



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Your Ride to a Better Environment



Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission

Your Ride to a Better Environment

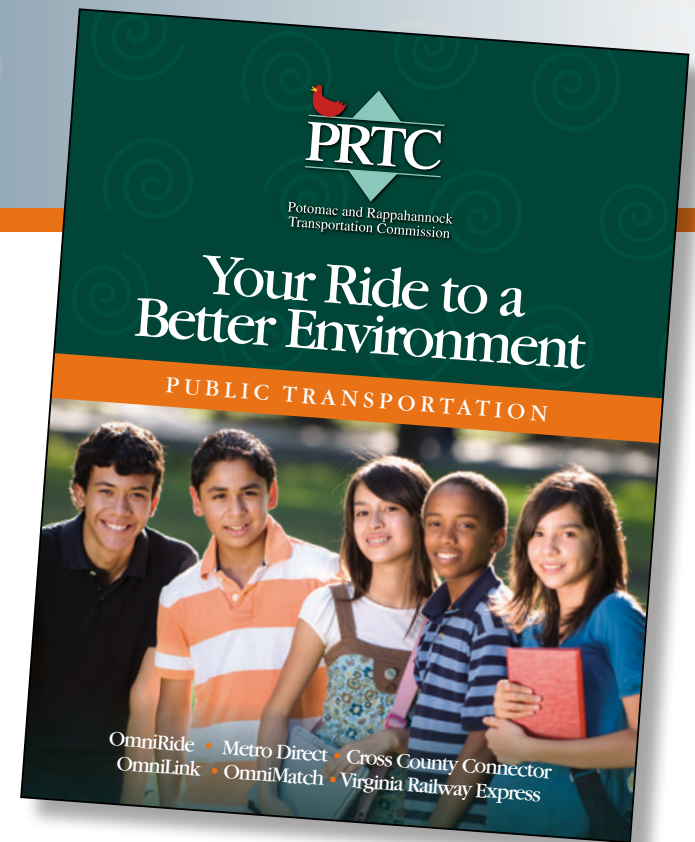
A transit education program for Middle Schools

Program Introduction

In February 2012, PRTC launched a new Youth Outreach effort aimed at middle school students. The Your Ride to a Better Environment program was designed to complement PRTC's existing programs for elementary-age children and teen-agers.

With an engaging PowerPoint program and fun hand-outs, PRTC started educating tweens (those between childhood and the teen-age years) about public transportation and the role that it plays in a healthy environment.

PRTC's goal was to expose suburban children to the benefits of public transportation at a young age so they will consider using transit in the future. A secondary goal was to have them share the information with their parents.



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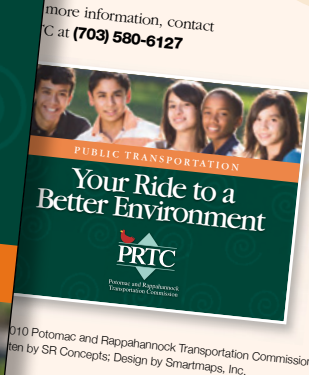
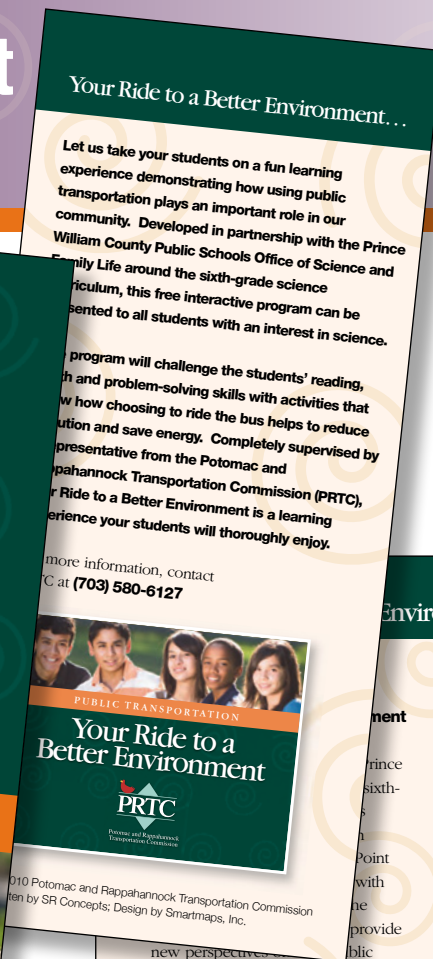
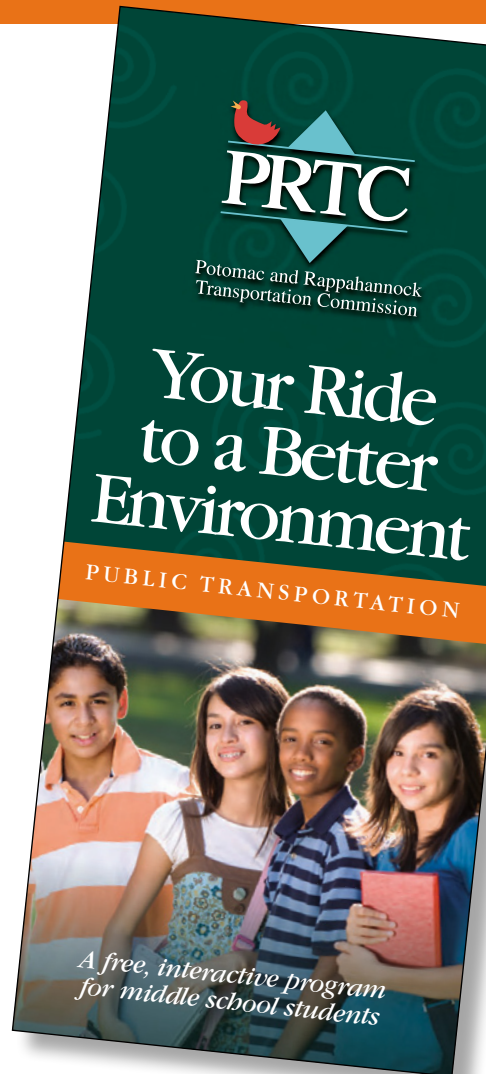
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Program Brochure

