



BCT staff photo/JOHN JABLONOWSKI

Second- and third-grade students from Riverton Elementary School participate in a session on light-rail safety yesterday at the town's rail station.

Students schooled on light-rail safety

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RIVERTON — Students at Riverton Public School took a course in train safety yesterday to prepare them for the opening later this year of the NJ Transit light-rail line.

Students in kindergarten through eighth-grade took part in Operation Lifesaver, presented by NJ Transit Police at the Broad Street station on the 34-mile, Camden-to-Trenton commuter line.

"If you hear a bell ringing or the gate is down,

don't cross, and if you're in a car that gets stuck on the tracks, get out of the car," said fourth-grader Ray Cunningham. The 9-year-old said he also learned not to walk or play on the tracks.

Fifth-grader Kyle Koste, 10, said students shouldn't go near the tracks when wearing backpacks because they could get snagged by passing trains.

Kyle said he plans to be extra careful when crossing the tracks because, if not, "you could die or get hurt."

Superintendent Mary Ellen Eck said the biggest lesson for students is to stay off the tracks.

"We're a walking district. At least half the stu-

dents will cross the tracks every day," Eck said. "Train safety is a big part of their lives."

Charles Ingoglia, director of public affairs for the light-rail construction project, said the program is designed to make children and adults aware the rail line would soon be operational.

Since the program began about two years ago, NJ Transit has spoken to more than 60,000 students in towns the tracks pass through, Ingoglia said.

Students learned many safety tips yesterday, but said they were most impressed by the rail car they toured.

"I like it. It looked a lot better than I thought it would," Kyle said.