

Durham School Services continues its commitment to excellence by providing transportation that is 172 times safer than riding in the family car. Our employees receive the very best training available and they play the most critical role in assuring a safe, uneventful ride to and from school each day.

### Statistical Data

	<u>2003-2004</u>	<u>2004-2005</u>
Regular Routes	39	48
Special Needs Routes	22	23
Mid-day Routes	19	23
Field/Activity Trips	4,101	4381 (projected)
Daily Ridership	3,591	4,395
Miles Driven	824,000	1,057,000 (projected)

The Transportation Department is comprised of three (3) functional areas of equal importance. Safety and Training, Operations, and Bus Maintenance. Each function provides the support necessary to meet the high expectations of our customers.

### Safety and Training

Aside from our on-going driver and monitor training program, we currently have eight employees enrolled in Durham University, a company sponsored training program for those interested in advancing their careers in school bus transportation. Program graduates include the Keller supervisory staff.

**Safety Action Plans:** An ongoing Safety Action Plan is maintained to ensure that we continue to address all of the safety related issues we are faced with on a daily basis.

**Monthly Safety-In-Service Training:** Some of the topics presented this school year included Sexual Harassment, School Bus Security, Loading/Unloading Procedures, Emergency Evacuation, Student/Employee Confidentiality, Accident Analysis and Costs, The "S" Endorsement licensing requirement, etc.

**In School Safety Training Programs:** Safety materials including coloring and activity sheets along with the new "Ride with Pride" safety video were provided to each elementary campus during National School Bus Safety week. Due to a conflict with "Drug Awareness" week, drivers conducted on-board safety briefings. More extensive in-school bus safety programs are available and conducted when requested by the school.

**Recognition Programs:** A Safety Incentive Program was implemented which allows our employees to accumulate points for safe performance, attendance, bus housekeeping, etc., and the points can be exchanged for merchandise. Seventy (70) drivers achieved an accident free year, compared to forty-two (42) the previous school year.

**Safety Goals:** Our goal is zero accidents and/or injuries. Although we have more work to do in this area, we did manage to establish a new accident free record of 51 days. We have had a total of nineteen (19) accidents/incidents involving damage costing \$1 or more. All involved contact with fixed objects such as tree limbs, parked/stopped vehicles, road surfaces, etc. We have had no student injuries due to unsafe bus operation and one recorded injury to a driver when the employee stepped off the bus incorrectly. One driver received a traffic citation for speeding and as a result is no longer employed.

## **Operations**

**Staffing:** We currently have 78 certified bus drivers, 28 monitors, and 125 certified coach/drivers. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of our regular drivers reside outside of the Keller ISD. We have been able to maintain an adequate driver and monitor staff this year, which has allowed us to make improvements in all customer service areas. A seasoned office staff has also had a very positive impact on the overall efficiency of the operation.

**On Time Performance:** We continuously monitor on time performance and make routing adjustments as necessary to ensure that buses arrive on schedule. At present, on time performance is at 99.8%. The primary causes of late buses are traffic conditions, new construction, and weather.

**Student Management:** Student behavior on the bus is extremely challenging to our drivers and although we focus much of our attention on inappropriate behavior, we have made a concerted effort this school year to recognize the good behavior of the majority of students that ride the bus. A significant number of Good Conduct reports were forwarded to the schools to recognize those deserving students.

**Parent Concerns:** The most frequently asked questions early in the school year have to do with bus stop locations and pickup times. As the school year progresses, student conduct issues and disciplinary procedures and/or disciplinary actions involving their child are addressed. Most often, a change in seating assignment resolves most conflicts between students riding the bus. In the more serious cases, meetings including the parents, school administrators, and transportation supervisors, are helpful in resolving problems.

**Customer Surveys:** We annually survey the parents and school administrators, as a means of identifying areas for improvement. The fall parent survey indicated a score of 5.8 on a 7.0 scale. A new method of surveying the school administrators via an email format has been developed and is expected to be emailed out prior to the end of the school year.

## **Maintenance**

**Bus Fleet:** The Keller bus fleet currently consists of ninety-eight buses. Seventy-one buses are used for daily bus routes and the coaches for athletics use eighteen spare buses, during regular route time. The remaining spares provide back up for regularly scheduled maintenance or any breakdown that may occur.

**Bus Replacements:** Ten new buses are ordered and scheduled to arrive this summer.

**Preventative Maintenance:** We have concluded another full annual preventive maintenance cycle and have improved our breakdown per mile ratio to one breakdown per 70,500 miles driven. This is a significant improvement from one every 34,000 miles during the previous school year and is well above our benchmark of one in every 60,000 miles. Improvements in this area are attributed to more emphasis on earlier replacement of items such as hoses, batteries, etc., and the reduction of the average fleet age from seven to six years.

**Bus Inspections:** In November, the Department of Public Safety, in conjunction with the Ft. Worth Police Department, conducted a random DOT inspection of 36 buses in the Keller Fleet and all buses passed with no findings. Considering the thoroughness of the inspections, this helps us ensure that our buses are well maintained and meeting all safety requirements.

**Fuel Costs:** In an effort to lower fuel cost and avoid wasting fuel through useless idling of the buses, idle times have been set to a ten-minute shutdown on all regular ed buses. Since many of the special needs students have accommodation requirements that will not allow the special needs buses to be shut down when idling, we have less stringent requirements on the special needs buses.

## **New Initiatives**

A new driver/monitor mentoring program is being developed by our Training Section, which will improve the transition of our trainees into the regular workforce. We expect to roll this program out beginning the 2005-2006 school year.

Effective September 30, 2005, state and federal law mandates a school bus driver to have an "S" endorsement on their driver's license in order to continue driving a school bus. Aside from the regular drivers, anyone that operates a school bus must have this endorsement, including mechanics, teachers, coaches, etc. If all background requirements are met, DPS will waive the road test; however, a written test and eye test is mandatory. DPS has tested and certified all of our regular drivers for the "S" endorsement and all of the coach/drivers will be tested and certified beginning June 2nd.

### **District Oversight**

We continue to meet weekly with the district, to discuss transportation related issues and to share information regarding maintenance, unusual problems, future requirements, etc. We are also in regular contact with the school administrators and other district staff members regarding issues related to route problems, student discipline, late buses etc. This collaborative process allows us to resolve issues quickly and plan future needs.