

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Education

FROM: Michael Padavic, Director of Special Education

SUBJECT: Special Education Transportation Contract

DATE: June 23, 2010

In my experience as a special education director for the past nine years, transportation plays a critical role in educating students with special needs. This ride to and from school sets the tone for how well the student will perform in and out of the classroom.

Currently, the special needs students of District 97 have a very healthy and strong relationship with the bus drivers and the bus attendants from Lakeview Bus Lines. Any change would cause a significant disruption in their daily lives. Change is difficult for many of our special needs students so routine and structure are absolutely necessary to ensure their success, both academically and socially. Lakeview Bus Lines has provided our special needs students with that routine and structure in the form of consistency in bus drivers, bus attendants and scheduling for the past 21 years.

Further, the existing dispatcher for Lakeview Bus Lines interfaces with the parent population of these special needs students, on a regular basis, to reassure them that their children are secure, safe, and cared for by Lakeview Bus Lines' staff. She listens to parents' input about better options for their children, accommodates easily their needs and requests whenever possible further insuring stability of service and success for students.

The District's long-standing relationship with Lakeview Bus Lines has always been positive, collaborative and highly successful. As the individual charged with managing the day-to-day administration of services to the district's special needs students, I feel strongly about maintaining the relationship with Lakeview Bus Lines and believe that the disruption in routine and structure caused by transitioning to a new transportation provider will negate the savings of approximately \$39,000 (exclusive of video cameras) over the next three years.

mp/tmo