



# KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

**Regulation Name: Student Transportation**  
Section: Business and Administrative Services:  
Transportation

**Regulation Code: BA-8.7.1**  
**Policy Code Reference: BA-8.7**

Established: February 25, 2025  
Revised or  
Reviewed: March 24, 2025

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This Administrative Regulation addresses the following subject areas:

[Student Eligibility](#)  
[Bus Operator Contracted Services](#)  
[Route Operation](#)  
[Safety and Conduct on Buses](#)  
[Bus Collision/Incident and Injuries](#)  
[Student Safety](#)

### 1. OBJECTIVE

To establish the criteria for the equitable provision of student transportation and safety measures that will be taken.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

Board

The corporate board which maintains the daily operation of the system; Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board; a reference specifically pertaining to Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board as a legal entity; also referred to as KPR or KPRDSB.

Board of Trustees

The elected governance branch of the Board.

First Responders

The term “first responder” includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of their professional duties, responds to emergencies.

MOE

Ministry of Education

MTO

Ministry of Transportation

**Out-of-Boundary**

Out-of-Boundary students are those whose principal residence is located within the board, but outside the attendance boundary of the school they attend or wish to attend.

**Policy**

A statement of intent, governing principle or end result, adopted by the Board of Trustees in open public session; it is intended to articulate what must be done, the rationale for it and a framework for the system.

**Specialized Programs**

A specialized program is a program which students may choose to attend. A specialized program is not Ministry-mandated but offered by the board and may or may not be located at the student's designated home school. Examples of specialized programs that may be offered by the board include, but are not limited to, French Immersion/Extended French, Integrated Arts, etc.

**School Purpose Vehicle**

A vehicle contracted to provide student transportation for the board, through a Service Provider.

**STSCO**

Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) is the consortium responsible for planning school bus transportation services for students attending Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

**Total Transportation Costs**

The sum total of the costs of all transportation contracts for a school year as determined on 31 October and March 31 of that school year.

**3. APPLICATION**

This administrative regulation and corresponding policy applies to all students, staff, trustees, parents/guardians, Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) and their contracted service providers.

**4. RESPONSIBILITY****The Board of Trustees is responsible:**

- For assisting parents/guardians with transportation concerns by receiving inquiries and forwarding them to the Superintendent of Business and Corporate Services or delegate for response.
- Approving transfer of bus contracts.
- Making decisions regarding appeals when a delegation comes forward after subordinate levels of the process have been completed.

**The Director of Education is responsible for:**

- Allocating staff and resources to support this administrative regulation.
- Approving the transfer of bus route contracts between contracted operators up to five.
- Responding to reports of collisions and supporting the principal and school community as needed. In the event of serious injuries, will act as board spokesperson, or delegate the responsibility as appropriate.

**The Superintendent of Business and Corporate Services is responsible for:**

- Providing support and decision making to STSCO in implementing this Administrative Regulation.
- Supporting STSCO during the procurement process, and contract renewals.
- Ensuring that the recommendations regarding the transfer of bus route contracts and contract renewals are properly supported for the Board of Trustees approval.

**Family of Schools Superintendents are responsible for:**

- Supporting school administrators in understanding and implementing this Administrative Regulation.
- Responding to reports of collisions and supporting the principal and school community as needed.

**Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:**

- Ensuring students transported on the bus who have a Plan of Care in place are recorded in the Transportation tab in the Student Information System and a copy of the Plan of Care is provided to STSCO.
- Assisting operators in establishing an appropriate date/time schedule to conduct bus evacuation drills for all students in their school, with a copy of this schedule being forwarded to STSCO.
- Consult with STSCO prior to implementing a School Bus Safety Patrol at their school.
- Establishing a communication plan regarding the student expectations outlined in this Administrative Regulation.
- Liaising with school bus drivers on a regular basis.
- Responding to Student Behaviour Report Forms on a timely basis, including providing feedback to bus drivers, where appropriate.
- Review for approval or denial, the transport of personal items necessary for regular or elective programs, following consultation with the bus driver.
- Ensuring that forms received from parents/guardians are reviewed and validated prior to being directed to STSCO.
- Reviewing requests for transportation and ensuring the requests are appropriate prior to directing them to STSCO.

- Ensuring that the student information system contains up to date contact information for parents/guardians so that timely contact can be made for transportation concerns or emergencies.
- Establishing a mechanism to ensure staff coverage at the school for the time equivalent to the completion of the last bus route.
- Ensuring appropriate information regarding transportation is easily accessible in the event of emergencies, or inclement weather. This includes student emergency contact information, bus lists, route numbers, and operator contact information.
- Supporting the communication process to parents/guardians when notified of a collision/incident.

**School Staff are responsible for:**

- Adhering to this Administrative Regulation.
- Observing the “Danger Zone” for the bus with particular care during loading and unloading.
- Assist where necessary with conducting transportation related safety drills, e.g., bus evacuation.
- Maintaining appropriate student conduct while loading and unloading students at school.
- Maintaining appropriate student conduct when on a school bus for the purposes of supervising a field trip.

**Students are responsible for:**

- Participating in provided safety training and exercises at their school.
- Staying alert and listening to all partners involved with providing their safe transportation.
- Observing the “Danger Zone” for the bus with particular care during loading and unloading.
- Following the direction of school bus drivers, or other supervisors, while being transported.
- Adhering to the student code of conduct while on a school bus.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- Completing the annual "opt-in" or “opt-out” for transportation form if their child(ren) are eligible for transportation.
- Ensuring that their child(ren) understands the expectations of conduct while waiting for and travelling on the school bus.
- The safe conveyance of the student(s) to and from school where the student(s) is ineligible for transportation.
- The safe conveyance of the student(s) to bus stop locations prior to pick-up and following drop-off.
- The safety of the student(s) prior to pick-up and drop-off at bus stop locations.

