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EIU To Take Over Its Own Shuttle Bus Operation

Jui-14-2008

Eastern Illinois University will no longer be relying on an outside company for shuttle bus service for its students.

Instead, the institution will operate its own service with leased buses and university personnel as drivers.

"This decision is in no way a reflection on past bus service," said Dan Nadler, vice president for student affairs. "It's just that we've talked about doing this for years. And with our contract with H & H expiring, we thought this would be the perfect opportunity for us to pursue the project."

Schedules and routes will remain essentially unchanged, Nadler said. Two 2007 Ford Aircraft-Allstar shuttle buses are due for delivery on campus by Aug. 10. Each bus will hold up to 20 passengers, and each is handicapped accessible.

Midwest Transit Equipment Inc., based in Kankakee, will supply the vehicles, which will be easily recognized by the EIU markings on their exteriors.

"We're excited about this new endeavor, and anticipate providing our students with a high quality service," Nadler continued. "And by providing our own shuttles, we also hope to keep a handle on operating costs. Our goal is excellent stewardship of student fees and cost avoidance in the future."

According to Monty Bennett, director of Eastern's Department of Procurement, Disbursements and Contract Services, the university will be responsible for general upkeep (i.e., oil changes, windshield wiper replacement, etc.) of the buses. But if more major problems occur, there are local businesses equipped to handle the repairs as per the agreement with Midwest Transit.

Eastern began offering shuttle bus service to its students in 2002, contracting with H & H Shuttle Services/Taxi Inc. of Charleston.