To publicize the availability of the *Your Ride to a Better Environment* program, PRTC created a brochure for school administrators and teachers. The brochure was distributed at school-related events, and the area's largest school district emailed an electronic version of the brochure to science teachers resulting in multiple invitations to present the program materials.



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Written by SR Concepts; Design by Smartmaps, Inc.


new perspectives...
transportation plays an important role in helping to save energy and protect our air quality.



Environment...



- In addition to learning about the contributions public transportation makes in the areas of energy conservation and reducing carbon emissions, students will be challenged to learn to read the PRTC system map, plan a bus trip and use their math skills to calculate the best bus fare. The students will also be tasked with using the PRTC website to complete a "Take Home Challenge" for an in-class discussion at a time convenient to the class schedule.
- **Your Ride to a Better Environment** will be a great learning experience for your students, but it's also designed to be fun. Students will receive an instructive handout containing messages from the presentation to reinforce the classroom activities, a few goodies to take home and an engaging four-page workbook with activities designed to make learning about public transportation's role in improving the environment a fun and interesting experience.



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In-class Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation utilizing colorful graphics and little text helps to keep the content fun and interesting. Keeping text to a minimum also enables the presenter to tailor the presentation for each class as needed.



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Your Ride to a Better Environment



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What is Public Transportation?



Who are we?



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OmniRide • Metro Direct • Cross County Connector
OmniLink • OmniMatch • Virginia Railway Express



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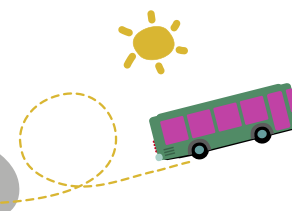
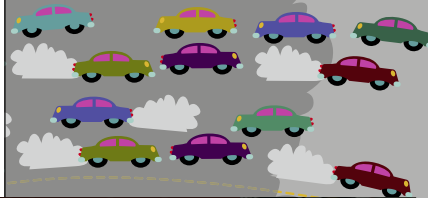
Transit is Green

The program incorporates information about how public transportation helps to improve air quality and energy conservation, which parallels lessons that are already part of the students' curriculum.

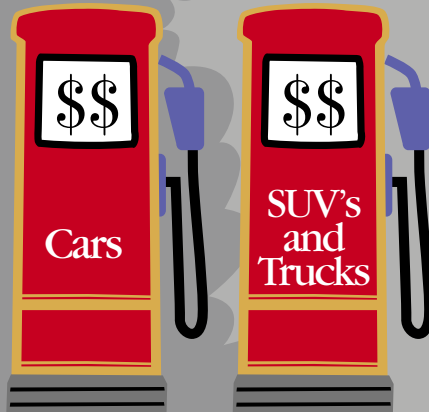
PRTC Helps Clean the Air!



