



Municipal Transportation Agency



Gavin Newsom | Mayor
Rev. Dr. James McCray Jr. | Chairman
Michael Kasolas | Vice Chairman
Shirley Breyer Black | Director
Wil Din | Director
Peter Mezey | Director
Tom Nolan | Director
Leah Shahum | Director
Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr. | Executive Director/CEO

October 2, 2006

Media Contact: Maggie Lynch
415/701-4647
866/239-4326, pager

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Announces Celebration of International Walk To School Day

On Wednesday, October 4, 2006, students from over 20 San Francisco schools will join the SFMTA and Mayor Newsom in the Walk to School Day celebration: a collective walk to school with a purpose – to promote health, safety, physical activity and concern for the environment.

Mayor Gavin Newsom and SFMTA Executive Director/CEO Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr. will walk with the students, faculty, staff, and parents of Longfellow Elementary School, starting at 8:15am from Alice Chalmers Playground at 670 Brunswick @ Lowell Roemer Way.

Walk to School Day is an annual global event held in early October that gives children, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members an opportunity to work together to make their communities safer and more pleasant for walking.

Schools are encouraged to join the Walk to School effort sponsored by the MTA School Area Safety Program, in partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. Walk to School Day activities will be held throughout the month of October. The focus of these activities will be to reduce the confusion at school drop off/pick up zones, increase awareness of pedestrian safety, and create more physically active and alert students.

Events are planned at nearly two-dozen sites. The largest events will take place at the following schools:

- Buena Vista Alternative Elementary School
- Dr. George Washington Carver Elementary School
- Jefferson Elementary School
- Lafayette Elementary School
- Longfellow Elementary School
- Miraloma Elementary School

“The SFMTA is committed to working with the schools to reach beyond the classroom to demonstrate habits for safer walking, better health, and improving our communities” said Nathaniel Ford.

more – more – more

The SFMTA School Safety Program

The School Safety Program works to make streets near schools and throughout the city safer for walking by providing adult crossing guards near schools, coordinating school area traffic enforcement, maintaining school ladder crosswalks and installing high visibility school pedestrian crossing signs. In addition, the SFMTA's Pedestrian Program also works to improve pedestrian safety through enhancements to streets and sidewalks including pedestrian countdown signals and curb bulb-outs.

The SFMTA improves pedestrian and cycling safety with the following initiatives.

- The Pedestrian Program has installed pedestrian countdown signals at over 800 intersections citywide. Pedestrian safety training has been provided in schools citywide, in coordination with the PedSafe Project and Walk to School Day promotions.
- Approximately 400 mast arms signals have been installed city wide (and more to come). These are effective in reducing red light running.
- In a further effort to reduce red light running, 23 intersections have been equipped with red light cameras.
- Crossing Guards currently support 108 schools.
- Muni provides 30 buses daily for school pickups.
- Upgraded crosswalks and crossing signs near schools citywide (ongoing program).
- Nearly 10,000 reflective safety bands have been distributed to students and seniors citywide.
- The Bicycle Program provides adult bike education classes, on the road skills training and outreach events. Bike safety training for middle schools is scheduled to begin spring of 2007.
- The Bicycle Program has installed 40 miles of bike lanes, 23 miles of bicycle paths, signed 82 miles of bicycle routes, and signed 56 miles of wide curb lanes.

The current SF Walk to School Day promotion is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and includes installation of radar speed display signs at five locations.

To learn more about Walk to School Day, please go to www.sfwalktoschool.com or contact MTA Project Manager Eileen Ross, (415) 701-4483, eileen.ross@sfmta.com.

###