



# Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

*To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...*

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 28, 2023    **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia    **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

## **Whittier Union Renews GoPass Program to Bring Free Public Transportation to Students**

**WHITTIER** – Whittier Union High School District is kicking off the 2023-24 school year with the renewal of the GoPass program, offering students consistent and reliable transportation to school by providing unlimited rides at no cost on the Metro bus and rail.

The program began its pilot year in Whittier Union in October 2021 after the District was approached by City of Whittier Mayor Pro Tem and Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board member Fernando Dutra. The Fareless System Initiative aims to increase student ridership, student success, and improve student health.

According to Metro, students with access to public transportation have a higher rate of graduation and are also shown to be healthier due to a more active lifestyle.

“This program not only helps students get to school but provides them access to after school activities such as extracurriculars, sports, jobs and more,” Director of Student Support Services Amy Larson said.

After receiving a subsidy from the state, Whittier Union pays less than \$3 for each student enrolled and receives free annual electronic passes for each student. While not every student has a need for the program, Larson said there are many students that heavily rely on their free Metro passes.

The pass allows each student unlimited rides on Metro bus and rail, as well as bus lines including Norwalk Transit, Montebello Bus, City of Commerce, LADOT Dash, Culver City Bus and the Santa Monica Big Blue Bus.

“It’s really a privilege that Whittier Union gives us access to this program,” California High School junior Nadia Medina said. “I don’t have a car, so it’s really nice to have a way to get to the places I need to go and to be able to get to school on time.”

Students continue to rely on the GoPass service during the summer vacation months to get around the city. Those interested can contact the Whittier Union Student Support Services office at (562) 698-8121 ext. 1180 for more information on how to receive a Metro pass.

“The GoPass program truly benefits our students and ensures that transportation is not a barrier to their school attendance,” Superintendent Dr. Monica Oviedo said. “At Whittier Union High School District, we pride ourselves on providing the necessary resources to help our students succeed every day.”

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