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Metro's School Pool Program Helps Parents Form Carpools

By DAVE SOTERO

(Aug. 18, 2005) Metro's School Pool Program is offering a free, voluntary and confidential service that helps parents interested in sharing driving responsibilities find carpooling partners at participating elementary, middle and high school campuses throughout Los Angeles County.

The agency maintains a comprehensive student carpool database and mapping system similar to its online commuter carpool matching system and provides lists directly to school administrators to share with participating parents.

The program is becoming increasingly attractive in light of record gasoline prices that are driving up commuting costs for families.

"Sharing the ride to school can be a significant benefit for parents, who are now able to more flexibly manage their morning and afternoon schedules," says David Sutton, director of Metro Commute Services, "freeing up time to take days off, meet other family obligations or run important errands."

The program is open to students in all participating public, private and charter elementary, middle and high schools. Parents are encouraged to ask their school administrators if the school can participate in the program.

Parents can also work through their Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) to request that the school become part of Metro School Pool.

Complete a survey

Participation is voluntary and parents share the task of driving students to and from school. Parents first complete a survey for each child wishing to participate, indicating individual carpool preferences.

They return the survey to their school administrators, who will provide a confidential matchlist for potential carpool candidates closest to their home.

Parents can then contact families on the list to meet and establish carpooling arrangements, including pick-up and drop-off points, carpool cost-sharing and driving responsibilities. Metro School Pool does not transport children to school.

Families who already carpool can enroll in the program to become eligible to participate in upcoming special events and promotions rewarding ridesharing families.

For information on the program or to sign up, parents should contact their local schools and complete a Metro School Pool survey.

