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NEWS RELEASE

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Mesa County, Colo.— Student safety is a concern to all in Mesa County. The recent change to busing and walking distances in Mesa County Valley School District 51 is a community issue needing community assistance. That is why School District 51 has partnered with local law enforcement as the first day of school nears. Drivers could potentially see more students walking farther distances to schools this year, with school starting August 20.

Student safety remains a primary concern. Therefore, in addition to drivers being aware, parents and guardians can also make sure children know the safest route to school (and an alternative safe route) and walk or bike in groups whenever possible. Kids should always use traffic light and pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and be aware of railroad crossings. In addition, make sure to walk or bike the route before school begins.

Parents can send in complaints about specific walking routes on the District's website: www.d51schools.org. Those concerns will be reviewed by a committee. PTO/PTA and other parent groups are also open to discussions about the changes to walking distance and can help address concerns for parents. In addition, most elementary schools will be hosting extended hours programs. Anyone interested in that should call Extended Hours at (970) 241-3603.

For immediate safety issues or to report suspicious behavior or incidents, the public, parents or students should not hesitate to call 911.

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