- Determining the appropriate age or maturity level at which their student(s) can walk to and from school bus stops unattended.
- Observing the “Danger Zone” for the bus with particular care during loading and unloading.
- Providing transportation for their student(s) to and from school in the event that bus privileges are removed.
- Completing appropriate documentation within specified timeframes so that consideration can be given to requests in a timely manner.
- Updating their school administration on a timely basis if there are changes to the family contact information (i.e., phone number/email addresses) or status/situation that would impact transportation eligibility, including changes to primary residence and custody matters.

**Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) staff are responsible for:**

- Liaising with bus operators and school administrators in support of resolving behavior concerns on school buses.
- Overseeing all aspects of the video or digital recording program.
- Advising appropriate personnel at the Education Centre, in a timely manner, in the event of a collision/incident.
- Ensuring that all information relevant to any collision/incident is received from the bus operator for investigative and contract purposes.
- Communicating to parents/guardians inquires regarding transportation eligibility in a timely manner.

**Communication Services is responsible for:**

- Communicating and providing appropriate context to the public and media in the event of a serious collision/incident with injuries.

## **5. PROCEDURE**

### **5.1 Student Eligibility**

#### **5.1.1 Eligibility Distances for Transportation Home to School**

Students will be provided transportation if their primary residence is more than the eligibility distance noted below by the shortest direct walking route as measured by STSCO (by publicly maintained road and/or walkway), from the school the student is attending:

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Junior Kindergarten/Senior Kindergarten (JK/SK) | 1.6 km |
| Grade 1-8                                       | 1.6 km |
| Grade 9-12                                      | 3.2 km |

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for the safe conveyance of their children to and from school.

#### Home to Bus Stop

Students eligible for transportation according to the eligibility distances noted above may be assigned to a bus stop location according to the following bus stop location distance guidelines, as measured by STSCO:

|            |        |
|------------|--------|
| JK/SK      | 1.0 km |
| Grade 1-8  | 1.0 km |
| Grade 9-12 | 1.6 km |

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for their children prior to pick up and following drop off, including the safe conduct of the student(s).

Where students from partner boards share the same buses at the same time, eligibility distance from home to school may align with the lesser of the partner board's distances.

#### 5.1.1.1

Transportation will not be provided on roads that are not assumed and maintained year-round by the municipality. In certain situations where roads are not yet assumed by a municipality but are maintained (i.e., new subdivision) bus routes may be considered on these roads after consultation with the local municipality and the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer. Students eligible for transportation may be required to get to an existing or alternate stop regardless of the distance if an appropriate bus stop location cannot be established within the distances outlined under Section 5.1.1, Eligibility Distances for Transportation. This may also apply to assumed roads where the bus cannot access and/or turn around.

#### 5.1.1.2

The measurement of distances shall be done by STSCO using an appropriate distance measurement instrument. The measurement will be taken by the most direct publicly maintained walking route commencing from the closest access onto the school property attended by the student, outward to the closest access point, sidewalk, or driveway where public property meets the student's primary residence property.

#### 5.1.2 Transportation to Specialized Programs

Notwithstanding the distances outlined in Section 5.1, Eligibility Distances for Transportation, transportation may be provided for students requiring specialized programs. Transportation shall only be provided while the student is enrolled in the specialized program. Discretion over which programs are deemed "specialized" and eligible for transportation rests with board administration. Discretion also rests with administration in determining schools that will be designated as closed to out-of-boundary students.

Please note that ride times may be extended beyond the Length of Time on Buses noted under Section 5.3.1 for specialized programs.

### 5.1.3 Out-of-Boundary Students

Only students living within the attendance boundary for the school may be eligible for transportation. Students who reside outside of their school's attendance boundary will not be provided transportation. School boundaries are created by the board and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to be aware of their school's boundaries.

#### 5.1.3.1 Vacant Seating on Buses

Students who are ineligible for busing will not be provided with transportation services. Empty seats on existing bus routes are reserved for eligible students.

### 5.1.4 Transportation to and from Child Care Facilities

Transportation may be provided for primary students (JK to Grade 6) between school and an alternate address (i.e., a child care/day care centre or baby sitter address (referred to as child care) in accordance with the guidelines and procedures noted below. Requests for older students will be reviewed on a case by case basis through the Special Transportation Request (STR) process.

- The child care is within the same school boundary/catchment areas including specialized program boundaries, as the student's primary residence and
- The child care is beyond the walking distance of the home school which the student is registered to attend.
- A student may have only one alternate pick/up and or drop/off stop.
- The alternate transportation follows the same schedule five days per week;
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit an "opt-in" request from an Alternate Address form annually for this type of pick-up and drop-off by May 30, for transportation for the following school year. The application form is available through the online Parent Portal found at [www.stsco.ca](http://www.stsco.ca).

Where a child care centre forms part of a secondary school or nearby elementary school, the board will permit the child of a registered secondary school student to accompany the student on the school bus in order to attend the child care centre. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be responsible for the provision of all necessary approved child restraint equipment and the cost associated with the installation of such equipment.

Child care/baby sitter addresses outside of the student's home school catchment area will not be eligible for transportation to the home school.

### 5.1.5 Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

#### 5.1.5.1 Special Transportation Arrangements

Special/additional transportation may be provided for students based on the following criteria: physical disability, cognitive/intellectual disability, medical conditions or diagnosis, communication disorder, and other grounds in the Human Rights Code. The Individual Student Transportation Plan and Special Needs Request form must be completed on an annual basis by the student's school in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s). All requests will be reviewed annually.

The completed Individual Student Transportation Plan and Special Needs Request form will be submitted to STSCO by the school.

In the event that a bus monitor is required, the appropriate section of the Individual Student Transportation Plan and Special Needs Request form will be completed and submitted to the Special Education Department for approval.

