



HPSD introduces new ‘bus status’ transportation link on its website

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HIGH PRAIRIE, AB – Checking the status of bus routes within High Prairie School Division is now much easier.

And it’s all thanks to the timely addition of an effective online communications resource on HPSD’s website which will keep parents well-informed about the status of all 53 active student transportation bus routes within the division.

“Essentially what we’ve done is added a useful link to the top left corner of our existing Internet home page (www.hpsd48.ab.ca) where stakeholders can go to access up-to-date information in relation to all of our daily student bus transportation routes,” says HPSD Communications Officer Kevin Laliberte.

The new link provides a detailed breakdown of each bus route throughout the day within the school division, including the name of the bus driver, the bus number and location, as well as the status of each bus during morning and afternoon runs.

Laliberte says the internal initiative was specifically designed and developed by HPSD to be extremely user-friendly, adding that the basic intent is to provide parents and/or guardians with an accurate overview of the operating status of each bus route within the division.

“We’ve incorporated the standard colours of a typical traffic light (yellow, red and green) into the link to give everyone a real time assessment of what’s happening with all of our bus routes during the morning and afternoon run each day,” Laliberte explains.

“A highlighted green bar on any given route means the bus is running and on time, while a yellow bar indicates an unexpected delay with the regularly scheduled arrival or departure time of a school bus. A bus route highlighted in red, on the other hand, refers to the cancellation of a specific route.”

Each active route outlined within the link consists of a status bar for the morning (a.m.) and afternoon (p.m.) runs in addition to a “comment” area on the right side to explain the rationale behind all delays and cancellations.

All bus routes are updated each weekday during normal school operating hours by Gordon Jessome, HPSD’s Director of Transportation. He says the new website link will significantly improve the regular flow of information regarding the status of buses to both broadcast media and parents/guardians.

“This enhanced service will provide regional broadcast media and parents/guardians with instant access to valuable information about the status of our buses by simply clicking a (computer) mouse,” Jessome explains.

The new link is a marked improvement from the previous protocol, which saw Jessome maintain the responsibility of informing parents about delayed or cancelled bus routes through an effective communications relationship with local radio stations.

“Bus drivers experiencing difficulties or delays would contact me directly, and in turn I would relay the information to radio stations for broadcast. With this new link, we are able to update the busing status data each day directly to our website, resulting in much quicker access to information by radio stations (for broadcasting purposes) and parents,” he says, adding that communication efforts with area radio stations will be used in the event of power outages or when Internet services are down.

The Director of Transportation acknowledges that, while rare, there are occasions throughout the course of the school year when the regularly scheduled transportation of children to and from school is interrupted by circumstances beyond the control of HPSD’s dedicated group of bus drivers. Primary examples of this include adverse weather conditions (ie. a snowstorm or severe cold conditions) and mechanical breakdowns on buses.

Busing status updates on the HPSD website are updated throughout the day as required.

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For further information please contact HPSD Director of Transportation Gordon Jessome at 780-523-3654 or HPSD No. 48 Communications Officer Kevin Laliberte at 780-837-6638.