All of the people in these cars... can easily fit in one bus!



PRTC Helps Save Energy!



Public Transportation



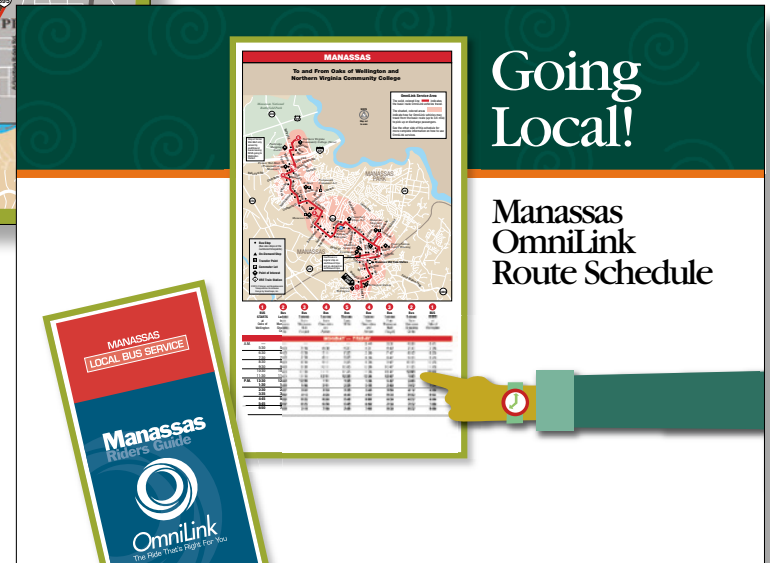
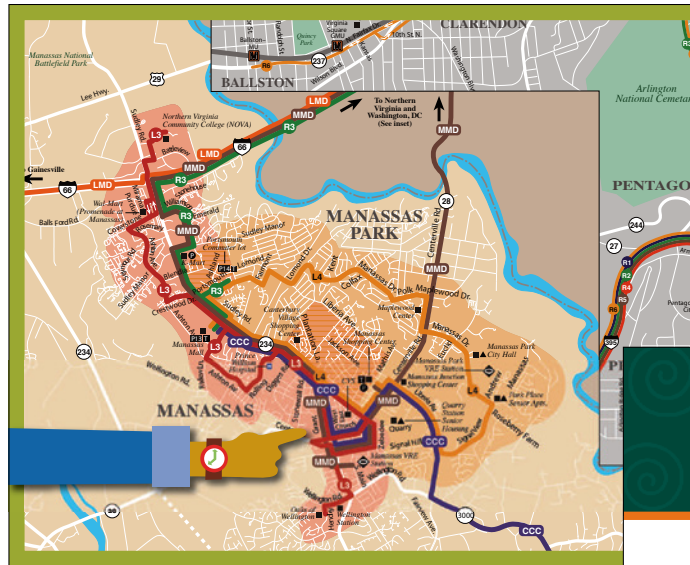
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Let's Plan a Trip

After learning about the many places served by PRTC, students read maps and timetables while planning a trip.



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All's Fare

Students learn about the many ways they can pay for their fare and then calculate the cost of their trips.

All's Fare!

- Teen Summer Pass
- Teen Pass
- Rechargeable SmartTrip Card - Can be loaded with Day Pass or Weekly Pass
- Exact Fare

All's Fare!

	CASH	SMARTTRIP CARD	DAY PASS
• OMNILINK	\$1.20	\$1.20	\$2.50
• METRO DIRECT	\$3.30	\$2.65	N/A
• OMNIRIDE	\$7.00	\$5.25	N/A
• CROSS COUNTY CONNECTOR	\$1.20	\$1.20	\$2.50



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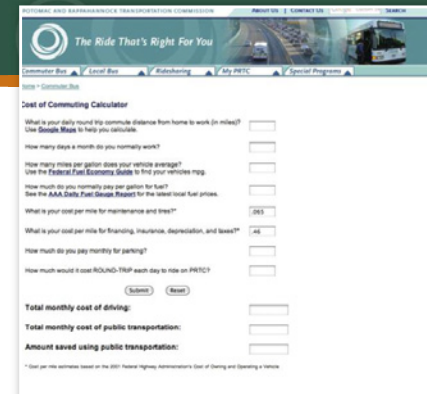
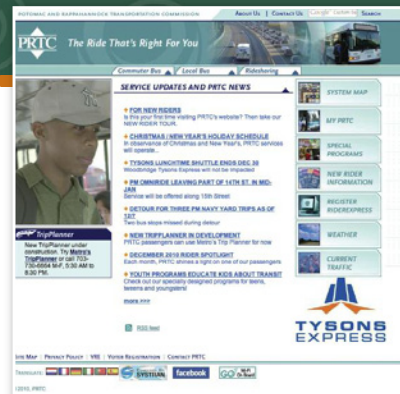
Wrap it Up

