



Section Sixteen

Transportation



Section 16
TRANSPORTATION

Lakehead District School Board Policies and Procedures

Lakehead District School Board services a very large area. With the intent of providing this service in an efficient and cost effective manner, Lakehead District School Board entered a consortium with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. The Education Act allows a Board to provide transportation for students under certain conditions. All transportation provided is at the discretion of the Board. It is a privilege, not a right, and must meet the requirements of Board Policy and Procedures. Student Transportation Services have been designed to provide a balance of safety and security, bringing students to school on time and ready to learn.

Lakehead District School Board provides transportation for students identified as exceptional. Upon written approval received from the Superintendent or designate responsible for special education, exceptional children may be provided with transportation to school without consideration for any limitations. Proof of need is to be established by medical authorities or the identification, placement and review committee.

The Board agrees to provide special needs transportation for students attending Demonstration Schools or Provincial Schools (e.g., the W. Ross Macdonald School (Ontario School for the Blind) and the Sir James Whitney/Sagonaska School (Ontario School for the Deaf)), in accordance with a schedule to be agreed upon in consultation with both Lakehead District School Board and Provincial/Demonstration School staff.

Transportation of Exceptional Students

The Responsibilities

The Driver

- Must give special attention to students with disabilities
- Must be firm, but gentle; be patient, but persistent; be consistent
- Must see that the students are properly seated at all times
- Must be sure the student who leaves the school bus is delivered to a responsible adult
- Shall report any unusual actions in detail to the principal or teacher immediately
- Ensure that exceptional students abide by student regulations for transportation
- Will be aware of students identified on bus routes with potential life-threatening illnesses

The Principal

- Shall advise the operator of any health or behavioural problem of these students
- Must realize that regulations for school bus riding apply to the exceptional student

The Parent/Guardian

- Must realize that all rules and regulations related to school bus transportation apply to the exceptional student
- Shall advise the student of the rules and regulations
- Must be aware that transportation is provided from a designated stop to a designated stop, and that any other arrangements must be approved by STSTB or Principal.

Safety Criteria for Bus Operators

The Operator shall ensure that:

- services are provided in a safe and efficient manner;
- proof of insurance for each licensed motor vehicle is provided to the Transportation Department in accordance with the Ontario Public Vehicles Act;
- copies of the mechanical fitness inspection certificates required by the Acts and Regulations are available upon request;
- that each driver (including spare drivers) are trained in the use of an Epi Pen and Emergency First Aid and possess current Emergency First Aid/CPR certificates.
- that if a vehicle under contract is involved in an accident while transporting pupils, STSTB is notified as soon as possible, and follow up with a written accident report;
- that each driver has conducted a familiarization run of their assigned routes prior to the first day of the school year;
- each vehicle is equipped to meet requirements as outlined in all relevant Federal and Provincial Statutes and Regulations;
- each vehicle is operated in such a manner so as to comply with all relevant Federal and Provincial Statutes and Regulations;
- each vehicle displays a current brake inspection sticker and bus safety inspection sticker as required by the Highway Traffic Act;
- each vehicle has a logbook that is completed daily, according to Ontario Regulation 705/75 of the Highway Traffic Act;
- no person is employed to drive a vehicle unless said person meets all licensing requirements as set by Provincial Statutes and Regulations;
- the drivers enforce the standards of discipline for students as set forth under current Board Policies, Regulations and Procedures;
- each bus is in good working order and maintained in a clean manner both inside and out;
- drivers have a good moral character and are skilled in the management of students;
- each bus is provided with a waste receptacle attached at the front or back of the bus;
- that drivers are trained in the use and submission of the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form of Bill 157 - Keeping Our Kids Safe at School;

School Bus Transportation Safety Initiatives

Video Cameras

In the interest of safety and in an effort to reduce student discipline problems and vandalism on school buses, video camera surveillance systems have been placed on school buses under contract to the Boards.

Reflective Tape

All of the school buses contracted by the Boards have been outfitted with reflective tape to improve visibility.

First Rider Program

The First Rider Program was developed to help the very young first time riders of school buses overcome any fears that they may have about riding a school bus. This is an opportunity to teach them about school safety. The First Rider Program is a community endeavour involving School Boards, City Police, Ontario Provincial Police, City of Thunder Bay, Community Safety Groups, and School Bus Operators. It is held in August of each year.

Route Audit

Periodically throughout the school year, route audits are performed by STSTB to ensure compliance with Board Policy. Examples of items that are examined include safety of stops, capacity, distance between stops, condition of roads and turnarounds, route efficiency, length and time of route and student and road eligibility. Route Audits may result in changes to a route, i.e., stops changed or deleted, times changed, etc. These changes may occur at any time during the school year. Affected students and parents will be contacted by STSTB or the school of any significant route or time changes.

Identification of Hazardous Situations

Periodically, unusual safety hazards need to be evaluated. This process is done in conjunction with Police Services, STSTB, school bus operators, and drivers. A consensus is reached and a written report on the situation will be kept on file.

Driver Training

Not just anyone can get behind the wheel of a school bus. It takes someone with specialized knowledge and skill to control a vehicle safely, watch traffic and road conditions and at the same time, manage a bus full of high-spirited passengers. School bus drivers have an extremely important job and responsibility. From the time drivers make the first stop on the route until the last passenger disembarks, the safety of someone else's children is in their hands.

The legal requirements of becoming a licensed school bus driver are very demanding: between 20 and 40 hours of specialized training is followed by written exams and a road

test in the bus. Driving and criminal records are reviewed and regular medical examinations are required.

Every driver must complete certified driver improvement courses, as well as know traffic laws and safety procedures thoroughly. Periodic re-examinations keep the school bus driver sharp and safety-wise.

Radios

Each school bus is equipped with a two-way radio giving the bus driver contact with their Operators or the Board Transportation offices as needed.

Crossing Gates

All buses employed by the Boards are equipped with a stop arm located at the front of the bus. This stop arm is activated when the bus is stopped and provides a guide for students crossing in front of school buses. It ensures students are the required three metres ahead of the bus when crossing.

Strobe Lights

Some school buses traveling on our highways are equipped with strobe lights.

Visible Parent

A parent or guardian is required to meet the bus at the designated stop, be visible to the bus driver, or have a responsible sibling or caregiver there when Kindergarten students are being picked up and dropped off.

Safe Arrival Program

Member Boards' all participate in a safe arrival program. The Safe Arrival Program helps to ensure that all children who leave for school arrive at school safely. Parents' active participation in this program ensures the the program responds quickly to an emergency.

ID Tag Program

Each September new Junior Kindergarten students ride the bus to school for the first time. This program helps to alleviate any potentially confusing experiences for JK students on their first week of riding the bus. The use of ID TAG identification can be an effective way to improve safety and confidence. This method of identification ensures that bus drivers and teachers can readily identify new students that are riding buses for the first time.

Emergency Evacuation Program

All schools are required to provide training in emergency evacuation of a school bus to elementary students by October 31 of each new school year. Should an emergency arise in the P.M. where buses cannot deliver students home, each situation will be handled on a individual basis with all pertinent information posted/updated on the STSTB website.

More Information

For more information regarding Transportation please call STSTB at 625-1660 or go to the website at www.ststb.ca.