Throughout the school year, bus monitor reviews will be requested by STSCO through the school, to assess if student's needs have changed.

#### 5.1.5.2 Special Apparatus for Transporting Students

From time to time, vehicles must be adapted in order to provide the safest possible environment for the special high needs pupil, others riding the same vehicle, for the driver, and the general public.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be advised that their child/foster child will be transported using a special apparatus e.g., Safety Vest (4-point harness). Safety Vests are to be used to support mobility impaired individuals and are not designed for students with behavioural challenges.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall acknowledge, in writing, that they understand and agree to the use of the special apparatus to ensure the safety of their child while being transported by the Board.

If this acknowledgment is not received in writing, responsibility for transporting the student shall rest with the legal guardian.

The standardized form, Special Apparatus, Acknowledgment of Understanding, is to be completed by parent(s)/guardian(s).

#### 5.1.6 Transportation for Medical Reasons

Transportation may be provided for students incapacitated with medical conditions temporarily or long term.

Short-term transportation may be considered for students eligible and currently utilizing transportation when the student has a physical disability that prevents them from boarding a regular bus and walking to their seat (i.e., broken leg or ankle).

Transportation for short-term medical concerns is a parent/guardian responsibility if less than 4 weeks.



Long-term medical transportation may be considered for students residing in their home school boundary and that have a long-term medical condition when the condition severely limits the student's mobility and is restricted from specific physical activity while at school (i.e., the student is deemed medically fragile and is restricted from such activities as recess, gym, sports, etc.), and requires special provisions/assistance while at school (i.e., support to navigate hallways, stairways, classroom etc.).

In situations where the request is being made due to medical circumstances, a Request for Special Transportation Medical form is available at schools and will assist parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure sufficient information is provided by a physician.

Submission of the form does not automatically guarantee transportation.

In these circumstances, the guidelines and procedures noted below should be followed:

- i. The parent/guardian must provide a Request for Transportation Medical form, which has been completed by a qualified medical practitioner that is appropriately aware of the specific medical condition and can verify the student's limitations, and the date of anticipated recovery. \*Parents/guardians will submit the form to the school principal.
- ii. The Principal will review the forms and if supported, forward them to the Office of the Superintendent responsible for Transportation to render a decision, and where applicable, may contact the physician's office to seek clarification and/or to discuss the details of the medical information provided.
- iii. Once approved, the forms will be forwarded to STSCO for implementation of transportation.
- iv. Siblings of students transported under this provision will not qualify for transportation solely as a result of another family member being transported.
- v. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted and advised of the decision by the principal.

#### 5.1.7 Transportation for Students in a Joint Custody Arrangement and Having Two Homes

A 'joint custody arrangement' refers to a student whose two parents and/or guardians are legally responsible for the care of the student and who share access to the student. Joint custody needs not be specified in a court order. Parent/guardians who sign an application for variable transportation are claiming to have 'joint custody' of the student.

In joint custody family arrangements, variable/alternate pick-up/drop-off points may be approved i.e., pick-up and drop-off from the residence of one (1) parent for one (1) week and pick-up and drop-off from the residence of the other parent for the alternate week under the following conditions:

- Both residences must be within the attendance boundary for the student's board-designated school and within the transportation boundary for said school.
- Existing bus stops will be used if possible.
- Only two (2) residences will be considered.

- Students must be able to determine the correct bus that they are to embark to their appropriate residence each day.
- Completion of prescribed form, signed by both parents/guardians, and submission of the form to STSCO. For safety concerns and to ensure that both parents/guardians are aware of the variable transportation arrangements, both parents/guardians signatures are required for consideration. Separate forms may be completed and signed by each party. A single form signed by both parties is not necessary providing the information on separate forms is identical.

Exceptions, including for emergencies, must be approved by the school principal and superintendent.

#### 5.1.8 Transportation Safety Issues

STSCO will establish bus stops at reasonable and appropriate locations that meet with the provincial standards set by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

Transportation may be provided within the defined walking distance as set out in Section 5.1, Eligibility Distances for Transportation, if a request is made, in writing detailing the specific concerns, to STSCO for special provisions for reasons of safety. The matter will be reviewed by STSCO which may consult with various agencies.

The board shares with the parent(s)/guardian(s) a responsibility for the safety of students and considers this to be of paramount importance. The board's responsibility for the supervision of students who are transported on a school bus/vehicle will commence with the students' entrance onto the school bus/vehicle and will end with the students' exit from the school bus/vehicle at the designated stop locations.

It is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to ensure the safety of students from home to the bus stop location, until boarding the school bus/vehicle, and after disembarking from the drop-off location to home. Ultimately, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will decide whether or not to make use of a designated bus stop.

Parents/guardians are responsible for determining the appropriate age or maturity level at which their children can walk to and from school bus stops unattended.

#### 5.1.9 Transporting Other Passengers

All contracts with school bus/vehicle operators shall contain a clause limiting passengers to the board's pupils unless permission to carry other persons is obtained from the Chief Administrative Officer or designate. Permission to ride may be granted to parent volunteers who work at the schools, students who attend a Centre for Individual Studies, Peterborough Alternative and Continuing Education at Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational Institute, and students enrolled in Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional programs, or other programs to be determined.

Permission may also be granted to children of school bus/vehicle drivers (elementary age students or younger) to accompany drivers on their route. All requests must be in

writing to the Chief Administrative Officer or designate, and will be considered on a space available basis provided such arrangements will not affect the safe and professional operation of the school route. The school bus/vehicle operator shall be responsible for the provision of all necessary approved child restraint equipment and will ensure that such equipment is installed according to all legal specifications. It is also understood that these arrangements can be cancelled at any time by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

#### 5.1.10 Communicating Student Transportation Eligibility

Schools shall develop an appropriate means to periodically remind students and parent(s)/guardian(s), throughout a given school year, of the elements of this policy. STSCO shall develop a similar mechanism to advise operators/drivers of the board's policy regarding student eligibility. STSCO will communicate with the public, with the assistance of Corporate Affairs, all policies and procedures regarding transportation.

