

Public Schools Branch

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

Student Transportation	
<i>Policy Section</i> Student Transportation	<i>Procedure Number</i> 301.1
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<p><i>Replaces:</i> ESD - EEA-R Student Transportation Services ESD - EEAC-R Designating and Evaluating School Bus Routes April 14, 2004 ESD - EEAE-R Emergency School Bus Evacuations April 15, 2004 ESD - EECA-R Responsibilities of Students for Transportation Services, April 15, 2004 ESD - EECB-R Responsibilities of Parents for Transportation Services, April 15, 2004 ESD - EECC-R Responsibilities of Bus Drivers, April 15, 2004 ESD - EECD-R Responsibilities of Principals for Transportation Services, April 15, 2004 ESD - EECE-R Responsibilities of the Transportation Supervisor for Bus Route Design and Evaluation, April 15, 2004 WSB - Student Transportation Services Guidelines June 2006</p>	

1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Closed Bus or Closed Bussing** – A school bus which can not accommodate a school bus pass.
- 1.2 **Collection and Drop-off Locations** – the places designated for a school bus driver to allow a student to board or disembark the school bus.
- 1.3 **Contractor** – A person who has entered into a contract with the Public Schools Branch for the conveyance of passengers by means of a vehicle owned or leased by the contractor.
- 1.4 **School Attendance Zone** – A defined geographical area within the Public Schools Branch which identifies where children will attend school.
- 1.5 **School Bus** - A school bus or other vehicle that is under the management of the Public Schools Branch and used primarily for the conveyance of students.
- 1.6 **School Bus Pass** - A pass issued to a student by their school principal/designate to access a school bus to which they have not been assigned.

2.0 SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 A student in grade kindergarten to six (K-6) living more than 1 kilometer from the school to which they are zoned will be provided with transportation services to and from the school to which they are zoned.
- 2.2 A student in grade seven to twelve (7-12) living more than 1.6 kilometers from the school to which they are zoned will be provided with transportation services to and from the school to which they are zoned.
- 2.3 If a student is in grade K-6 and lives less than 1 kilometer from the school to which they are zoned, transportation to and from school, if required, is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

- 2.4 If a student is in grade 7-12 and lives less than 1.6 kilometers from the school to which they are zoned, transportation to and from school, if required, is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- 2.5 Any exception will be made by the Transportation Services Coordinator on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration safety, efficiencies or economics.

3.0 DESIGNATING STUDENT COLLECTION/DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

- 3.1 Eligible students are assigned to travel on a specific bus(es).
- 3.2 Transportation Services will determine student collection/drop-off locations. The student collection/drop-off locations will be designated with student safety as the primary concern.
- 3.3 A student who is provided bussing services will board and disembark the school bus at designated student collection/drop-off locations.
- 3.4 Every effort will be made to establish a reasonable walking distance to and from student collection/drop-off locations. This distance does not normally exceed 500 meters.
- 3.5 A student may be required to transfer between buses to reach their final destination.
- 3.6 The criteria for designating student collection/drop-off locations is included in the publication *Practical Guide for Safe School Bus Stops* (Appendix A).
- 3.7 A parent/guardian may contact Transportation Services to determine if their child is eligible for bussing and to find out the student's collection/drop-off locations, bus and route information.
- 3.8 A student should arrive at their designated student collection location 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time.
- 3.9 Bus drivers will not stop at non-designated locations unless authorized by Transportation Services.

4.0 EVALUATING SCHOOL BUS ROUTES

- 4.1 Transportation Services conducts an efficiency review of bus routes, as needed.
- 4.2 Upon request, the Transportation Services Coordinator will evaluate individual student collection/drop-off locations for safety concerns.

5.0 NOTICE OF CHANGE

- 5.1 The impacted principal and bus driver will be consulted if there will be a significant change in the bus route.
- 5.2 When possible, a parent/guardian will be given reasonable notice of any planned change in time/location of student pick up or drop off.
- 5.3 In the event of an emergency, routing changes will not require prior notice.
- 5.4 A request to consider a change to a designated student collection/drop-off location or route must be made by the principal, driver, or parent to Transportation Services.

