



BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Student Eligibility

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
NUMBER

1301

Directional Policy

1300 – Student Transportation

TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Student Eligibility

DATE APPROVED:

May 12, 2021

PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:

2026

DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:

1300 - Student Transportation

ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Student Eligibility Administrative Procedures support our Vision for achieving excellence in Catholic Education by establishing consistent and transparent processes for determining which pupils of the Board are eligible for transportation services from home to school.



Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Vision

Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education
LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

Mission

To educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body and spirit of all.

LEARN

Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.

LEAD

Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.

SERVE

Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Eligibility for transportation services may be granted to pupils of the Board as per the approved parameters in the Transportation Directional Policy.

This Procedure provides guidance with respect to:

- Transportation to Specialized Programs
- Transportation for students enrolled in French Immersion Programs
- Transportation to and from Childcare
- Temporary Transportation due to Medical Reasons
- Temporary Transportation due to Compassionate Family Medical Reasons
- Variable Transportation for Joint Custody Arrangements
- Transportation for Out-of-boundary students
- Requests for Review of Distance Determination
- Requests for Reconsideration of Transportation Arrangements

Transportation to Specialized Programs

Notwithstanding the approved parameters in the Transportation Directional Policy, transportation may be provided for students requiring specialized programs, i.e. Special Education services located in regional sites. Transportation shall only be provided while the student is enrolled in the specialized program. Determination of which programs are deemed 'specialized' and eligible for transportation rests with Board Administration.

Transportation for students enrolled in French Immersion Programs

French Immersion programs are offered in various regional sites within the school board jurisdiction, and transportation services are provided to students who are eligible with regards to distance parameters under the following circumstances:

- French Immersion programs have established boundaries/catchment areas, which may be different than a student's 'home' school. Students may be provided with transportation to the French Immersion program that their primary residence is within the catchment for.
- Transportation to the location of the French Immersion program shall only be provided while the student is enrolled in the French Immersion program.
- Should a student cease to attend a French Immersion program, it is expected that the student will transfer to the appropriate English track program situated at the home school.

Transportation to and from Childcare

Transportation may be provided between school and a childcare centre/babysitter address (referred to as childcare) in accordance with the following guidelines and procedures:

- i) The childcare is within the same school boundary/catchment as the child's primary residence and
- ii) The childcare is beyond the walking distance of the home school which the student is registered to attend.
- iii) A student may have only one alternate pick-up and/or drop-off stop
- iv) The alternate transportation follows the same schedule five days per week;
- v) The parent/guardian applies annually on the prescribed form for this type of alternate address pick-up and drop-off by May 30th for transportation for the following school year.
- vi)

Temporary Transportation due to Medical Reasons

Transportation may be provided for students temporarily incapacitated with medical conditions that significantly interfere with their safe conveyance to school in accordance with the following guidelines and procedures:

- i) Parents/guardians must provide a Request for Special Transportation – Medical, 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.

- ii) Parents/guardians will submit the form to the school principal for acknowledgement by the principal.
- iii) The school principal will submit the form to the Transportation Authority for review and approval. In the event that insufficient information is provided by the medical practitioner, the form will be returned to the parent/guardian for further clarification and implementation will be deferred until clarification has been received.
- iv) After the transportation service has been approved, the Transportation Authority will arrange transportation and advise the parent/guardian accordingly. Siblings of students transported under this provision will not qualify for transportation solely as a result of another family member being transported.

Temporary Transportation due to Compassionate Family Medical Reasons

Consideration will be given by the Transportation Authority to special circumstances when a parent is critically ill/or injured and transportation is requested for the student. The parent must make the request in writing and provide sufficient/appropriate detailed information to the Superintendent responsible for Transportation. All other reasonable options such as walking buddies, walking school bus or riding with neighbours must be explored by the school Principal before transportation is granted. Transportation will only be granted for a limited time period of up to three months or until the end of term/year depending on when the request is received, and is intended to be a onetime event only. During this period the family will work on making alternative permanent arrangements.

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 equal access to the student. Joint custody need 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 on a one-week rotating schedule (week being defined as Monday to Friday) 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:

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

- iii) Only two (2) residences will be considered
- iv) Students must be nine (9) years of age by 1 September and able to determine the correct bus that they are to embark to their appropriate residence each day.
- v) Completion of prescribed form, signed by both parents, and submission of the form to the Transportation Authority. 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.

Transportation for Out-of-Boundary Students

Each school shall have a defined attendance boundary. Where permission has been granted to a student to attend a school outside of their attendance boundary, transportation services are not provided. Transportation for out-of-boundary/out-of-Board students is ultimately the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Transportation may be considered, upon written request, where there is

- (i) an existing route that accesses the 'out-of-boundary' school, and the parent/guardian is prepared to take responsibility to safely convey the student to a pick-up point on the existing route.
- (ii) there is adequate space on the existing route,
- (iii) no or minimal route adjustments are necessary, and
- (iv) there will be no additional costs incurred by the Board or Transportation Authority.