#### 5.1.11 Pre-authorization of Transportation Charges

Any transportation charges which will be billed to a First Nation, or other party, must be pre-authorized by the respective party.

#### 5.1.12 Transportation Exceptions

Notwithstanding the above, as a result of individual circumstances, any exceptions to this policy may be brought forward in writing to the Chief Administrative Officer for consideration and possible approval. As final recourse, parents/guardians may appeal policy exceptions to the Board through the Resource Committee.

#### 5.1.13 Transportation Appeal Process

Any appeal in terms of transportation needs to be initiated through STSCO. STSCO will assist the parent/guardian through the following process:

1. Parent/guardian contacts STSCO to advise of a concern (with respect to walk to stop, stop location, eligibility for transportation, etc.). Their first contact at STSCO will normally be the Route Planning Specialist responsible for their geographic area.
2. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the information provided by the Route Planning Specialist, they are referred to the Manager of Operations, who will investigate the matter, visit the site, and attempt to address the parent/guardian's concern, wherever possible, within Board policy and administrative regulations.
3. If the parent/guardian is still not satisfied, they may appeal to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of STSCO, in writing. Following receipt of the written appeal, a thorough investigation is undertaken by the CAO, and the findings of the investigation are reported to the family in writing.
4. In the event that the parent/guardian cannot be satisfied, the written report to the family will include the following:
5. "As final recourse, the parent/guardian has the option of appealing to the Board through the Resource Committee. This appeal is directed to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Business and Corporate Services, who will arrange for the parent/guardian to attend as a delegation at the next Resource Committee meeting,

and a report with background information pertinent to the transportation matter review will be included with the agenda.”

6. If a parent/guardian wants to appeal to the Board through the Resource Committee, the parent/guardian will contact the office of the Superintendent, Business and Corporate Services.
  - i. The parent/guardian will be informed of the time and date of upcoming Resource Committee meetings, and be provided with a copy of the Board Resource Committee Guidelines for Delegations as noted below:
    - Delegations wishing to make presentations must apply in writing, including a summary of the matter to be addressed and the specific action requested of the committee, as well as the name(s) of the presenter(s) and the individual or organization to be represented, to: Chairperson, Resource Committee
    - This material must be received at least nine calendar days prior to a Resource Committee meeting, and will be printed with the agenda package distributed prior to the meeting. It can be delivered to the Education Centre, sent by email, or faxed to 705-760-8656.
    - A maximum of ten minutes for the presentation will be allocated for each delegation. Additional presentation materials may be distributed at the meeting by the delegation.
    - Please contact the Business and Corporate Services Executive Assistant at 705-742-9773 or toll-free at 1-877-741-4577, extension 2024, to make arrangements for a delegation.
  - ii. Once a parent/guardian confirms that they want to appeal, they are included in the in-camera session agenda and advised of an approximate time.
  - iii. A written report outlining the circumstances of the appeal, prepared by STSCO, will be reviewed by the committee.
  - iv. The parent/guardian is given ten minutes to explain their issue and state their request.
  - v. Once complete, the parent/guardian is thanked for their presentation, and advised that the committee will further review the matter and inform the parent/guardian in writing of their final decision.
  - vi. Following deliberations and a recommendation from the committee, a written response will be sent to the parent/guardian by the appropriate superintendent, in a timely manner.

## **5.2 Bus Operator Contracted Services**

As a minimum, contract agreements shall address the following items.

### **5.2.1 Payment to Bus Operators**

Payment to operators, in consideration of transportation services provided, will be an amount determined as ten percent (10%) of the total contract price for each route.

Payments for the first month of the school year will be based on an estimate, with reconciliations completed monthly. Payment will be made on or before the first banking day of each of the 10 months of the school year.

#### 5.2.2 Procurement of Bus Routes

STSCO and the Superintendent responsible for transportation will, when required or requested, meet with representatives of all school bus operators serving the board to discuss and negotiate contract issues that arise during a contract term.

In accordance with the Broader Public Sector Procurement directives, a competitive procurement process may be developed in order to secure transportation services.

When new regular daily bus routes are required to be established in the ordinary course of a school year they may be offered to an existing bus operator with capacity. Failing that, the new routes may be offered for public tender.

Contracts will be reviewed prior to expiry of a term in order to assess where changes and/or improvements may result for future terms. A future Request for Proposal (RFP) process will incorporate performance management from the previous contract term and will form part of the scoring for “references.”

The term of existing contracts may be extended when a public procurement process is not contemplated for a renewal period. In those circumstances, existing contracts may be discontinued at the renewal date upon the following conditions:

- if the board is dissatisfied with the services being received from the present operators, or
- if there is a substantial change in bus routes due to population shifts, etc., and the board wishes to reach a satisfactory new agreement with the existing operator, or
- if it is considered that the board is paying more than is justified for a particular route and is unable to agree on a satisfactory adjustment with the existing operator.

#### 5.2.3 Limitations on Holding of Bus Contracts

It is the objective of the board to achieve or maintain a limit on the number of bus routes to be serviced by one (1) company or entity at twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of routes administered by the board.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Trustees, in its absolute discretion, may grant exceptions to this Policy in respect of any particular contract if it is of the view that it is in the best interests of the board to do so.

Approval will not be granted to award additional routes or transfer existing routes to companies or entities if it results in any one (1) company or entity holding contracts for more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of routes administered by the board.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Trustees, in its absolute discretion, may grant exceptions to this Policy in respect of any particular contract if it is of the view that it is in the best interests of the board to do so.