The presentation ends with a summary and a challenge to visit PRTC's website and work with their parents to determine their individual costs of commuting. The results of this exercise may prompt some to consider riding with PRTC. It also provides an opportunity for parents to familiarize themselves with PRTC's family of services.

What Have We Learned...

- ✓ 1. Public transportation is comprised of different types of vehicles that take people to work, to doctors' appointments, shopping, to the movies and lots of other places.
- ✓ 2. OmniLink is your local bus with service in eastern Prince William County and the Manassas area.
- ✓ 3. By choosing to use public transportation and not driving their individual cars, people can help reduce pollution and save energy.
- ✓ 4. How to read a bus schedule and plan a trip.
- ✓ 5. How to shop for the best fare that saves you money when you ride the bus.

Take Home Challenge



Our Website & Website Calculator

Visit **PRTCtransit.org** and click on the **Commuter Bus Tab** to find the **Cost of Commuting Calculator**



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Student Activity Workbook

This activity book was developed for students to put the lessons they learned to immediate use in the classroom following the presentation. It features an easy word search and a challenging crossword puzzle that can be solved only by studying the accompanying System Map.

Where Can You Go on PRTC?

PRTC provides OmniRide commuter and OmniLink local transportation services in Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park. Routes run in Dale City, Dumfries, Lake Ridge, Manassas, Manassas Park, Montclair, Quantico, the Route 1 Corridor and Woodbridge. OmniLink and Cross County Connector buses travel locally, while OmniRide and Metro Direct buses take people farther away – to popular destinations in Northern Virginia and Washington, DC.

Have you ever used public transportation? If you have, you know that one thing you have to do is plan your trip. The first step in planning your trip is to see where the buses will take you. A great way to find out where the buses go is to use the system map. This is part of the PRTC System Map showing eastern Prince William County. The map has a "Legend" and "Route Listing" which show you the names and numbers of the color-coded bus routes on the map and other information that will help you plan your trip.

Across

1. To get to the _____ at Optics Crossing you can ride the OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5).
2. People can help the environment by parking their cars at the _____ Ridge Commuter Lot and riding the bus to work.
3. Take a shopping trip to the _____ Mini Mall on the OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5) bus.
7. There is a transfer point at the _____ Recreation Center where you can transfer from the OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5) bus to the OmniLink Dale City (L1) bus.
9. Ride the OmniLink Dale City (L1) bus to a fur at the _____ M. Swine School.
10. Go to a parade at the _____ Marine Base by riding the OmniLink Route 1 (R1) bus.
13. When you see a _____ symbol on the map, it means there is a _____ point at that location and you can change to a different bus.
14. Going to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC is easy when you hop on the _____ commuter bus.
17. You can take the OmniLink Dale City (L1) bus to a picnic at _____ Leitch Park.

Down

1. In the Route Listing, the letters LMD stand for Linton Hall. _____ Direct.
4. Go to lots of places on _____ buses. They can be scheduled to serve locations up to 3/4 mile from the standard route.
5. Hop on the OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5) bus to go with your friend to her sister's play at the _____ Seminary School.
6. The Route Listing shows you can travel between the Eastern Prince William and Manassas areas on the _____ bus.
8. If your parents work in Northern Virginia or Washington, DC, they can get to work by riding a _____ bus.
11. Two buses can take you to the Old _____ Festival Shopping Center: OmniRide Lake Ridge (R2) and OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5).
12. Your friend's older sister or brother can ride the OmniLink Quantico (L2) bus to take a class at Northern _____ Community College.
15. Enjoy the scenery on the OmniRide Montclair (R4) bus as you travel near Lake _____.
16. There are three buses you can take to get to the Oakwood _____: OmniRide Lake Ridge (R2), OmniLink Woodbridge/Lake Ridge (L5) or OmniRide Dale City (R1).