Requests for transportation may be submitted by 30 May to the school principal (or completion of an electronic form where available) and decisions on out-of-boundary/out-of-board arrangements will be at the sole discretion of the Transportation Authority, following consultation with Board administration.

When approved, permission will be given for one school year only and must be reapplied for the following school year. Where, during the current school year it becomes evident that space will cease to be available or a change in route is deemed necessary, such service will be discontinued effective the start of the subsequent school year.

Should there be space available, approval by the Transportation Authority is based on knowledge of the family situation as well as consideration of the following criteria:

- Grade level (priority given to younger students)
- Child care/ daycare provider needs
- Date of the application

Where requests for 'Out-of-Boundary' consideration are received prior to the start of the school year, but after mid-August, requests will not be reviewed or processed until after September 30th in order that the school year start up for transportation may proceed efficiently.

Request for Review of Distance Calculation

Geometrics planning software programs are used for all students within the service area. This software determines distance eligibility. This software measures the distance between the residence and the school property based on approved distances set in the Transportation Policy.

Distance is measured from the closest perimeter edge of the residential property to the closest perimeter edge of the school property based on the shortest route on the road network, inclusive of municipal walkways.

If a parent wishes to dispute the distance calculation, they may do so, noting that the Transportation Authority and the School Board have agreed upon the planning software, as expected by the Ministry of Education, to avoid discrepancies which can occur in varying web based mapping technologies.

The submission will be reviewed and the decision communicated to the parent/guardian either verbally, or in writing. The Transportation Authority decision is final and not subject to further review.

Request for Reconsideration of Transportation Arrangements

It is possible to request a reconsideration of the eligibility decision made by the Transportation Authority in cases where a parent or guardian disagrees with the way in which policies and administrative procedures have been applied.

Reconsideration Procedure:

1. Requests for reconsideration must be made in writing by a parent or guardian directed to the Chief Administrative Officer of STSCO, or the Transportation Supervisor of Trillium Lakelands DSB depending on the service area.
2. Staff members of the Transportation Authority will prepare all information regarding the situation along with an explanation for their decision based on policy and procedures.

3. The CAO/Transportation Supervisor will assess the documentation provided by the parent and guardian. A written reply will be prepared within 15 days of receipt.
4. If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response from the Chief Administrative Officer, he or she may request reconsideration of the decision in writing to the Director of Education, or delegate.
5. The Director of Education, or delegate, will then render a decision in writing within 30 working days. The parent or guardian will be notified in writing of the decision.
6. If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the response from the Director of Education, or delegate, regarding the application of this Administrative Procedure, they may petition in writing the Board of Trustees to request the opportunity to make a delegation to the Board.

Notwithstanding the time limits outlined above, no request for reconsideration will be processed between the dates of September 1st through October 15th because of the Transportation Authority school year start up for transportation.

At any time during the process, the local School Board Trustee may be contacted to assist with the process and the request submission.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Reviewing this Administrative Procedure to ensure its alignment with the Transportation Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Student Eligibility Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.
- Assisting parents/guardians with transportation concerns by receiving inquiries and forwarding to the Superintendent of Business and Finance or delegate for response.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation of the Student Eligibility Administrative Procedure.
- Making decisions regarding reconsiderations when subordinate levels of the process have been completed.

Superintendent of Business and Finance is responsible for:

- Acting as delegate of authority for Director of Education in matters of reconsideration.

- Providing support and decisions to Transportation Authority in interpreting and resolving conflicts brought forward from parents/guardians.

Superintendents are responsible for:

- Forwarding transportation eligibility related matters to the appropriate Transportation Authority or to Superintendent of Business and Finance

Principals are responsible for:

- Directing inquiries regarding transportation eligibility matters to the appropriate Transportation Authority
- Ensuring that forms received from parents/guardians regarding transportation eligibility are directed to the appropriate Transportation Authority
- Reviewing requests for Special Transportation and ensuring the requests are appropriate prior to directing to the Transportation Authority

Parents are responsible for:

- 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, and
- the safe conduct of the student(s) prior to pick-up and drop-off at bus stop locations
- Completing appropriate documentation (paper-based or electronically) 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 status/situation that would impact transportation eligibility, including changes to primary residence and custody matters.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Inquiries from parents/guardians and requests for reconsiderations are addressed in a timely manner.

DEFINITIONS:

Transportation Authority: for the jurisdictions of the Board in Peterborough, Northumberland and Clarington, the transportation authority is Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO), through its Chief Administrative Office. For the City of Kawartha Lakes, the transportation authority is Trillium Lakelands District School Board through its Transportation Supervisor

REFERENCES/RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Administrative Procedure 206 – Admission to Catholic Schools

Appendix A: School Bussing Application for Alternate Pick-up/Drop-off for
Childcare/Babysitter

Appendix B: Student Eligibility: Request for Special Transportation – Medical Form

Appendix C: Out-of-Boundary Student Transportation Request Form