If any one (1) company or entity, presently doing business with this board, holds contracts for more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of routes administered by the board, that company or entity will not be allowed to acquire new routes until they come within the percentage requirements noted above.

When a public procurement process is contemplated for securing new transportation contracts, any changes to the percentages noted above will be considered by the board prior to issuing a tender or Request for Proposal.

#### 5.2.4 Bus Insurance

A certificate of the insurance being carried by the contracted operator is to be filed with STSCO prior to the first day of operation in a given school year.

All contracts will contain a clause acceptable to legal counsel for the board, administration, and the Chief Administrative Officer requiring the operator to maintain sufficient general public liability and property damage insurance with a reputable insurance company authorized to transact business in Ontario, against claims arising out of operation of a public vehicle according to the Public Vehicles Act and the Regulations thereunder, and which insurance shall name the board as an additional named insured.

The limits of insurance to be carried will be specified annually in the actual contract agreements and will reflect both Ministry requirements and industry recommended levels.

#### 5.2.5 Inclement Weather and Board Strike Action Affecting Bus Contracts

Where transportation services are not required by the board due to inclement weather the Operator shall receive the Fixed Rate and the Variable Rate, less the fuel portion of the Variable Rate.

Where transportation services are not required by the board due to any strike, lock-out, picketing or similar work stoppages involving the board's employees, whether legal or illegal, for more than five (5) school days, the Operator shall be paid as follows:

| # of Days Cancelled | Daily Rate          |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 6 – 15 days         | 85% of the per diem |
| 16 – 35 days        | 75% of the per diem |
| 36 days & over      | 50% of the per diem |

(per diem calculated by adding the annual Fixed Rate and Variable Rate and divided by 187).

In the event of an operator job action no payment shall be made.

#### 5.2.6 Transfer of Bus Contracts

In order to deal expeditiously with requests for transfer of school bus contracts, the Chairperson of the Board and the Director of Education, or designate, are authorized to grant such requests up to a maximum involvement of 5 routes, subject to the limitations on holding bus contracts as noted above.

##### 5.2.6.1

The Director of Education, or designate, shall ensure that the proposed new operator of the contract can provide the necessary service and is able to meet all other requirements pertaining to vehicle loading and safety for students. The Director of Education, or designate, shall also determine the ultimate owner, major shareholders or holding company of the proposed new operator to ensure that it is known if this new operator has contracts with the board under any other names.

##### 5.2.6.2

The Director of Education, or designate, shall submit an information report to members of the Board, following the granting of transfer(s) of contract(s).

##### 5.2.6.3

Requests for transfers dealing with more than 5 routes will be considered by the Board.

##### 5.2.6.4

The Director of Education, or designate, shall provide to the Board the information noted in Item 6.1 above for each route to be transferred.

#### 5.2.7 Bus Safety Checks

The Chief Administrative Officer of STSCO is empowered to require any operator to have the operator's vehicle(s) inspected by a certified mechanic of the board's choice or by Ministry of Transportation officials, and, if there is indeed a fault, the cost of such check will be borne by the operator; if no fault is discovered the cost will be borne by the board.

All vehicles used to transport students to and from school shall comply with the regulations as set down in the Highway Traffic Act and Public Vehicles Act and any other municipal and provincial laws/regulations governing their operation.

#### 5.2.8 Vehicle/Route Inspections

The board recognizes the need to maintain safe bus routes and to ensure compliance with Ministry of Education regulations. There is also a need to confirm/review distance claims, vehicle sizes and compliance to Ministry of Transportation regulations as submitted by operators. A minimum of 20% of the board's total bus routes and any new routes should be audited annually through field audits. These audits should focus on:

- route efficiency,
- distance claims by operators,
- visual inspection of vehicle,
- safety of pick-up and drop-off location,
- driver skills, and
- public vehicle licensing requirements.

#### 5.2.9 Maximum Age of Vehicles

Operators shall not use vehicles for the transportation of students, that have been in service more than 12 years, without the annual approval of STSCO.

#### 5.2.10 Two-way Communication

The operator shall at their expense, purchase, arrange for, and provide all vehicles with two-way communication equipment as authorized by the board.

The equipment must:

- be able to provide mobile-to-mobile communication as well as mobile-to-base,
- be able to have dispatch and/or central monitoring from a location or several locations,
- be able to communicate with a base from everywhere in the area where the operator generally operates for the board, e.g., charter work for the board and its schools,
- be able to operate under adverse weather or other conditions, e.g., should hydro fail to the tower site, radio system should not be inoperative,
- be as technically simple as possible,
- be transferrable from one vehicle to another in the event that a spare bus is being used or spare buses be equipped with the same type of radios; and
- have central monitoring with direct and continuous access to necessary parties to further rider safety or for dispatch of emergency services.

### 5.3 Route Operation

The board will work cooperatively with its coterminous school boards in sharing routes and vehicles between students of the coterminous boards where it can be demonstrated that the resulting routes are safe and financially efficient.

Except in special circumstances, bus routes will be arranged so that students are not transported for a length of time greater than that set out in the parameters noted below in section 5.3.1. As well, transportation may be provided either within or outside of the defined walking distances, as set out in the parameters noted above in 5.1.1, where STSCO has determined there is a hazard zone within the defined walking distance.

Buses operating on a single route basis are intended to arrive not earlier than fifteen (15) minutes before school commencement. However, buses operating on a double route basis are timetabled to arrive not earlier than necessary.



Where feasible, the board will utilize staggered start/finish times to facilitate transportation cost efficiencies. Changes to hours must be mutually approved by the Director of Education, or designate, and STSCO. In the case of shared bus runs, STSCO will serve as intermediary in coordinating staggered school hours between the board and other boards involved.

