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Horace Mann Middle Schooler Zyda Culpepper-Baldwin with her safety poster, along with LA City Councilman Bernard Parks, school staff member Debra Gayle and Horace Mann student Rayvione Mouton.



Photos by Rich Morallo

Middle Schoolers Look Forward to Riding New Line 757

- 13-mile line connects Metro Red and Green Lines

By RICH MORALLO

(Dec. 28, 2005) Sixth grader Zyda Culpepper-Baldwin looked with expectation at the new red, 60-foot articulated bus parked along Western Avenue.

As people started arriving for the Metro Rapid Line 757 kickoff program, Dec. 16, Zyda whispered, "This is a cleaner, fresher bus and it has more space so people don't have to stand."

A student at Horace Mann Middle School, Zyda plans to use the new service along the Western Avenue corridor that already receives more than 38,000 daily boardings on the local Metro Bus system.

She and fellow student Rayvione Mouton gave a safety contact suggestion to start the bus debut program held at the southwest corner of Western and Slauson Avenues.

"I catch the Metro bus at Martin Luther King to travel south on Western," Rayvione said. "It's a 15-minute bus ride and Metro gets me to school on time."

As Zyda held up a poster showing students waiting for a bus at a street corner, Rayvione said, "Safety begins with you. Make good choices."



From left, Sheriff's Capt. Jacques La Berge, Horace Mann student Rayvione Mouton, LA City Councilman Bernard Parks, Horace Mann student Zyda Culpepper-Baldwin, LADOT's James Okazaki and South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.

'Cut travel time'

"This new service will cut down on travel time," said LA City Councilman Bernard Parks, who spoke at the morning ceremony with South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey and LADOT Assistant General Manager James Okazaki.

"With connections to other bus lines, local service and rail lines in the area, Metro Rapid ties into our enormous transit system," Parks said.

Coffey compared the transit rider volume along Western Avenue to the demand generated by a light rail line. "It is one of the densest corridors in Los Angeles County, and a perfect candidate for new Metro Rapid service."

She also described the 13-mile Line 757 route which will connect directly to the Metro Red Line at Hollywood and Western and travel south to connect with the Crenshaw Metro Green Line station.

The kickoff program speeches over, attendees, residents and media representatives walked toward the new high-capacity, high-tech bus for a ride.

"I'm driving," smiled Parks as he stepped into the bus.



Metro Bus rider Jose Melendez illustrates the route of Metro Rapid Line 757, linking the Metro Red and Green Lines.

