



District School Board  
Ontario North East

# JOINT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

## I. POLICY STATEMENT

The following policy document represents the common policies relative to student transportation under jurisdiction of the following District School Boards:

Northeastern Catholic District School Board

District School Board Ontario North East

Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario

The Education Act states that a board **may provide transportation** for pupils enrolled in schools operated by the Board. Transportation to and from school is provided to students as a privilege not a right. Policy sets out the terms and conditions under which the Board may provide transportation.

## **II. GUIDELINES**

### **A. DEFINITIONS**

#### **Board (DSB)**

The term “Board (DSB)” refers to any one or all three of the school boards listed in the policy statement.

#### **Home/Residence**

Permanent place of residence - Primary residence located on a public road or on an access route maintained by publicly funded services.

(Not included is a secondary residence, such as cottages, trailers etc . . . )

#### **Parent/Guardian**

A person who has legal custody of the child

#### **Caregiver**

A person or organization designated by a parent or guardian to provide care

#### **Bus**

School purposes vehicle operating under contract with the Board

#### **JTGC**

Joint Transportation Governance Committee of the three DSBs

## **B. TRANSPORTATION GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Amendments or deletions to this policy **MUST** be processed through the Joint Transportation Governance Committee and approved by the Committee prior to presentation and subsequent approval by individual Boards.

### **1. MEMBERSHIP:**

- Two elected representatives of each of the three DSBs
- The Director of Education of each of the three DSBs or his/her designates
- The Senior Financial Officer of each participating Board

**Note:** Resource people may be added to the committee when deemed necessary and approved by the JTGC.

### **2. MANDATE:**

- Provide effective, efficient and economical school bus transportation services for all eligible pupils of the three DSBs
- Recommend necessary improvements to existing policies
- Undertake and finalize all school busing contracts
- Deal with all relevant issues under its jurisdiction
- Respect and apply the joint transportation policy of the three DSBs while recognizing individual board self-funded transportation needs
- Provide to the three DSBs all information required for decision making

### **3. DECISIONS:**

- All decisions flowing from the JTGC must be established first, on a consensus basis, and failing that, a simple majority vote of individual board votes.
- Each board shall have the right to one (1) vote
- All decisions having a financial impact must be approved by each of the three DSBs
- All amendments to the existing transportation policy must be presented to and approved by the three DSBs prior to implementation.

## C. REGULATIONS

### 1. ELIGIBILITY

The Board may offer, as a privilege, a transportation service to the pupils registered in its schools.

To maintain this privilege, every pupil is responsible for his or her behaviour to the principal of the school attended when travelling on school buses.

1. Every registered pupil attending one of the schools of the Board may have access to a means of transportation if he or she meets all the following conditions:
  - 1.1 the pupil attends the school assigned by the Board, and
  - 1.2 resides at a distance from the school that is greater than the walking distances established by the Board.

### 2. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions may be made to the above regulation in the following:

- 2.1 A pupil for whom walking poses a danger;
- 2.2 A pupil having special needs:
  - 2.2.1 a pupil having physical or intellectual disabilities;
  - 2.2.2 a pupil who has been injured or is ill (doctor's certificate must be provided prior to authorization)
  - 2.2.3 a pupil taking part in a cooperative education course.

Conditions:

    - 2.2.3.1 Schools offering a cooperative education program and requesting transportation for some of their pupils have to pay the expenses involved
    - 2.2.3.2 This service is available if there is space on the bus and if the request does not cause a change of route
    - 2.2.3.3 The pupil can have access to this service if the distance between his or her work place and the school or home exceeds the walking distance established by the Board.
- 2.3 A child of preschool age registered in a day nursery situated in a school of the Board if he or she is accompanied by a parent or legal guardian registered in a school of the system;

Conditions:

  - 2.3.1 The child is eligible and registered either at the day nursery of the school attended by parent or guardian or at a program for children of preschool age approved by the Board, and
  - 2.3.2 The child is accompanied by a parent or guardian registered at a school of the system, and
  - 2.3.3 There is space on the bus, and
  - 2.3.4 The Transportation Officer and the Director of Education of the Board, or his/her designate, have granted approval, and
  - 2.3.5 The Board has received the "Release of Indemnification" form properly completed and signed by the parent or guardian of the child.

2.4 For all other reasons deemed as valid by the Director of Education of the Board.

## 2. ALTERNATE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

In special circumstances, the Board can approve and subsidize other means of transportation.

If pupils are required to travel by boat, snow-machines and/or other means of transportation, it is recommended that approved life jackets, helmets and other safety equipment be worn as required by Transport Canada and/or other provincial legislation, except on commercially operated passenger vessels/vehicles which operate in compliance with all regulations and are licensed by Transport Canada.

## 3. WALKING DISTANCES

Eligible students who reside, or whose caregiver resides more than the following distances by public road or publicly owned and maintained access route from the designated school may be provided transportation:

	JK/SK	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Secondary Grade 9 -12
<b>Distance</b>	All are bused	.8 km	.8 km	.8 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	1.6 km	2.6 km
<b>Distance to a stop</b>	.3 km or less	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	.5 km	1.0 km

## D. ROUTES

### 1. REGULAR ROUTES

- 1.1 School bus loading and unloading locations will be determined by the Board's Transportation Officers. These locations will be determined in terms of safety, convenience and number of pupils served. The Board may, from time to time, amend the routes as required.
- 1.2 There will be no school bus stops on a hill, curve, dead end or any other location that could be considered hazardous, students may be required to walk to a reasonable collection point.
- 1.3
  - 1.3.1 All routes will be designated to operate only on municipal or provincial owned roads and roads which are municipally or provincially maintained twelve months of the year. The exception being turnarounds which may be located on private property where approved by the Director/designate or at the board's discretion.
  - 1.3.2 The Board may determine because of distance, terrain, safety condition or road maintenance that it will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardians to provide transportation to the nearest established bus stop.
  - 1.3.3 Where deemed impractical by the Board due to distance, terrain, safety condition or road maintenance students entitled to transportation may be expected to walk to the designated bus stop.

