



San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Mayor Ed Lee, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy & Supervisor Julie Christensen Celebrate Walk & Roll to School Day in San Francisco

Students, Parents, City Leaders, and Community Groups join to support the City's Vision Zero Goals & the Surgeon General's Call to Action on Walking and Walkable Communities

San Francisco, CA - On International Walk and Roll to School Day, over 100 Spring Valley elementary school students formed "walking school buses" with parents, Mayor Lee, Dr. Murthy, Supervisor Christensen and other City and community leaders. They made their way through busy streets to reach school before the bell rang, simultaneously highlighting Vision Zero's traffic safety initiatives, increasing their physical activity, and improving their concentration for better learning in school.

Almost one-third of the 350 students at Spring Valley Science School walked and rolled to school, demonstrating the school's commitment to walking.

"We want our students to be active in order to arrive at school ready to learn, and walking to school is a great way to accomplish this," said Principal Marlene Callejas. "For our families, traffic safety is the most critical factor for determining whether or not families walk to school regularly."

Walk and Roll to School Day is part of Vision Zero SF (<http://www.visionzerosf.org>), the City's commitment to safer, healthier streets to reach the goal of zero traffic fatalities by 2024. To date, 17 out of 24 Vision Zero projects to improve our streets and sidewalks have been completed.

"We are encouraging our children and their families to choose to walk, bike or take Muni to school today on Walk and Roll to School Day," said Mayor Ed Lee. "We want our students to be active every day and make healthy choices, and we want every student throughout our City to be safe when they are walking to school. Let's make every day Walk and Roll to School Day!"

"We know that an active lifestyle is critical to achieving good overall health. And walking is a simple, effective and affordable way to build physical activity into our lives. That is why we need to step it up as a country ensuring that everyone who chooses to walk can safely walk in their own communities," said Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, the 19th U.S. Surgeon General.

"As a teacher at Spring Valley, I know first-hand how beneficial walking is for the health and wellbeing of my students, my colleagues, and myself, says Spring Valley teacher, Yvon Wu. "I walk every day and

see the traffic dangers that my students are exposed to, which is why our school is participating in Walk and Roll to School Day.”

“I’m proud to be here at Spring Valley to support walking to school, not just for today, but every day,” said Supervisor Julie Christensen. “Every child deserves a safe route to school, which is why I’m working to implement numerous pedestrian safety projects throughout District 3. We must make it safe and easy for all residents and visitors in District 3 to walk, bike, or take transit to school.”

“I am proud of the work that SFDPH and the Safe Routes to School Partnership has done to increase safe and active walking and rolling to school,” said Barbara Garcia, Director of Health. “Walking and rolling is a perfect way to keep the mind and body fit. It is good for our air quality and our communities. Through Vision Zero, SFDPH is working to prevent injuries and keep our children safe.”

At Spring Valley Science School, 65 percent of the students live within one mile of school and 32 percent walk, according to the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH). Citywide, over 40 percent of all elementary school students live within walking distance of school, but only 27 percent of students walk. The Safe Routes to School Partnership, led by SFDPH, works with 35 elementary schools to encourage walking, wheelchair rolling and biking, an important way to increase children’s daily physical activity. The Partnership also improves traffic safety by providing educational lessons to students, working with SFPD to provide traffic enforcement and working with MTA to improve streets and sidewalks around schools.

With over 95 schools and 14,000 children participating in Walk and Roll to School Day across the city, Superintendent Carranza said, “I’m proud of the San Francisco Unified School District and the SF Safe Routes to Schools Partnership for making it safer and easier to build physical activity into our children’s everyday lives. With over 85 percent of SFUSD elementary schools participating in today’s event, we look forward to families continuing to walk and roll throughout the school year so students arrive focused and ready to learn.”

“Today reminds us that children deserve to walk to school safely not only on Walk and Roll to School Day, but every day,” said Nicole Ferrara, executive director of Walk San Francisco. “Young students are especially vulnerable to traffic injuries, because children generally don’t develop the cognitive ability to judge the speed of oncoming vehicles until ages 10. Slowing down speeds around schools is critical to protecting the safety of our City’s future leaders.”

Funding for the school area safety work was provided by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds, and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority.

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International Walk and Roll to School Day encourages the creation of safer routes to school, enhances kids’ health by encouraging physical activity, reduces traffic, and protects the environment.

The San Francisco Safe Routes to School Partnership (www.sfsaferoutes.org) works to implement the federally funded Safe Routes to School program to encourage more families to walk, bike, take transit and carpool to and from school. The San Francisco Department of Public Health is the lead agency, and the Partnership includes public and private partners.

Vision Zero – San Francisco adopted Vision Zero as a policy in 2014, committing to build better and safer streets, educate the public on traffic safety, enforce traffic laws, and adopt policy changes that save lives. The result of this collaborative, citywide effort is safer, more livable streets as San Francisco

works towards the Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities by 2024. San Francisco is engineering inherently safer streets, enforcing traffic laws more effectively, and targeting traffic-safety education, to reach its Vision Zero goals.

Walk San Francisco ([WalkSF.org](https://www.walksf.org)) and its members are making San Francisco a more livable, walkable city, by reclaiming streets as safe, shared public space for everyone to enjoy.