Bus routes, including board approved late bus runs, summer school busing and board approved shared busing, shall be established by STSCO, prior to school opening in September. Absolutely no changes will be made without prior consultation with STSCO.

### 5.3.1 Length of Time on Buses

It is expected that STSCO will design bus routes such that the length of time a student would spend riding the bus from their home or pick up point to the school in the attendance area they reside, would not be longer than the following:

- JK to Grade 6: 75 minutes
- Grade 7 to Grade 12: 90 minutes

There may, however, be exceptions should the student opt to attend a school outside of their regular attendance boundary (i.e., program of choice), if there is no school in the immediate area and students must travel to the nearest school facility, or if the attendance area is a significant geographic area.

### 5.3.2 Bus Pick-Up/Drop-Off Locations

Pick-up/drop-off locations are designated by STSCO at reasonable and appropriate locations, with consideration for the number of students assigned to a stop, and are not to be changed, added, or deleted by bus operators without authorization from STSCO. Pick-up/drop-off locations will be established within the parameters established in the Student Transportation Policy and shall not normally be designed to provide door-to-door services.

Each student is to have a consistent pick-up and drop-off point, within the student's school attendance boundary. Consistent student pick-up/drop-off transportation service shall be defined as one (1) fixed location for all school days for the school year. The location for pick-up for all school days for the school year may be different from the location for drop-off for all school days for the school year, but must be on the same route. Requests for access to a second (different) bus will be denied.

For further clarification, the pick-up/drop-off must be consistent five days a week for the school year. (see section 5.1.7 regarding alternate arrangements for Child Care and Joint Custody Arrangements).

The bus operator's responsibility for the supervision of students transported on contracted vehicles will commence with the students' entrance onto the school bus/vehicle and will end with the students' exit from the vehicle at the designated stop location.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring the safe conveyance of students on their way to the stop location.
- Ensuring the safety and security of students while waiting at the stop location until boarding the vehicle.
- Ensuring the safety and security of students after disembarking the vehicle at the drop-off location when returning from school. Students will not be allowed to disembark from a school bus at a stop that is not their regular drop-off point. Exceptions to this procedure may occur where written authorization from STSCO or the school principal has been provided to the bus driver in advance.
- Determining the appropriate age or maturity level at which their children can walk to and from school bus stops unattended. (as noted in 5.1.8)

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that no Kindergarten student disembarks from a bus unless the parent/guardian or caregiver is present to meet the student at the bus stop. Kindergarten students should be instructed to inform the driver if the adult is not at the drop off location.

If no parent/guardian or caregiver is present at the designated stop, the bus driver will contact their operator for assistance. The operator and/or, where contacted the school, will attempt to locate the parent/guardian or caregiver. While dispatch attempts to locate the parent/guardian the student will remain on the bus while the route is completed. STSCO is to be notified at this time. If the operator and/or the school are unable to contact the parent/guardian by the time the driver has completed all other stops, the bus will return to the school. If contact still cannot be made with parent/guardian or school staff, then the police shall be contacted and arrangements made for the safe transfer of the student.

### 5.3.3 Late Busing

Late busing is an optional service for the board and, where a budget exists and is feasible, will be shared among coterminous boards where there is shared busing. The intent of late busing is to provide a service, primarily to rural secondary students, to assist students that are participating in after school academic or extra-curricular activities. The parent/guardian is ultimately responsible for transporting students from school to home beyond the regularly scheduled bus route times.

Secondary school principals, with the approval of the Superintendent of Business & Corporate Services, wishing to establish a limited number of late bus routes should submit their requests to STSCO in advance of the school year beginning.

Secondary school principals will consult with STSCO to determine:

- When the buses will run and/or
- The routes to be traveled – designed to get students as close as possible to home (generally within 7 to 10 km)

- Whether there are sufficient students to warrant late busing (a minimum of one-third of a regular school bus on a consistent basis)
- The means by which the school will have a contact person available/on-call until late runs are completed in the event of a related emergency.

#### 5.3.4 Summer School Busing

Summer school busing is an optional service provided at the discretion of the board and, where feasible, will be shared among board where there is shared busing. When it is deemed necessary, appropriate routes and a corresponding budget will be determined by the appropriate superintendent responsible for summer school and STSCO.

#### 5.3.5 Inclement Weather Transportation

Schools are open and operational on all instructional days regardless of weather conditions, unless otherwise approved by the Director of Education, or designate.

Transportation services will inevitably be impacted during inclement weather and therefore, the board acknowledges the right of parent(s)/guardian(s) to use their discretion in addressing student attendance at school during inclement weather.

Annually, each school shall develop and refine a school plan to address inclement weather emergencies. These procedures, including transportation contingencies, shall be shared with the school council and communicated to parent(s)/guardian(s).

#### 5.3.6 Public Transportation

Wherever feasible, practical and cost-effective to do so in place of contracted school bus providers, the board may utilize municipal public transportation to transport students from Grade 7 to 12 that are eligible for transportation services.

### **5.4 Safety and Conduct on Buses**

A close liaison between bus drivers and school principals assists with the implementation of this Administrative Regulation.

The principal's responsibility for the safety and conduct of students is no less applicable to the school bus than to the classroom.

#### 5.4.1 Expectations of Conduct on School Buses

School Principals are responsible for ensuring that a communication plan for students and parents/guardians is in place that addresses the expectations. To facilitate safe and efficient service, positive student behavior is expected at all times. For further clarification, it is expected that students will:

- be at their pick-up point at least ten (10) minutes prior to the bus arrival time.
- line up and board the bus promptly in single file without crowding or pushing.

