



Commission scolaire Western Québec
Western Québec School Board
15, rue Katimavik, Gatineau (Québec) J9J

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gatineau, January 29th, 2010

Re: **School Bus Transportation Safety Campaign**

The Western Québec School Board is proud to announce the launching of its fifth annual school bus transportation safety campaign, which will run from February 1 to February 12, 2010.

The only English school board serving the Outaouais and Abitibi-Témiscamingue regions, Western Québec transports 6500 students to 25 schools and adult education and vocational training centres daily. Our 135 vehicles travel over 10,700 kilometres daily, for a total of more than 1,958,100 kilometres annually. Western Québec's safety record is outstanding, with no serious accidents or injuries having ever occurred since our Board was created.

Our safety campaign, which takes place across our more than 90,000 square kilometers territory, is made possible with the participation and involvement of our partners: L'ATEQ, MRC des Collines Police Service, Sûreté du Québec, Gatineau Police Service, Carrier Enforcement officers (SAAQ), our transporters, teachers, principals and volunteers.

While fewer and fewer accidents are attributed to school bus transportation, nothing should be taken for granted. The annual safety campaign helps promote the continued safety and security of our students. The ultimate goal of our safety campaign is to educate pre-school and primary level students on the importance of adopting safe behaviors while on or around school buses.

The timing of the February campaign also serves to reinforce good driving habits as well as to remind drivers of the added vigilance required with winter road conditions.

We also hope to raise awareness among parents and motorists of the dangers of not respecting the basic rules of safety within school zones, near schools and when approaching a school bus on our highways and streets.

The activities and highlights of this campaign will be:

- Production and distribution of a flashing/reflector badges to all our elementary students to be attached to their school bag, enabling them to be visible when walking to and from bus stops or school.
- Distribution of over 5 000 car air fresheners with a school bus pictogram. These air fresheners will be distributed to road users and the community in conjunction with selected Tim Horton restaurants in our area. Furthermore, Carrier Enforcement (SAAQ) and Police officers will distribute them to road users during various interventions.
- Distribution to all elementary students of a game called "Chatterbox"" with questions and answers about school bus transportation safety.
- Distribution to road users of a flyer showing school transportation regulations with the theme "Did you see me?"
- Our trainers, with the participation of police and carrier enforcement officers will meet with all elementary students to make a presentation on bus safety measures. Students will also be visited by our "Bubusse" mascot.
- Students will be involve in an educational activity on school transportation and participate in a Board wide drawing contest.
- Production of a 2010-2011 school calendar using the winning drawings this school year.
- Live television interview on local morning show.
- Participation in a radio "hotline" show on Tuesday February 9, 2010.

To conclude the Western Québec School Board wishes to thank all their school bus drivers for their professionalism, patience and dedication in performing daily safe transportation for those who are so precious, our students!

For more information on this campaign or to participate in any way, please contact the Superintendent of Transportation, Manon DuSablou, at 819-684-1313, extension 1135.

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