

Metra releases new schedule

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Metra recently unveiled a new Rock Island Line schedule that includes changes necessary for the new Positive Train Control (PTC) safety system, as well as some service enhancements such as new express trains.

As part of the new schedule, inbound Train 408, arriving at LaSalle Street at 7:22 a.m., will be turned into an express train from Tinley Park - 80th Avenue (with stops at Blue Island - Vermont St. and 35th St./"Lou" Jones).

The pilot schedule will go into effect on Jan. 28, and operations and ridership patterns will be evaluated over the next few months. Customers are urged to view the new schedule at metrarail.com to see if their train or station stop is affected. No changes were made to the weekend schedule

PTC is a federally mandated safety system that will automatically stop a train if the engineer fails to obey a signal or exceeds the speed limit. The system integrates GPS, trackside sensors and communications units, onboard computers and Metra's centralized train dispatching system. Together, these components track trains and monitor the crew's compliance with speed restrictions and signals. Although it can't prevent all accidents, PTC increases safety by preventing train-to-train collisions, unauthorized entry by trains into work zones and derailments due to speeding or moving through misaligned track switches.