- take their assigned seats on the bus and remain seated throughout the trip to and from school.
- keep aisles clear at all times, and must keep books, lunch boxes, and other items under the bus seat.
- not drink or eat, litter, smoke, or use illegal or restricted substances on a school bus.
- not at any time create a disturbance that could distract the bus driver.
- not open windows unless authorized by the bus driver and must keep all parts of their body inside the bus at all times.
- not touch emergency equipment except in the case of an emergency. Students should be aware of bus evacuation procedures and the location of emergency equipment and exits.

Students and/or their parent/guardian will be financially responsible for any act of vandalism.

#### 5.4.2 School Bus Discipline

All students, while travelling on a school bus, are expected to obey the school bus driver at all times and behave in accordance with the Board Code of Conduct in addition to the items listed in section 5.4.1 above.

Should an incident occur on the bus between the school and the student's home where the driver feels it could escalate the next morning, the driver shall contact the school principal immediately to discuss. The principal may request the parent(s)/guardian(s) to transport the student the next morning and attend a meeting at the school with the principal, or designate, to discuss the incident.

For offences deemed by the principal as dangerous (e.g., an action that could endanger the safety of other passengers) immediate action shall be taken, including an automatic indefinite removal of bus riding privileges.

Penalties for misconduct may not necessarily be exclusively restricted to the removal of bus riding privileges. Following consultation with the family, bus operator and STSCO, the principal may deem it more appropriate for the student to participate in community service work, attend an in-school safety/discipline program as devised by the school, etc.

For offences that are deemed criminal as defined by the police, the driver shall contact the operator immediately who will in turn contact the police. The police will then advise as to whether they will investigate at the scene, at the school or another appropriate alternate location. The operator shall inform the school and STSCO as to where the investigation will take place and who is involved. The school in consultation with the operator and police will determine which family(s) shall be contacted.

In the event that a student has bus riding privileges removed, it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that the student attends school. Given the severity

of the incident, the removal of bus riding privileges could carry over from one school year to the next.

The principal shall be responsible for responding electronically to the Transportation Communication form.

On field trips/excursions, the teacher and/or appointed adult, riding on a school bus, shall be responsible for the conduct of students. However, the teacher/adult shall not be permitted to alter the normal rules of conduct for student transportation without the agreement of the driver.

If, in the opinion of the driver, the conduct of the students on the bus is unacceptable, the driver shall stop the vehicle and consult with the teacher/adult concerned to request acceptable conduct from the students.

If subsequently, in the opinion of the driver, the conduct of the students is still unacceptable, the driver will stop the vehicle, and when order has been restored, return to the school. The driver will then make a report to the principal.

NOTE: In all references to principal above, the principal may designate a staff member responsible for such duties.

#### 5.4.2.1 Transportation Communication Form (previously Student Behaviour Report Form)

Incidents of misconduct shall be reported by the driver to the principal immediately using the prescribed Transportation Communication form. Copies of the form shall be provided to the driver/operator, parent(s)/guardian(s) and principal/designate.

Drivers/operators shall be kept informed of the actions taken by the principal/designate following the submission of a Transportation Communication form.

#### 5.4.3 Video Cameras on School Buses

To assist with monitoring of safe practices on school buses, contracted vehicles may be equipped with interior cameras that will record audio and video of drivers/monitors(s) and passengers riding the bus. Buses may also be equipped with exterior cameras (i.e., stop arm cameras) to record passing motorists. To assist with the process, the following guidelines are provided:

- The use of recording devices in no way supersedes other existing disciplinary procedures for school buses, but rather may be used to assist in determination of offenders who show unacceptable behavior.
- No recording device shall be used for general viewing or driver training.
- Recordings used during an investigation by principals, vice-principals, and STSCO staff will be subject to all regulations outlined in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

STSCO staff, assisted by school administrators, and bus operators will:

- Co-ordinate the distribution of all video camera equipment and usage on buses upon request by the bus operator or school principal.
- Maintain recordings in a secure location and ensure that they are available to authorized individuals as necessary, subject of MFIPPA requirements. Normally video recordings will be held no longer than 5 school days unless just cause warrants longer storage. Recordings no longer required shall be erased.
- Co-ordinate the distribution of all communications to all parties involved with buses where new installations occur.
- All video camera equipment used on contracted buses must be approved by Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO).

#### 5.4.4 Transportation of Personal Items on a School Bus

Where the transportation of personal items on a bus to and from school is necessary to carry out regular or elective programs, such transportation is authorized at the discretion of the school principal following consultation with the bus driver.

When authorizing the transportation of these necessary personal items on a school bus, parents/guardians must be made aware by the principal that care and control of all personal items remain the responsibility of the student. Neither the school bus driver, the bus operator, nor the board will be responsible for any damage or loss regarding personal items while they are being transported on a school bus.

### 5.5 Bus Collision/Incident and Injuries

All collisions, involving a student or students and/or contracted school vehicle, no matter how minor, must be reported by the Operator immediately to STSCO and the school or schools whose students are assigned to the vehicle.

In the event of a collision, the driver's first responsibility is to the passengers and the driver shall:

- remain with the bus and passengers,
- determine, as quickly as possible, if anyone is injured,
- immediately use the onboard two-way communication device to report the collision to their dispatch office (who would contact the First Responders), being sure to give the exact location of the collision for First Responders to be able to locate the scene,
- explicitly ask for an ambulance to be dispatched, if any children are hurt or report minor injuries,
- not move any student from the collision site, until the officials at the scene (i.e., police, ambulance, bus driver, or appropriate board and/or STSCO personnel) have jointly agreed to release them, and ultimately, all students shall be assessed and, where deemed appropriate, be sent to hospital for an examination (where developmentally handicapped or non-verbal students are involved, and there is

doubt as to whether medical attention is required, they should be sent to hospital for examination); and

- attend to injured students while waiting for police, ambulance and a board and/or STSCO official(s) to arrive.