## **2. WINTER TRAVEL**

Permission will **not** be granted for a school bus to travel on the frozen surface of any lake or river.

## **3. ONE PICK-UP/ONE DESTINATION**

For reasons of safety, students are permitted to have one pick-up and one destination point only, (these points may be different providing it is a daily occurrence). Transportation is provided from home/caregiver home to/from school only. Requests that students be picked up and dropped off at other locations will not be accommodated. The requested change must be a permanent one that will be the same on a daily basis.

Parents/guardians wishing to change the regular pick-up and/or regular drop-off address must apply to the school for approval as per the form provided.

## **4. TEMPORARY CHANGES**

Temporary changes may be permitted on an existing route only in cases of emergencies such as death in the immediate family or serious illness requiring hospitalization or at the discretion of the Director of Education or his/her designate.

The temporary change may be considered if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Has been initiated by the parents/guardians by completing a Request for Special Transportation form to the school principal;
2. Request is made one (1) school day in advance of requested change;
3. Conditional on room availability on the bus;
4. Results in no route extension or deviation.

The transportation system is designed for eligible students. Students who are not normally eligible for transportation will not be accommodated unless the criteria for temporary changes have been met. Parents are responsible for transportation arrangements regarding birthday parties, visiting school friends or other personal commitments.

## **5. SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS**

In the interest of safety and in an effort to reduce student discipline problems and vandalism on school buses, video camera surveillance systems may be placed on school buses under contract to the Boards within the guidelines and procedures established by the Board.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD**

The responsibility of the Board begins when the child gets on the bus to go to school and stops when the child gets off the bus, at the end of the school day, at the point designated by the Board

## **7. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT**

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians of Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten pupils to ensure that, when the child is returned after school, there is someone waiting to receive the pupil.

The parent or guardian of a pupil who is not eligible for transportation service is responsible for the child to attend school.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT**

Every pupil is responsible for his or her conduct to the principal of the school that the pupil attends while travelling on a school bus that is under contract to a Board.

The pupil shall be ready for the school bus when it arrives, otherwise, the school bus may leave without the child. It will then be the responsibility of the parents/guardians to transport the pupil to school at his/her own expense.

## **E. PARENTAL CONCERNS AND/OR APPEAL PROCEDURES**

Parental concerns and/or appeals of decisions should be directed to the following persons or committees in their respective Board in the order presented:

- Principal
- Transportation Officer
- Appropriate Supervisory Officer
- Director of Education
- District School Board

## **F. SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS**

The Board expects and encourages that all school bus drivers will be able to effectively communicate with students they transport in the language of instruction of the schools they serve.

The Boards require a criminal record check for every person driving a school bus.

Every person driving a school bus shall submit to their employer an annual offence declaration prior to the beginning of the school year.

School bus drivers are required to fill in a School Bus Incident Report form to report incidents that have occurred on the school bus to the school principal.

## **III ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. DISTANCES**

#### **CALCULATION OF DISTANCES**

All distances mentioned will be the shortest distance by public road or publicly owned and maintained access route between home and school and may be measured from where the laneway or driveway joins the public road.

### **B. ADVERSE ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS**

The three local District School Boards recognize their responsibility for the safety and welfare of their pupils during or before school hours as stipulated in the Education Act or the Regulations.

Therefore, when a situation of inclement weather exists, or is predicted to exist before or during the school day which produces a significant risk for the safety of pupils, the Boards will develop and implement administrative provisions which will authorize Board designates to cancel student transportation.

#### **PROCEDURES**

The Director of Education or his/her designate may cancel the student transportation service before the beginning of the school day if the safety of pupils is at risk.

The Directors of Education or their designates may shorten the school day for the same reason.



## **GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS**

In recognition that the weather and road conditions frequently vary within the Board areas served by the three District School Boards, geographic grouping of schools is made to facilitate the formulation of procedures leading to cancellation of student transportation. Directors of Education or designates are responsible for establishing procedures in conjunction with the Joint Transportation Governance Committee.

## **C. ONTARIO SCHOOLS OR RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR EXCEPTIONAL PUPILS**

The Board may provide a resident pupil or for a person who is qualified to be a resident pupil, student transportation to and from the pupil's residence and the Ontario Schools for the Blind, Deaf and Ontario Hospital School, a Children's Mental Health Centre or Provincial Demonstration Schools as per the schedule established by the facility.

## **D. TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN IN LIEU OF BUSSING**

Subject to authorization of the Director of Education or his/her designate for the specific Board, daily student transportation MAY be provided by a parent/guardian for his/her own children to and from an established school bus route or school at the rate per kilometre in effect at the time, as per the Travel Allowance Policy/Agreement of the respective Board, including return trip. Payment may be made for actual pupil day attendance. Non-residents or persons living at a cottage or summer place or an alternate residence do not qualify.

In exceptional cases and upon specific approval of the Director of Education or his/her designate, a pupil may be authorized to attend a specific school (not normally attended) on condition that there are no added student transportation cost.