



From the Staff of Student Transportation

Happy New Year from Student Transportation. We hope this issue of our newsletter finds you well.

As we're sure was the case with many families, our Student Transportation family was very busy in December. In the midst of all of the important work our staff does, we happily found time to share in some holiday cheer. Central services departments at the Centre for Education (the District's main administration building) took part in a food sculpture contest to support the Edmonton Food Bank. By using non-perishable food items such as cans of soup, jars of peanut butter, packages of pasta and boxes of cereal, Student Transportation created an incredible sculpture of a school bus. The event raised 1,371 pounds of food for the Edmonton Food Bank.

As a reminder for Grade 6 yellow bus riders who are changing to Edmonton Transit in September 2008, ETS travel training will be available at our annual First Riders Day in August. Invitations will be sent to all current yellow bus riders, but please share this opportunity with other "soon-to-be" transit riders.

Bus Driver Appreciation Day is just around the corner. Although any day is a good day to appreciate the work of our dedicated drivers, this designated day is the one especially noted for these special folks.

Sincerely,

Student Transportation

ETS Trip Planner

ETS has a valuable tool that can quickly and easily assist you with details on when, where and how to use ETS to get you where you're going. Visit www.takeets.com for more information.

2008-09 Pre-printed Application Forms

During the month of April, schools will be receiving pre-printed application forms for current eligible fixed route and special education needs riders for the 2008-09 school year. Schools will distribute these forms to your child(ren) and will advise you when signed forms need to be returned to the school. If there are any changes, please ensure these are made directly on the form.

New bus riders for 2008-09

If your family has a new bus rider for the upcoming school year, please contact your school to fill out the appropriate application form.

You are reminded to check with the school office for your application deadline for guaranteed yellow bus service for the first day of school.

If you have any questions, please contact your school or Student Transportation at 429-8585.

First Riders

In preparation for the 2008-09 school year, we would like to remind parents of our third annual First Riders event on Tuesday, August 26, 2008. This free event is open to first-time bus riders and Grade 6 students transitioning to Edmonton Transit. This educational event is hosted by Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord, Edmonton Transit and our bus carriers. The program provides an opportunity for children and their parents to learn about safe school bus and ETS bus practices and the important role parents play, not only on the bus, but on the trip to and from the bus stop each day. Watch for more details in our next newsletter, in the mail, and on our website.

Walk the Talk About Back to School Safety

What is Walk the Talk? Every year, over 450 child cyclist and pedestrian injuries and deaths occur in Alberta. The fact that most of these are preventable drove the Alberta Traffic Safety Initiative to launch the Walk the Talk About Back to School Safety Program in 1997. Today, it stands as a banner child traffic safety program in the province. The 1998 Walk the Talk program was awarded the Silver Premier's Award of Excellence in June 1999. Alberta's educators were a critical part of the program's extended team.

Walk the Talk is about kids' safety and leading by example. The program focuses on improving education on child traffic safety issues and is profiled during the months of August and September when kids head back to school. Walk the Talk is designed to educate Alberta families on child traffic safety practices. And when school is back in, it is also a reminder to motorists to be on the lookout for children and school buses, and to drive with special care throughout the school year.

The program brings schools, families, and the entire community together on a special day in September. Alberta "Walks the Talk" Day encourages families to walk through their children's route to school, providing them with practical safety tips on how to avoid any dangers they may encounter. It also highlights the importance of safety, year-round.

Why Walk the Talk? In our fast paced world, children are often the tragic victims of our inattention or our rush to get where we're going, making traffic-related collisions the single-leading cause of injury or death for children today.

Walk the Talk provides children with the necessary safety tools and practices to help them grow up healthy and free from harm. The program unifies educators, caregivers, children, parents, guardians, motorists, decision-makers and the media, building a province-wide network of communities dedicated to keeping kids safe.

Whether children live in the city or in the country, getting to and from school safely provides challenges. These include: busy roads, crossing lights, having to get on and off a school bus safely, crossing a busy highway and knowing how to walk safely along the side of a road where there are no sidewalks. Walk the Talk helps kids meet all of these challenges successfully.

For details, call the Alberta Traffic Safety Initiative at (780) 422-8839, or outside of Edmonton call 310-0000 (toll free).

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Safety Tip

- Ensure that your child is properly dressed for the weather conditions.

Our bad weather brochure, which provides many important details about bad weather safety, is available on our website at <http://transportation.epsb.net> under *Publications*.

Need More Information?

Visit the Student Transportation website at <http://transportation.epsb.net> for information about both ETS and yellow bus service within the district. Get comprehensive maps of designated receiving schools, as well as maps of transportation areas for Alternative Program sites. Use the Find a School Tool to find your designated receiving schools.

Student Transportation supports schools in their instructional focus by ensuring that our students are transported in a safe and timely manner and arrive ready to learn.