6.0 OUT-OF-ZONE

- 6.1 The Public Schools Branch is not obligated to provide transportation to a student attending a school outside the student's school attendance zone.

- 6.2 Where circumstances allow, a student who has been approved for an out-of-zone transfer can request to access an existing bus route through Transportation Services on the prescribed form.
- 6.3 Bus routes and space availability are subject to change at anytime during the year which may impact access for a student who is out-of-zone.
- 6.4 A parent/guardian is ultimately responsible for transportation for a student who is out-of-zone.

7.0 ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION

- 7.1 Where the Director or Manager of Student Services determines that the needs of a student cannot be accommodated on a regular school bus, the Director or Manager of Student Services, in consultation with the Transportation Services Coordinator, can approve an alternate arrangement to transport the student to and from school.

8.0 ITEMS PERMITTED ON THE BUS

- 8.1 The transportation of curriculum related materials (small musical instruments, school projects, etc.), student mobility aids, and service dogs will be accommodated in accordance with the *Guideline for Transporting Items on School Buses* (Appendix B). The Transportation Services Coordinator, driver and principal are responsible to ensure compliance with these safety standards.

9.0 SCHOOL BUS PASS

- 9.1 A parent/guardian who wishes their student to temporarily access a school bus that has not been assigned to them, must request a school bus pass from the student's school.
- 9.2 The issuance of a school bus pass
 - a) ensures adequate seating is available;
 - b) identifies all students on the bus; and
 - c) assists with bus route management and safety.
- 9.3 School bus pass requests can be difficult for schools to manage and accommodate. Therefore a parent/guardian is encouraged to request a school bus pass in advance. The school will notify a parent/guardian and the student if they are not able to issue a school bus pass.
- 9.4 Where a school has been identified as having a 'closed bus' or 'closed bussing', a school bus pass will not be issued.
- 9.5 Schools will determine what individualized arrangements can be accommodated.

10.0 SCHOOL BUS SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 If it is necessary to cross the road to meet the bus, a student must cross at least 3.5 meters (10 feet) in front of the bus. When crossing the street or highway, a student should only cross when:
 - a) the bus has completely stopped;
 - b) the student has looked both ways to ensure that traffic has come to a complete stop;
 - c) the bus stop sign is out and red lights are flashing;
 - d) the bus driver's face can be seen; and

- e) the bus driver indicates that it is safe to cross the road.
- 10.2 A student should be aware of the danger zones around the school bus. Boarding must not be attempted when the bus is in motion.
- 10.3 A student should never reach for anything that has fallen near the side of or underneath the school bus.
- 10.4 Items may not protrude into the aisle, above the seats or into another student's space. Aisles must be kept clear at all times. Items permitted on the bus must be secured or contained.
- 10.5 The bus windows should remain closed unless authorized by the bus driver and items must never be thrown out the window.
- 10.6 Students must keep their heads, hands and/or other parts of their bodies inside the school bus windows at all times.
- 10.7 Students must remain seated until the bus reaches a full stop.

11.0 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the student responsibilities identified in the *Education Act*, a student on a school bus has the following responsibilities:

- 11.1 To ensure their conduct contributes to a safe and respectful environment at all times while on the school bus and to understand and apply the *Student Code of Conduct on School Buses* (Appendix C);
- 11.2 To respect and obey directions given by the school bus driver;
- 11.3 To arrive at the assigned bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time;
- 11.4 To occupy a bus seat according to the driver's instructions and remain seated, facing forward while the school bus is in motion.
- 11.5 To treat the school bus with respect and realize that they, and their parents, will be responsible for payment of damages due to acts of vandalism.

12.0 PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/guardians play a key role in the student transportation process. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to:

- 12.1 Ensure and/or assist their student gets safely to and from the designated student collection/drop off locations;
- 12.2 Ensure their student arrives at their designated student collection location 10 min prior to the scheduled pickup time;
- 12.3 Ensure the safety and supervision of their student at the collection/drop off location, as determined by the parent;
- 12.4 Have appropriate arrangements made for receiving students for disembarkation at the end of the day;
- 12.5 Report concerns related to student safety, including student collection/drop-off locations, to the principal and/or Transportation Services; and
- 12.6 Ensure their student knows or can easily access their full name, address, telephone number, and school.

