



MAY 2019 STORIES TO SHARE – School Bus Driver Verna Anderson, Hinton

Verna Anderson, a bus driver with Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD), was recently awarded the Student Transportation Association of Alberta's 2019 Bus Driver of the Year, winning well-deserved provincial recognition for her outstanding dedication in safely transporting students to and from school for almost 40 years. Her win came as no surprise to Corey Halabi, Director of Transportation Services, who proudly nominated Ms. Anderson for her willingness to share her wisdom with others, and her excellence in driving experience. Halabi noted, "School bus drivers are professionally trained individuals who capably transport our children to and from school, and care for the physical and mental well-being of each young person, playing a vital role in our education system. I was very proud to nominate Verna for her outstanding service and dedication to the safety of GYPSD children."

In 1980, Ms. Anderson began driving bus in Hinton as a part-time endeavour when her children were small, and has not looked back since. Quickly becoming indispensable, she was the 'go-to' person for the Hinton area; from coordinating bus routes and performing minor mechanical repairs on the Hinton fleet, to becoming a certified 'S' endorsement instructor for new GYPSD drivers. She has also won three championships in the annual School Bus Roadeo competitions.

Ms. Anderson is a familiar face behind the wheel for extra-curricular and school field trips as well as driving her regular route in town. Her warm smile and generous nature make her a favorite with her students as well as in the community. She believes it important to get to know each of the students on her route, and has a genuine interest in seeking ways to make each trip an enjoyable one. Ms. Anderson is now proudly driving a third new generation of children, many of whom are the offspring of past students.

Not taking the health and safety of students under her care lightly, her driving skills and high standards have resulted in an accident-free driving record despite driving in rough weather and on various road conditions over the years. Being the first division person a student often sees in the morning and the last of their school day, Ms. Anderson is one of those special people whose patience and compassion make her an excellent ambassador of her trade. Her love of the children under her care is the main reason she has no plans to retire in the near future. She will also continue mentoring for GYPSD's new bus drivers, *inspiring* them to model her commitment to service excellence, exceptional safety record, and exemplary student engagement. Congratulations Verna!