

Whited Elementary Charter School

Wednesday, October 15th, 2025



In attendance: Christina Panza (SRTS Director), Sarah Hadler (SRTS Program Manager /Educator), Alexander Ocegüera (City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Planner), Paul Patterson (City of Santa Rosa Engineering Technician); Mike Vanmidde (City of Santa Rosa Associate Traffic Engineer), Jasmin Stitt (Caltrans), Erin Scull (Principal), Julya Reynolds (Student Advocate/SRTS Champion/parent), Grace Hayes (parent), Serena Lienau (parent)

Route: Began at school main entrance in driveway loop, off Hwy 12, and observed a portion of drop off in school driveway loop. Then split into 3 groups and observed the remainder of drop off at the intersection of Hwy 12 and Jack London Drive, on Jack London Drive, and on School Street. After observing drop off, the group walked the length of Jack London Drive between Hwy 12 and Rinwood Drive, along Hwy 12 between Jack London Drive and the school driveway entrance/exit, and between the school driveway entrance/exit on School Street to Middle Rincon Road and back.

Pick up/Drop off: Morning drop off and afternoon pick up for the school takes place in three primary locations; through the school driveway loop, (with drivers both entering and exiting from both Hwy 12 and from School Street), along Jack London Drive, and along School Street and the adjacent Marshall Drive. There are several ways to enter campus: two gates to campus on Jack London Drive, one gate at the end of School Street that leads to the school blacktop, a gate entering the school from the school driveway loop, and the entrance that leads to the school office (also from the school driveway). Because drop-off and pick up is distributed among several locations, drop-off in the school driveway loop was relatively smooth. Principal Scull is also typically out there to monitor drop off at

that location. Drop off/pick up on School Street and on Jack London Dr. also appeared fairly smooth, but had some issues which are noted in the concerns section below.

There is one yellow school bus carrying students to Whited in the morning, which drops off in the school driveway loop. In the afternoon, there are two yellow school buses that pick up students on Jack London Drive. In addition, two small yellow buses were observed in the morning on the east side of Jack London Drive, picking up students to transport them to another (unknown) site.

A Crossing Guard is stationed at the intersection of Jack London Drive and Hwy 12.

School Information:

Address	4995 Sonoma Hwy, Santa Rosa, CA 95409
Morning Bell(s)	8:15am
Afternoon Bell(s)	2:45pm (M/T/Th/F); 1:45pm (W)
Grade levels	TK-6
Enrollment	337
School type	Charter
Student's proximity to school	2025-26 GIS Map Data 337 Geocoded Students 239 live within 2 miles of the school (71%) 200 live within 1 mile (59%) 118 live within ½ mile (35%) 51 live within ¼ mile (1%)
Participating School in Sonoma County SRTS program?	Yes
Student Travel Mode info (data collected in September 2025)	Walk – 15% Bike – 2% Other – 0% Carpool – 0% School bus – 5% morning, 8% afternoon Transit – 1% Single Family Vehicle – 76%
Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Programming (2024-25)	2 nd Grade Pedestrian safety lessons 4 th Grade Bicycle Basics Lessons, Bike Rodeo 5 th Grade Mapping and Communication Lessons Multiple Walk/Roll to School Events annually

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.

Concerns & Observations:

Hwy 12

- Whited Elementary is located on State Highway 12, between Middle Rincon Drive and Jack London Drive. Hwy 12 is a major east-west arterial that serves as a commuter route for locals, a major path for tourists visiting Sonoma County, and a route of travel to/from Whited and other Santa Rosa schools. The highway is divided by a raised and landscaped concrete median, with two travel lanes in each direction. There are left-turn pockets at Middle Rincon Drive west of the school, Jack London Drive east of the school, where U-turns are permitted, and Boas Drive a bit farther to the east, where U-turns are also permitted.
- A crosswalk with a pedestrian-activated flashing yellow beacon is located on Hwy 12 at Jack London Drive. Participants expressed that the yellow flashing lights are “glitchy” and sometimes go off at random times, and/or don’t always appear to work. They indicated that the yellow lights are also not very visible, and that drivers often blow through the intersection even when lights are flashing. In addition, when the sun rises, drivers traveling east can barely see, and the same goes for drivers traveling west when the sun sets. Both parents, school staff, and neighbors have repeatedly requested that this intersection be improved with either a traffic signal or a more visible flashing beacon that would better manage traffic and improve safety for pedestrians. Whited Office Manager Lisa Rossi, who has worked at the site for ~19 years and has lived in the neighborhood for over 35 years, shared that she would rather see the crosswalk entirely removed until it is improved, than continue facilitating a pedestrian crossing at such a dangerous location. A comment from the Spring 2023 SRTS parent survey: *“Sonoma Hwy in front of Whited is a RACETRACK OF WEST BOUND TRAFFIC IN THE MORNINGS. Zero vehicles follow the speed limit, including school buses, cops, ambulances, fire engines. It’s a death trap to try and cross at Jack London. We tried and witnessed 3 rear end collisions while crossing so without ANY SUPPORT after over 20 calls to both CHP, and SRPD our only safe option is to drive and we literally live across the street from the school.” Another parent implored “NEED A PUSH BUTTON RED LIGHT TO ACTUALLY GET CARS TO STOP.”*
- Drivers traveling east down Hwy 12 on their way to Whited often make a U-turn at Jack London Drive in order to get to the Whited main entrance from that location. Although the U-turns are legal, the frequency of U-turns, combined with drivers entering Hwy 12 from Jack London Drive and turning left to travel east or right to travel west, results in potential conflicts, not only for the drivers, but for pedestrians attempting to cross at that location. The school crossing guard was recently hit by a driver turning right onto Hwy 12 from Jack London Drive. The driver apparently expressed that they were so concerned about looking to the left to make sure it was safe to turn, that they didn’t see the crossing guard. A parent responding to our Spring 2023 SRTS parent survey indicated *“Cars turning right never check to see if people are crossing.”* Parents inquired about whether it would be possible to restrict U-turns at this location.
- The volume, speed of traffic, and potential for conflict(s) at intersections and driveways along Highway 12 is a major concern for the school community. The speed limit on Hwy 12 is

45mph, 25mph in the school zone while children are present. However, participants expressed that drivers appear to frequently exceed the speed limit, even when children are present.

- Participants expressed concerns about sidewalk gaps on the south side of Hwy 12 between Elaine Drive and Indian Creek Drive, and also between Maria Lane, up to S. Boas Drive. Children were observed walking in the dirt on the south side of Hwy 12 on their route to school.
- Two comments from the Spring 2023 Parent survey re: speeding and lack of sidewalks:
 - *“Significant speeding issue on highway 12, lack of safe crosswalks, intersections too big, too busy. Multiple private properties without ANY sidewalks at all forcing child to walk ON the sonoma highway in speeding traffic. school zone not enforced. ever.”*
 - *“Our walk is from Acacia lane to Whited along highway 12 is missing sidewalks on both sides and only one crosswalk at the middle rincon intersection, unguarded, school zone completely unenforced. Speeding a huge problem. Child would walk to school every day if not for the psychotic traffic and hazardous lack of infrastructure. Instead I drive two blocks in my SUV. My options are contribute to climate change or let my kid get pancaked by some sociopath doing 50 in a school zone with no sidewalks.”*
- Cars parked on Hwy 12 on the south side of the school, close to the school driveway entrance, block sightlines for drivers entering and exiting the school driveway.
- Bushes on school property also block sightlines in/out of the school driveway and along the sidewalk on the south side of the school.

Jack London Drive between Hwy 12 & Rinwood Drive

- Parents park along both sides of Jack London Drive for drop off/pick up, and residents of the neighborhood also park along Jack London Drive.
- Multiple parents were observed making U-turns on Jack London Drive at Roma Street after dropping off their children, increasing the potential for conflict between vehicles and/or active travelers.
- Due to the volume of cars parked along Jack London Drive, parents frequently double park to drop off their children.
- School staff expressed concerns about students exiting the school gate(s) and frequently crossing mid-block on Jack London Drive to get to the apartment complexes across the street or to their parent(s) vehicles parked on the east side of the street. This concern is exacerbated by the fact that sightlines are often blocked by vehicles parked on both sides of Jack London Drive, and by yellow school buses parked on the west side of Jack London Drive at pick-up time. There are no marked crosswalks between Hwy 12 and Rinwood Drive.
- There are no curb ramps at the intersection/marked crosswalk at Jack London Drive & Rinwood Drive, and sightlines may be blocked by a car parked on the north side of Rinwood Drive across from Jack London Drive.