In the event of a collision, the notification of responsibilities are as follows:

- the Operator will immediately notify STSCO and the appropriate school(s), providing complete details,
- the school staff will be responsible for contacting each student's parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible and advising them of the collision. Where school staff is not available to contact families, the bus operator shall assume the responsibility, and
- STSCO will immediately notify the Superintendent of Business and Corporate Services and Corporate Affairs of the collision.

As soon as possible after the collision, the driver will file a report with the operator using the Collision/Incident Report form supplied by STSCO. The operator will be responsible for supplying STSCO with a completed copy of the Collision/Incident Report form within 24 hours of the collision. In serious cases, a written report shall be submitted immediately.

In order to assist in the above process, it is essential that each bus display a listing of:

- appropriate police telephone number(s),
- driver's name,
- bus operator name and telephone number,
- STSCO telephone number(s),
- STSCO contact personnel,
- route number,
- school(s) served, and
- list of passengers on the route and telephone number of each.

## **5.6 Student Safety**

### **5.6.1 Student Safety Patrols**

The board recognizes the importance of encouraging students and the drivers of vehicles in the school community to exercise caution and use sound safety practices. Principals may establish Student Safety Patrols where circumstances warrant.

- Student Safety Patrols will operate only under an officially recognized training program provided by either their local police service or the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA).
- When established, the principal of the school shall name and support a teacher supervisor to assist in the operation of Student Safety Patrols and to co-operate with the Student Safety Patrol program provider (i.e., CAA or Police).

- Student Safety Patrols will not be used on main traffic arteries where the safety of the student patrol might be jeopardized.
- Student Safety Patrols may be used only in areas near the school where their activities can be appropriately monitored by the teacher-supervisor.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring that due consideration be given to the particular circumstances of normal traffic, and the age and maturity of children involved.
- Written permission of the parent or guardian will be obtained prior to the appointment of students as patrol members.
- Tangible recognition (picnic, special trip, etc.) of patrol members' service may be given.

#### 5.6.2 School Bus Safety Patrols

The board places emphasis on the need to transport students in a safe and efficient manner. Toward the implementation of this concept it authorizes, where feasible and desirable, the establishment of School Bus Safety Patrols.

- School Bus Safety Patrols will operate only under an officially recognized training program provided by either their local police service or the CAA.
- Principals shall consult STSCO prior to implementing a School Bus Safety Patrol at their school.
- When established, the principal of the school shall name and support a teacher supervisor to assist in the operation of pupil safety patrols and to cooperate with the School Bus Safety Patrol program provider (i.e., CAA or Police) and STSCO.
- Written permission of the parent or guardian will be obtained prior to the appointment of students as patrol members.
- Each patrol member will be supplied with the necessary equipment required for this service. All such equipment remains the property of the board and must be returned to the school at the close of each school year or when the student ceases to be a member of the patrol.

#### 5.6.3 Adult Crossing Guard

The authority for employing crossing guards rests with individual municipalities rather than the board. Normally, crossing guards will be trained and serve under the direction of the appropriate municipal authority. The board will cooperate with the municipality in developing and maintaining an effective service.

Steps leading to the provision of an Adult Crossing Guard service may be initiated by school authorities, board administration, or other interested organizations or persons.

#### 5.6.4 School Bus Evacuation Drill and Emergency Procedures

For each school year two safety demonstrations MUST be completed, for all elementary school children in accordance with these guidelines:

- STSCO is to identify, for the operator and the school principal, the bus operator(s) assigned to each elementary school,



- the assigned operator(s) is requested to consult with the school principal in establishing an appropriate date/time schedule to conduct the bus evacuation drills for all students in the school, with a copy of this schedule being forwarded to STSCO,
- the drills must be conducted on school property in a safe location, at a convenient time for all, prior to December 1 and June 1,
- the operator shall provide the appropriate vehicle(s), properly equipped, and in order to expedite the process, it is recommended that as many students as possible be put through the drills at one time with students travelling as a class and accompanied by appropriate school staff,
- the operator shall be responsible for providing the required instruction and the schools shall be responsible for showing an evacuation video just prior to the date of the evacuation drill,
- It is imperative that each driver receive the practical experience of conducting an evacuation drill,
- the company name, date, time and location of every drill shall be recorded on the STSCO Bus Evacuation Form, with the operator/instructor and principal signing the form, and upon completion of the bus evacuation drill(s), a copy of the completed form shall be forwarded by the operator to STSCO, and
- STSCO Route Planning Specialists may be available, as a resource as arranged through the STSCO Manager of Operations.

#### 5.6.5 Vehicle Loading and Unloading Practices

Concern exists regarding exhaust fumes from idling school vehicles transporting students. When loading students at the school, there can be a significant length of time between arrival of the bus, loading of students, and departure of the bus. During this time, staff and students, as well as board buildings are exposed to varying amounts of fumes depending on the strength and direction of the wind, and the location of the loading zone, relative to the school.

There is also a safety concern whenever students and staff are moving in and around idling vehicles that could accidentally be put in gear and move suddenly.

Exposure to exhaust fumes and the risk of a bus accidentally moving could be eliminated by turning the vehicles off when loading and unloading at the school. Therefore, consistent with municipal anti-idling bylaws, bus drivers are instructed to turn the bus engine off between the time of arrival and parking in the bus loading zone or on the school property, and the time of departure from the school.

## 6. RELATED POLICIES, ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS OR PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Board Policies:

[BA-8.7, Student Transportation](#)

[ES-1.1, Safe, and Caring Schools](#)

Administrative Regulations:

[ES-1.1.1, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct](#)

[ES-1.1.1A, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct](#)

## **7. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

[Education Act](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Ontario Public Vehicles Act and Regulations thereunder](#)

[Ontario Highway Traffic Act and Regulations thereunder](#)

[Ministry of Education, Policy/Program Memoranda 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct](#)