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NEWS RELEASE

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Houston County Board of Education *Extra Mile Award* Winner



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County Board of Education has been awarded the *Extra Mile Award* by the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition (MGCAC) and Middle Georgia Clean Cities Coalition (MGCCC). The award was presented to the Transportation Department for efforts in clean air emissions. Created in 2003, this award recognizes individuals or fleets that go out of their way (the extra mile) to make Macon and Middle Georgia greener and cleaner.

Executive Director of MGCCC and Coalition Director of MGCAC Charise Stephens stated “Our coalitions feel it is important to let these community leaders know their contributions are recognized and are valued. The Houston County Board of Education has been a leader in the community from integrating idle reduction policies, GPS software strategies, retrofitting school buses and procuring newer buses. The leadership in Houston County is forward thinking and we say thank you!”

Steve Ulmer, fleet manager for the Houston County School System, meets with the MGCCC alternate fuels committee every two months. They discuss ways to clean the air and reduce pollution from school buses. Houston County uses biodiesel in its buses when available and has implemented a five-minute maximum idle policy for non-handicap buses. GPS software is also used to monitor idle time and route efficiency. In addition, Houston County has received grants from the EPA/EPD for retrofitting older buses with emission devices to reduce pollution from the tailpipes by at least 50 percent. So far Diesel Particulate filters and Low NO₂ Filter have been installed on 14 buses. Houston is the only school system in middle Ga. to receive EPA grant funds for two consecutive years.

For more information, Stephens may be reached at 478-747-7920. Ulmer may be contacted at 478-929-7780, ext. 58780, or stephen.ulmer@hcbe.net.

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