.
 - Short Term: Consider paint and post curb extensions. (Long Term: Install curb extensions on northeast and southeast corners of intersection. Consider incorporating green infrastructure.)
 - Install a curb ramp on west side of the northern crosswalk.
- 3 El Dorado Drive at Southgate Avenue**
 - Study installing Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon or RRFB.
 - Examine drainage and existing slope to study feasibility of curb extensions at the end of existing crosswalks; install if feasible. Consider incorporating green infrastructure into curb extension design.
 - Install a pedestrian refuge island on the west side crosswalk.
 - Explore the feasibility of relocating the bus stop currently on the west side of the crosswalk.
 - Install high visibility crosswalk on north side of intersection.
- 4 El Dorado Drive at Casa Avenue**
 - Paint red curb around 15’ of the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection and the E side of the crosswalk to daylight intersection.
- 5 Cerro Drive Staircase**
 - Consider a school policy to restrict external gate access from the street.
- 6 Daniel Webster Elementary School Property**
 - Formalize informal path from gate entrance near Casa Ave to parking lot and buildings.

*The above items are recommendations only and based on Safe Routes to Schools site assessment best practices. Feasibility determination, final design, accessibility, funding, and implementation of any recommended improvements is the responsibility of the appropriate governing agency.
**Red curb and/or parking restriction signage should be provided between advance stop/yield markings and the crosswalk. Exact red curb distance should be determined in accordance with the CA-MUTCD and City policies/standards. Red curb not symbolized on map.

