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M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: August 17, 2006

TO: District School Superintendents

FROM: Linda Champion

SUBJECT: Transportation Employees Drug and Alcohol Testing Contract

Ensuring access to learning requires that individuals transporting students meet all health and safety requirements, including federal requirements for drug and alcohol testing conducted under the Omnibus Transportation Employees Testing Act of 1991 (OTETA). The Department of Education reminds school districts that its current agency term contract with FirstLab for drug and alcohol testing services for commercial drivers, including school bus drivers, will expire August 31, 2006.

The Department of Education (DOE) has been working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to establish a new agency contract that is now scheduled for award October 1, 2006. This contract will be in effect from the date of award through a five-year period. During September, between the expiration of the contract with FirstLab and the award of a new contract, there will be no active state drug and alcohol testing services contract.

The decision to purchase services from the successful vendor pursuant to the upcoming FDOT contract will remain voluntary for school districts. In the interim before the new contract is in place, each school district may wish to contact its current vendor and/or other available vendors to determine what pricing and services they will honor.

Districts are reminded that sound public purchasing practices should be followed and that drug and alcohol testing services may be exempted from the purchasing requirements of Chapter 287, Florida Statutes (F.S.), under the specific authority of Section 287.056(5)(f), F.S. There may also be additional flexibility in Rule 6A-1.012(6), Florida Administrative Code, if districts do not exceed the Category Two purchasing threshold specified in Section 287.017, F.S.

If you or your Drug Testing Program Manager have any questions, please direct them to Ronnie H. McCallister in our School Transportation office at (850) 245-9795, Suncom 205-9795, or e-mail Ronnie.McCallister@fldoe.org.

LC/cfh/rhm

cc: Drug Program Managers
Finance Officers
Transportation Directors
Charter Schools