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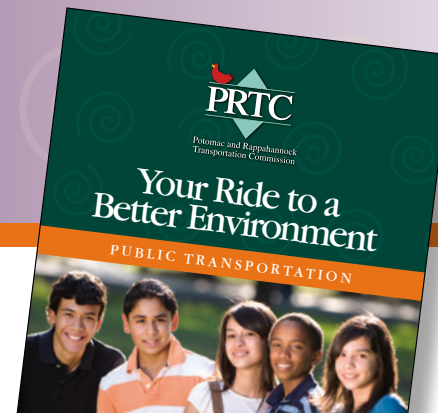


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Student Handout

This student handout was developed to present basic information about riding a bus and the places of interest accessible via PRTC and other area transit providers. The Take Home Challenge from the PowerPoint's final slide is included on the back cover.



Your Ride to a Better Environment . . .

We are very lucky to have many different ways to travel!

- **OmniRide** is PRTC's convenient commuter bus service. OmniRide operates Monday through Friday (except some holidays) from locations throughout Prince William County along the I-66 corridor and Manassas and Gainesville areas along the I-66 corridor and destinations including the Pentagon, Crystal City, Rosslyn/Ballston, downtown Washington, D.C., Capitol Hill, Tysons Corner and the Washington Navy Yard.
- **Metro Direct** buses provide weekday connections to nearby Franconia-Springfield and West Falls Church Metrorail Stations, with limited morning service to the Vienna Metrorail Station. The service is a great fit for commuters with non-traditional work schedules and those who need midday commuting options and is perfect for day trips into Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. There are three Metro Direct routes: Prince William Metro Direct, Manassas Metro Direct and Linton Hall Metro Direct.
- **OmniLink** is a local weekday bus service with routes serving Dale City, Dumfries, Manassas, Manassas Park, Quantico, the Route 1 corridor and Woodbridge/Lake Ridge. OmniLink service is available Monday through Friday and buses also run in eastern Prince William County on Saturdays.

- **Cross County Connector** buses connect eastern Prince William and the Manassas area, via the Prince William Parkway. Passengers may transfer to or from OmniRide commuter buses and local OmniLink buses at designated bus stops along the route. Perfect for fun or business.
- **OmniMatch** is a FREE, personalized ridesharing service for people who carpool and vanpool. OmniMatch links commuters who have similar work hours and origination and destination points. In just one brief phone call or by completing the MatchRequest form on PRTC's website, a Customer Service Agent can obtain all the data necessary to create a ridesharing matchlist for your parents.
- **Virginia Railway Express** commuter trains operate Monday through Friday, offering service to and from Washington, D.C. along two different lines: Manassas and Fredericksburg. Trains primarily travel northbound in the morning, towards Washington, and southbound during the evening. This service is co-sponsored by PRTC and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.



With PRTC you can also connect to all these other public transportation providers and more!

Alexandria DASH | Fairfax Connector | VRE | Washington Metro

PRTC also provides other beneficial programs that make it easy to travel. **SmarTrip** is a rechargeable farecard that you can use on PRTC and many other public transportation systems throughout

Northern Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, including Metrorail and Metrobus. Having one farecard makes bus and train transfers easy, and with SmarTrip there's no need to carry bus tokens or worry about having exact change for your fare.

OmniLink Teen Summer Pass. If you have older brothers or sisters, you may want to tell your parents about PRTC's great summer pass program for teens, and you may want to think about buying a pass when you are eligible. It's a great deal - you get 3 months of unlimited local rides for one price!



Rules of the Road..

Riding the bus can be fun but we all have to remember to be respectful of other passengers. Here are a few tips that will make everyone's bus ride a good experience.

- **This is a decal you will see on all PRTC buses...**
"No smoking/eating/drinking/loud music/cell phones"



- **Keep it to Yourself**
If you are listening to music or playing games, be sure to wear your earphones. You may love your music but others might not, so remember to keep the volume low enough so other passengers will not be able to hear. Try not to use your cell phone if possible, but if you do, please try to make your conversation short and keep your voice as low as possible when you are talking. Also, please remember to put your phone on vibrate while you are on the bus.

- **A Neat Seat**
Remember, seats are for passengers. It's very important to keep your personal belongings off the seat beside you, especially when the bus is crowded. That way others can sit rather than stand. Don't forget to take your trash with you when you leave the bus and please help us take care of our vehicles so they will be nice for you and others to ride.

