



For Immediate Release

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Lane Transit District

Students Take The Bus For A Greener November

EUGENE, Ore. ---(December 20, 2023)--- School-age ridership numbers got a boost in November thanks to Lane Transit District's [second annual "Take the Bus Challenge."](#) The combined efforts of 10 area high schools kept [almost 28 metric tons](#) of carbon dioxide from entering the air from vehicle tailpipe emissions. That's equivalent to about 28 cross-country mile flights!

[Springfield's Thurston High School](#) and [Bethel's Kalapuya High School](#) won the competition to find out which school could use their free [Student Transit Pass](#) to take the most LTD bus trips per capita during a two-week period in November.

For the student body's contribution to the reduction of vehicle emissions, both winners received \$500 to invest in a sustainability project that benefits the school.

Thurston will purchase native plants for their community garden. At Kalapuya, registrar Stormy Smith says the student body will invest in a new bike program. "It would not only promote a healthier lifestyle, but also encourage eco-friendly transportation. It could foster a sense of independence, teach valuable life skills, and contribute positively to the environment."

There were two competition categories: one for schools with less than 250 students and one for students with more. More than 22% of Kalapuya students (enrollment: 97) and 11% of Thurston (enrollment: 1,227) students participated in the challenge.

Thurston High School principal Kimberlee Pelster says the school is grateful for the opportunity to partner with LTD. "Each day, students utilize public transit to navigate our community: to and from school, to jobs, to community resources. This partnership helps our students feel prepared and confident in their ability to access all our community has to offer."

Area students in kindergarten through 12th grade are eligible for a free Pass. During the 2022-2023 school year, almost 14,000 free Student Transit Passes were issued and ridership in this age range continues to rise steadily. The free Student Transit Pass program is funded through a grant to LTD from the state of Oregon's [Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund](#) (STIF) approved through House Bill 2017.

View the [full results of the challenge](#) at LTD.org.

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About Lane Transit District (LTD)

Lane Transit District (LTD) is a special district of the State of Oregon led by a seven-member volunteer board of directors appointed by Oregon's governor. LTD's budget is funded through a combination of fares, taxes paid by local employers and employees, and from state and federal sources. LTD lives its mission to connect our community by delivering more than 5 million annual passenger boardings from 30 fixed bus routes and two EmX Bus Rapid Transit lines. LTD's paratransit service, RideSource, provides more than 250,000 trips annually for people with disabilities and Medicaid recipients. More information about LTD is at www.LTD.org.