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NEWS RELEASE

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Lake County Schools eliminates courtesy busing for the 2013-2014 school year

TAVARES — Effective for the 2013-2014 school year, courtesy transportation is being eliminated for Lake County students residing within the 2-mile Parent Responsibility Zone of their home school.

By state law, Florida provides transportation funding only for traditional education students that live two or more miles from the school. The Lake County School Board unanimously made the decision at its June 24 meeting to discontinue the service as it seeks cost-cutting measures to close a \$16 million gap in next year's proposed budget. The projected savings from the elimination of courtesy busing is approximately \$650,000.

Eliminating courtesy busing will affect more than 3,000 students of Lake County Schools. Several years ago, the Lake County School Board approved a measure to reduce courtesy transportation to high school students. More than half of the affected students from the recent decision to eliminate courtesy busing will affect elementary school students.

Student eligibility related to School District transportation is currently being processed and will be available on Lake County Schools' online address lookup system at <http://lake.k12.fl.us/addresslookup>. The address lookup system is helpful to parents and students as it provides school assignments, transportation eligibility and maps of school boundary zones.

In addition to the address lookup system, bus routes are also available on the District website at <http://lake.k12.fl.us/busroutes>. Bus routes are currently being formed for the 2013-2014 school year and will be available on the website by Aug. 1.

The eligibility of students to receive school transportation services is defined in Florida Statutes (F.S.) Section 1006.21, to include the following:

- Prekindergarten disability programs and in kindergarten through 12th grade students whose homes are more than a reasonable walking distance, from the nearest appropriate school. A reasonable walking distance is defined by the Florida Department of Education Administrative Code 6A-3.001 as; "A reasonable walking distance for any student who is not otherwise eligible for transportation pursuant to Section 1011.68, F.S., is any distance not more than two (2) miles between the home and school or one and one-half miles between the home and the assigned bus stop."
- Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students with special needs or with transportation disabilities, regardless of the distance from home to school as defined in F.S. Section 427.011.
- All students enrolled in a Teenage Parent Program which include pregnant students or student parents, and the children of those students as defined in F.S. Section 1003.54.
- Elementary age children who live within two miles of their assigned elementary school and who are subject to hazardous walking conditions as defined in F.S. Section 1006.23.

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