



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*\* MEDIA ADVISORY \*\*\* MEDIA ADVISORY \*\*\***

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### **Benicia Schools Celebrate International Walk to School Day**

**SUISUN CITY, CA** –Schools in Benicia will welcome fall by participating in International Walk to School Day on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012. Students, families and teachers from Mary Farmer, Joe Henderson, Matthew Turner and Robert Semple Elementary Schools will be joining with community leader Benicia Mayor Elizabeth Patterson to celebrate walking and rolling to school.

Held on the first Wednesday of every October, Walk to School Day is an internationally recognized day to celebrate the benefits of active transportation by encouraging school children to walk and bicycle to school. Cities and local health departments join in the celebration by urging schools across the world to take part in Walk or Roll to School Day. "International Walk to School Day is a great opportunity for our students to learn how to remain safe walking to and from school. Not only will they be healthier, the planet will too," said Mayor Patterson.

Walk to School activities provide opportunities for communities to address safety concerns around schools. Reducing the risk of injury includes teaching children age-appropriate walking and bicycling skills, reminding drivers to be extra vigilant in watching for young walkers and bicyclists, and identifying and eliminating hazardous conditions along routes to school that need to be fixed. Walk to School activities can also help children reach the minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week as recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General.

"Getting students back on foot is a major step towards improving their health in several ways. They become more physically fit along with family members who choose to walk with them as Walking School Bus leaders. With fewer cars, there is less traffic congestion which also improves air quality and decreases asthma triggers," said Robin Cox, Solano County Public Health, Community Wellness Bureau Manager.

Mayor Patterson along with Robert Semple Elementary School students will start walking or bicycling at 8:00 a.m., from Francesca Terrace Park (Armory Park) with walking school buses and bicycle trains arriving at school by 8:15 a.m.

Solano Safe Routes to School (SR2S) is a program of the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) in partnership with Solano County Public Health Department, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District, Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to encourage children to walk or bike to school for the benefit of health, safety and the environment. For more information about the SR2S program contact Danelle Carey, STA's SR2S Assistant Program Manager at [dcarey@sta-snci.com](mailto:dcarey@sta-snci.com) or 707-399-3219, or go to the website: [www.SolanoSR2S.ca.gov](http://www.SolanoSR2S.ca.gov). For more information about Walk to School Day, contact Tracy Nachand at [tnachand@solanocounty.com](mailto:tnachand@solanocounty.com) or 707-553-5543.

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