School Street and Middle Rincon Road

- Participants observed that both School Street, which dead ends at the school blacktop, and the adjacent Marshall Drive are utilized for drop-off pick up, although perhaps not as heavily as Jack London Drive and Highway 12.
- One issue with drop-off/pick up on School Street is that some parent(s) pulled up all the way to the dead end, in front of the closed school blacktop gate, in the space next to a city backflow device on the south side of the School Street dead end. Those drivers were observed having to back out into the school driveway entrance/exit, in order to turn around to drive out, resulting in potential conflicts between vehicles. Participants expressed the desire to restrict parking in that location.
- Numerous students were observed walking across Marshall Drive at School Street, and sightlines are blocked by cars parked on the west side of Marshall Drive at the approach to the intersection.

- The intersection of Middle Rincon Road. and School Street was recently improved with the installation of a pedestrian activated RRFB (rapid rectangular flashing beacon).
- Participants expressed concerns that Middle Rincon Road lacks bicycle facilities. A significant number of students live west of Middle Rincon Road and could potentially bicycle to school should there be a safer bicycle route along Middle Rincon Road.

Potential Solutions:

Hwy 12

Caltrans, in coordination with City of Santa Rosa

- Replace the flashing yellow beacon at the intersection of Hwy 12 and Jack London Drive with a "Traffic HAWK" signal. A HAWK signal is a type of High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk. It is a pedestrian-activated traffic signal that helps people cross busy streets safely by stopping traffic with a sequence of lights, but remains dark to allow normal traffic flow when no pedestrians are present.
- Close sidewalk gaps on south side of Hwy 12 between Elaine Drive and Indian Creek Drive, and also between Maria Lane, up to S. Boas Drive.

City of Santa Rosa

- Inspect the flashing yellow beacons at Hwy 12 and Jack London Drive to confirm that they are functioning as intended.

School/District

- Trim bushes at entrance to school driveway, and along the sidewalk between the school driveway and Jack London Drive.
- Encourage families to avoid making U-turns at Jack London Drive & Hwy 12, and instead, make a suggestion for families to head east on Middle Rincon Road to enter the school driveway from School Street, or park and walk from School Street or Marshall Drive, or alternatively, make the U-Turn at Boas Drive instead of at Jack London Drive.

Caltrans

- Restrict parking (red curb) for approximately 40 feet of the approach of the Whited School driveway entrance on the north side of Hwy 12.
- Consider adding a speed feedback sign at or near the school zone signage, as another reminder to drivers that they are entering a school zone and should adjust their speeds.
- Consider partnering with CHP to occasionally locate a speed radar trailer along highway 12 approaching the school zone (if one is available and a feasible location is identified).

Jack London Drive between Hwy 12 & Rinwood Drive

City of Santa Rosa

- Consider converting one or both of the speed humps on Jack London Drive to a raised crosswalk. If only one is feasible, the crosswalk located closer to Roma St. is the priority.
- Consider adding a curb extension to southbound Jack London Dr at the approach to HWY12.
- Consider improving the intersection of Jack London Drive & Rinwood Drive to improve pedestrian safety. Potential improvements:
 - Install curb extensions to shorten crossing distance
 - Add curb ramps

School Street and Middle Rincon Road

City of Santa Rosa

- Restrict parking (red curb) the west side of Marshall Drive at the approach to the School St. intersection
- Restrict parking (red curb) on the south side of the end of School Street, next to the backflow device, in front of the school blacktop gate.
- Coordinate with SRPD to visit site after parking is restricted, to target enforcement in the area.
- Install class II bicycle lanes on Middle Rincon Road, in accordance with the City of Santa Rosa Active Transportation Plan.

School/District

- Consider putting out a “no parking” sandwich board or cones daily, to deter parking next to the backflow device, in front of the school blacktop gate.

District/School SRTS Considerations:

- Continue 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, and more. Continue to maintain a “school team” consisting of site admin, staff (teacher and/or classified staff), and even a parent or parent(s) who can assist with implementation and communications.
- Continue to assist the SRTS program in data and information to maintain understanding of travel behavior and barriers to travel at Whited.
 - Conduct student arrival/departure tallies in September/October (not on a Walk/Roll Day) to gather data on the number and percentage of students who walk, bike, scooter/skateboard, carpool, transit, yellow bus and travel in single-family vehicles in both the morning and afternoon on a typical day.
 - Distribute parent surveys, as requested, to collect more comprehensive feedback on the barriers to walking & bicycling as well as preferred routes to school.
- Continue to establish/promote current “Walking School Bus” (WSB) or Bike Train meet up spots, or even alternative “drop-off locations” without a supervised walking/biking group, and supporting school “SRTS Champions” to facilitate promotion and community participation. School administration, teacher(s), or even vetted community partners 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.
 - Tanglewood Park is a current meet-up spot, activated on Walk-Roll Event Days and led by Julya Reynolds.
 - An alternative “drop-off spot” that was mentioned during the audit and could be promoted is the church located at Middle Rincon Road and School Street. There may be other feasible locations in the neighborhood or along Middle Rincon Road.
 - Identify additional leaders to facilitate groups walking or bicycling together.
- Pursue opportunities to provide free bicycle education as well as adult “Smart Cycling” to parents who may not feel comfortable or knowledgeable about bicycling.

