

Estacada School District Transportation Program

The drivers and staff of the Estacada School District Transportation Department have been quietly providing safe efficient transportation for students to and from school, and other activities on a daily basis year after year. From the year 2000, our school buses and drivers have traveled over 3 million 500 thousand miles without any student injuries. At the conclusion of this year, Lori Lohr, our most senior driver, will have 28 years driving school bus with the Estacada School District. The next senior driver is her husband, Glen Lohr, who has been with the District for 23 years. Fern Mathews, who started as a driver in 1979, has been a Dispatcher in the Transportation office since 1994. Fern has 29 years with the Estacada School District Transportation Department. Just these 3 people bring 80 years of experience to the Transportation program. Five more drivers bring another 82 years of experience; Sandy Fortner, 18 years, Annette Reisbick and Karen Danielson 17 years, Nina Winter, 16 years, and Shirley McAdoo, 14 years.

At the beginning of this school year Stephanie (Chris) Rausch became a Dispatcher in our office. Chris replaced our former Dispatcher who moved to Eastern Oregon last year. Chris has worked for Estacada School District since 1995. Chris drove one of our Special Needs routes for over 8 years. Before that she worked as a relief and substitute driver. During Spring Break she will attend classes put on by the Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Division to become certified as a Driver Trainer.

In the year 2000, the District bus fleet average age was 8 years. The fleet had 4 buses that were 22 years old. Today the average is closer to 7 years but only one bus is 16 years old. Our fleet has gotten a little newer and much greener. Our last two new diesel buses that were delivered this year impressively meet the latest emission standards. In fact, the exhaust pipe is still pristine looking after 7,500 miles. That means no black soot!

We are currently in the third year of the Junior High Homework Club Transportation program which has been a big success. We have been providing transportation to students of the after school academic programs and other activities such as Robotics, Girls Inc., Publishing Club, Models & Games, and Conflict Management. Our Transportation department helps make this very successful program available to all Junior High students.

Several years ago the Transportation Department took on District mail duties to help economize District operation. Each school now has its own mailbox and mailing address, so the postal service delivers mail to each District site. Selected Route drivers who are already at schools delivering students pick up inter-district and outgoing mail when they drop students off at schools. The mail is then sorted at the Transportation Department and sent back out on the mid-day kindergarten runs to schools. The Dispatchers meter the outgoing mail and it is set out for the mail person who picks up the outgoing mail when they drop off the Transportation Department mail. The Dispatchers have become very efficient at getting bulk mailings metered and out in an efficient manner. In addition to Mail Services, the Transportation Department assists in Warehouse activities,

maintaining achieved records storage and delivering those few items we continue to stock in bulk quantities, such as copy paper. These additional responsibilities save the District the cost of running a Warehouse and Courier Service while not impeding the operations at the building or District level.

Besides providing safe efficient transportation for students to and from school and a myriad of special activities, the Transportation Department has endeavored to become an integral part of the District mission of educating students in our community by getting students to school ready to learn on a daily basis. The bus driver is the first contact person from the District in the morning to greet students and the last contact in the day to drop them off at night. We continually emphasize making this first “school contact” a positive experience for all of our students.