13.0 SCHOOL BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the school bus driver are defined in the *Education Act - Student Transportation Regulations*. The bus driver must also adhere to the *Highway Traffic Act*. In addition, the school bus driver is responsible to:

- 13.1 Immediately report any safety concerns to Transportation Services regarding:
 - a) locations or route design; and
 - b) unsafe conditions or situations
- 13.2 Work with school staff to enforce established discipline procedures on the school bus;
- 13.3 Follow any behaviour support plans in place for students;
- 13.4 Exercise good judgement and protect students from dangerous situations;
- 13.5 Provide specific instruction to students regarding:
 - a) how to cross the road/highway in accordance with section 10.1;
 - b) rules of behaviour inside the bus; and
 - c) danger zones outside the bus
- 13.6 Notify Transportation Services if their bus will be late for any reason;
- 13.7 Update the list of permanent ridership, collection/drop-off locations, stop times, and other required route information on the provided route list to Transportation Services no later than October 15 of each school year, and as requested;
- 13.8 Request all changes to collection/drop off locations, additions/deletions of students on the bus route, and note any safety concerns to Transportation Services on the prescribed form (Appendix D);
- 13.9 Attend scheduled meetings, professional development, and training sessions as required by the school principal and/or Transportation Services to discuss transportation issues;
- 13.10 Transport authorized passengers on the school bus; and
- 13.11 Adhere to the Safe and Caring Learning Environment policy and procedure, *School Bus Driver Dress Code* (Appendix E) and any other direction prescribed by the Public Schools Branch.

14.0 PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

In regards to student transportation, it is the principal's responsibility to:

- 14.1 Assume responsibility for students when they are on the school bus to and from school and to and from school sponsored activities;
- 14.2 Provide adequate supervision in the school bus loading zone and ensure loading zones are clear of all vehicles at the time of loading and unloading students;
- 14.3 Delegate the appropriate number of staff or volunteers to supervise and assist students on buses during field trips and school sponsored activities;
- 14.4 Consider and approve temporary school bus pass requests in accordance with section 9.0;
- 14.5 Assume responsibility for student transportation disciplinary issues in accordance with the Safe and Caring Learning Environments policy and procedure and the Student Suspension policy;
- 14.6 In consultation with the bus driver, ensure that all students, including non-based students, receive instruction on school bus emergency evacuation drill

- procedures, and ensure a minimum of two evacuation drills are conducted, one no later than October and the other no later than February each school year;
- 14.7 Complete the *School Bus Evacuation Drill Report* after each school bus evacuation drill and provide the report to Transportation Services.
 - 14.8 Provide bus drivers with information about students with serious medical conditions, behaviour concerns, custody issues, suspensions, and other circumstances/safety concerns, as necessary;
 - 14.9 Request all changes to collection/drop off locations, additions/deletions of students on the bus route, and note any safety concerns to Transportation Services on the prescribed form (Appendix D); and
 - 14.10 Schedule meetings with bus drivers to discuss transportation issues as needed and share school related information/documentation in order to promote strong communication.

15.0 APPENDICIES

- 15.1 Appendix A - Practical Guide for Safe School Bus Stops
- 15.2 Appendix B - Guideline for Transporting Items on School Buses
- 15.3 Appendix C - Code of Conduct on School Buses
- 15.4 Appendix D – Request for Add/Delete Student & Assessment of Collection/Dropoff Location
- 15.5 Appendix E – School Bus Driver Dress Code

16.0 CROSS REFERENCE

- 16.1 Operational Policy 301 Student Transportation
- 16.2 Board Governance Policy GP 12 Establishment of School Attendance Zones
- 16.3 Operational Policy and Procedure 605 and 605.1 Safe and Caring Learning Environments
- 16.4 Operational Procedure 401.1 Student Transfer Request
- 16.5 Operational Policy 407 Student Suspension
- 16.6 *Education Act*
- 16.7 *Education Act* – Student Transportation Regulations
- 16.8 *Highway Safety Act*

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