- Pursue opportunities to educate parents and neighbors about California's Daylighting law. SRTS has created materials that schools can share re: the daylighting law here: [English Flyer](#) [Spanish Flyer](#) [English Social Media Infographic](#) [Spanish Social Media Infographic](#)
- Share information with students and parents about bus routes as well as 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.

Santa Rosa Police Department or CHP:

- Monitor traffic on Hwy 12 provide enforcement of illegal behaviors.
- Respond to school or city requests for targeted enforcement or speed trailer placement as indicated above
- Partner with SRTS to educate community members about California's new daylighting law.

Transit Information/Options:

- All students at the school can ride CityBus, Sonoma County Transit and SMART free of charge.
- If the school needs assistance planning school trips on transit, please use the tools on our website or contact me directly. If staff at the school need training passes in order to train students on riding the bus, we can make those available to staff at any school in Sonoma County.
- For your walking audit notes I wanted to provide a list of transit infrastructure related to this site.
 - Current for Douglas Whited Elementary School 4995 Sonoma Hwy, Santa Rosa, CA 95409, the SRTS Study Map reveals students geocodes dispersal, showing that a significant number of students/families are served by CityBus.
 - CityBus primary routes serving the school are.
 - Route 4— currently operates westbound on Highway 12 every 60 minutes from Downtown to Montgomery Village to Montgomery Ave and then northbound on Mission to Montecito to Calistoga Rd to westbound on Highway 12. Returning to Montgomery Villega and Downtown.
 - Closest CityBus bus stop serving the campus is directly in front of the school at the intersection with Jake London Dr. bus stop # 80431 or another bus stop is at Middle Rincon Rd, stop # 80432.
 - Route 4B - currently operates eastbound on Highway 12 every 60 minutes from Downtown to Montgomery Village to Montgomery Ave and then eastbound on Highway 12 heads to Calistoga Rd.
 - Closest CityBus bus stop serving the campus is directly across Highway 12 using the crosswalk, just east of the intersection with

Jake London Dr. bus stop # 80450 or another bus stop just west of Middle Rincon Rd, stop # 80449.

- Route 30 – this is operated by Sonoma County Transit. It serves the stops listed above and provides service to Glen Ellen and the town of Sonoma.
- Route 16 – This route primarily serves the Oakmont Community, and it is open to the general public. But it also makes one shopping trip a day into Santa Rosa, which if there was a reason a stop could be added closer to the school.
- Feasible improvement if the school would like to advocate for improved transit.
 - Changes/additions to bus stop any of the bus stops above.
 - Additional shelter or bench seating at the bus stops
 - Moving of the bus stop
 - Any other ideas that the school has
 - More dialoged with CityBus staff regarding any matter of concern that the school may have.
- City short / long term transit planning
 - Long term Route 4 /4B frequency show an increase

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 (including Transit), 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:



Flashing yellow beacon and pedestrian crossing at Hwy 12 and Jack London Drive



Bushes & parked vehicle blocking sightlines at entrance to Whited driveway on Hwy 12



Bushes adjacent to sidewalk on south side of school need trimming



Jack London Drive after drop off (resident vehicles parked along street all day)



Speed hump on Jack London Drive (closer to Roma Street) – convert to raised crosswalk?



2nd speed hump on Jack London Drive, closer to Hwy 12 (convert to raised crosswalk?)



Vehicle in midst of making a U-turn on Roma Street at Jack London Dr.



Intersection of Jack London Drive and Rinwood Drive – needs curb ramps, consider curb extensions



Consider restricting parking where white vehicle is parked on Rinwood Drive



Another view of 3-way intersection on Rinwood Drive



School Street – cars that park on right side of dead end where light green vehicle is parked can be problematic



Consider restricting parking in front of backflow device



Intersection of School St. & Marshall Drive – daylight approach



Intersection of Middle Rincon Road and School Street – recently installed RRFB; bike lanes would be beneficial on Middle Rincon Road

Funding for FY 2025-26 Safe Routes to School Walk Audit/Site Assessments is provided in part by the California Department of Public Health's Kids' Plates Program.