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## 8:15 SCHOOL START TIME APPROVED FOR LAKELAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL

### School Will Be Among the Latest Public High School Start Times in the Area

Lakeland, TN, January 15, 2020— The Board of Education of Lakeland School System unanimously approved a committee recommendation Monday night that the future Lakeland Preparatory School start time will be 8:15 AM. The school, which currently operates as Lakeland Middle Preparatory School, will begin serving high school students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in August of 2022 and will phase in one new grade per year. While the start time decision comes two and a half years before the opening of the high school facilities, the vote represents the school board’s long-held commitment to promoting healthy start times for its high school students.

School board chair Kevin Floyd said, “This decision reflects our board’s belief that adequate rest is in the best interest of students and should be a priority in planning for our new high school.”

The recommendation was made by the High School Start Time Committee which was formed by the Board of Education in February 2019 in anticipation of the eventual approval of funding for Lakeland’s first high school. The committee’s work started with the premise that the high school start time should be as close to 8:30 AM as possible based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The committee was made up of Lakeland School System parents, administrators, faculty members, school board member Deborah Thomas, and Superintendent Dr. Ted Horrell.

Committee member and Lakeland parent and resident Dr. Valerie Crabtree is also a pediatric sleep psychologist and chief of psychosocial services at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. Dr. Crabtree said that she applauded the Lakeland School System for following CDC recommendations to set the new school start time in a manner consistent with adolescent health. “Countless studies have supported benefits to physical and mental health as well as academic performance in adolescents. The Lakeland School System is setting the standard for schools in the Mid-South to adhere to these health recommendations.”

Lakeland Middle Preparatory School currently serves students in grades five through eight, and the new facilities will allow the school to serve students in grades five through twelve. The combined school will be called Lakeland Preparatory School, and students in all grade levels at the school will start at 8:15 AM starting in August of 2022.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Dr. Ted Horrell at 901.867.5412 or email at [thorrell@lakelandk12.org](mailto:thorrell@lakelandk12.org).