- **We want to make sure that using our service is easy and safe for everyone.**
All PRTC buses are designed to make them very accessible. Some buses have ramps and others have wheelchair lifts. All buses have special seating areas for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

- **Walking or riding your bike to the bus stop can be great ways to get exercise.**
Did you know your bike can ride the bus? All OmniLink, and many of our other buses have bike racks on the front so your bike rides for free! You can load your bike on the front of the bus, ride to the park and have a fun and safe day riding somewhere different than in your own neighborhood.



Safety First!

At PRTC we are always concerned about your safety. Our drivers are not only friendly and helpful — they go through excellent safety training. Your safety is their first concern, and we even have video cameras on our buses to help them make sure your ride is safe. Here are a few things you should know before you hop on a bus:

- **Try to arrive at your bus stop at least 5 minutes early.**
- **Never run alongside the bus.**
- **Stay on the sidewalk and stand next to the bus stop sign to make sure that the driver knows you would like to board the bus.**
- **Grab the handrail when you get on the bus and take a seat quickly.**
- **Never put your hands out the window.**
- **Stay seated during your trip.**
- **Do not distract the driver. Your safety is their first priority and they must concentrate on driving.**
- **When you get off the bus, never cross the street in front of the bus, and be sure to look both ways before you cross.**



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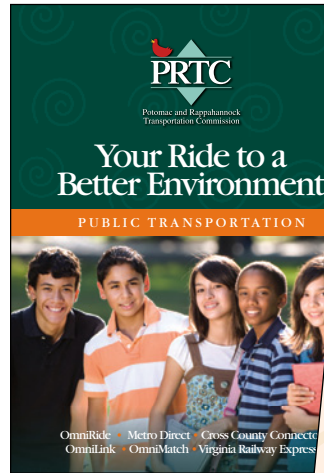
Quotes from Teachers and Students

“Having the students plan out and calculate the cost of trips, giving them experience reading the maps and tables, is a helpful skill.”

— Ms. Anthony,
Marsteller Middle School

“I enjoyed learning how to take the bus from my neighborhood and go anywhere in Prince William County.”


— Malachi Smithen,
Rippon Middle School student



Your Ride to a Better Environment...


Take Home Challenge:

On our website PRTCtransit.org there is a Cost of Commuting Calculator that lets you determine the difference in costs between driving and riding the bus. Ask your parents these questions about their commutes.



Calculator webpage:

1. What is your daily round trip commute distance from home to work in miles? (There is a link on the webpage for Google Maps to help you find the answer.)
2. How many days a month do you normally work? (There is a link on the webpage for the Federal Fuel Economy Guide to find the vehicle mpg.)
3. How many miles per gallon does your vehicle average? (There is a link on the webpage to the AAA Daily Fuel Gauge Report for the latest local fuel prices.)
4. How much do you normally pay per gallon for fuel? (There is a link on the webpage to the AAA Daily Fuel Gauge Report for the latest local fuel prices.)
5. What is your cost per mile for maintenance and tires? (See estimate on webpage.)
6. What is your cost per mile for financing, insurance, depreciation and taxes? (See estimate on webpage.)
7. How much do you pay monthly for parking?
8. How much would it cost round trip each day to ride on PRTC?



When you have all the information, go to PRTCtransit.org and click on the “Commuter Bus” tab to find the Cost of Commuting Calculator, or just type www.prtc.org/commuter-bus/cost-of-commuting.php. There, you can determine:

- The total monthly cost of driving**
- The total monthly cost of public transportation**
- The amount saved using public transportation**

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Program Summary and Results

Since the February 2012 launch of this program, 1,100 students have participated. After an initial round of presentations to more than 700 students at three middle schools, teachers recommended the program to colleagues and presentations were subsequently booked for all sixth graders at a fourth middle school.

Some teens have expressed an interest in purchasing a PRTC Teen Summer Pass, a product that is mentioned during the presentation. In addition, program evaluation forms submitted by teachers have reflected positive attitudes about the program along with suggestions for improvement, which have been incorporated where possible.

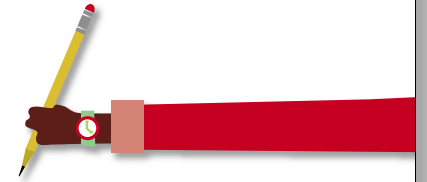


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What Have We Learned...



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2. OmniLink is your local bus with service in eastern Prince William County and the Manassas area.



3. By choosing to use public transportation and not driving their individual cars, people can help reduce pollution and save energy.



4. How to read a bus schedule and plan a trip.



5. How to shop for the best fare that saves you money when you ride the bus.