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1. Policy

It is the policy of Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) that students may be transported for education reasons at the Board's expense between home and zoned school, and on other occasions, according to the guidelines in Section 4 of the policy.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 The procedures will define the action required to implement policy statements.
- 2.2 References to 'STSTB' shall mean Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay, an administrative consortium to deliver efficiency and cost-effective student transportation service for the Board.
- 2.3 References to "Bus Operator" shall mean owner of the bus company.
- 2.4 References to "Driver" shall mean the driver of the school bus.
- 2.5 Eligibility defined in policy under Definitions, item 3.1.

3. Services – Daily Home to School

- 3.1 Accessibility is considered in contracting transportation services in accordance with 3100 Accessibility Procedures, Section 7.
- 3.2 Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay shall design routes to accommodate the majority of students in a given area, taking into consideration road conditions, proper turnarounds, timing and efficiency of routes, safety of students involved, and economy.
- 3.3 Bus stop locations, including transfer points and any changes to routes, must be authorized by STSTB.
- 3.4 Student pick up address may be different from their drop off transportation address and either or both may be different than their home address provided that:
 - a) the locations are within the school zone boundaries;
 - b) the schedule is static; and
 - c) request is received by LDSB from the parent(s)/guardian(s) and if approved by the consortium.

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- 3.5 Under specific circumstances, as approved by the director of education or designate, out of zone transportation to and from alternate home address may be provided, within existing scheduled routes, to and from the student's designated zone school.
- 3.6 Distances will be calculated as the distance by public pathway and public road from home to the closest school entrance of the school using the shortest route.
- 3.7 Seating accommodation and maximum loading factors for each bus servicing a school will be determined by:
- dividing the total inches of seating by 13 inches allowing three students per bench for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6;
 - dividing the total inches of seating by 15 inches allowing two students per bench for Grades 7 to 12; and
 - immediate arrangements shall be made to eliminate overcrowding or standees on school buses.
- 3.8 Where practical and feasible, vehicles will be utilized to their fullest extent by servicing more than one route, and more than one district school board.
- 3.9 Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay shall follow the summary of procedures, rules and regulations relating to school bus transportation as described in STSTB STS-GEN-023 Transportation Policy/STS-GEN-023fr Politique en maitiere de transport, prepared by consortium members.
- 3.10 No student will be discharged from a bus at a transfer point other than a designated transfer point. Students will only be discharged at a transfer point if there is Board supervision such as on school property or, otherwise, remain on their original bus until the transfer bus arrives. If, for any reason, the transfer bus does not arrive within a reasonable time, students must remain on the original bus until alternative arrangements can be made.
- 3.11 Whenever possible, no student will ride more than two buses while travelling to and from school. Routes will be designed, where possible, to limit the time riding on a bus to one hour each way. For students who reside in rural areas or attend programs at schools outside their home school catchment area (i.e., French Immersion, IB), ride times may exceed one hour.

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- 3.12 Routes will be designed to make every effort to arrive at schools as near to school opening times as possible, no earlier than 15 minutes before the bell at elementary schools, and to arrive at the bus stop nearest home as soon after school closing time as possible.

4. Special Consideration

4.1 Courtesy Transportation

As a courtesy, transportation may be provided to students who are ineligible for transportation where there is room on a bus, the student is zoned for the school, and the student is expected to be able to get to and from an existing stop safely. Students may be transported, although they normally would not be eligible for transportation, provided that, when eligible students require transportation, those ineligible students living closest to the school will be the first to relinquish their occupancy.

4.2 Out of Zone Transportation

Students who choose to attend a school outside of their school area must assume responsibility for their transportation to the chosen school.

4.3 Hazards

The Board will provide transportation to students whose transportation address falls below the eligibility distance when the consortium identifies hazards that warrant overcoming traffic or other forms of hazards.

4.4 Special Transportation

The Board may provide transportation for students who cannot access regular modes of transportation. Transportation will be provided, at the discretion of the director of education or designate, for injuries/medical conditions where the lack of access to school transportation presents a hardship for the parent/guardian.

4.5 Students with Special Needs

- 4.5.1 Students enrolled in self-contained programs, or identified as exceptional students, will be transported to designated schools in accordance with policy concerning distance between home and school. When possible, these students will be transported on regular routes.

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4.5.2 If circumstances, which in the opinion of the principal and/or other agencies, indicate that a student's interests would best be served by a transfer to another school (and this is approved by the director of education or designate), the student's transportation to the new school will be provided at the expense of the Board.

4.5.3 Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay shall follow the summary of procedures relating to special needs students as described in STSTB STS-SPE-001 Specialized Transportation Manual prepared by consortium members.

4.6 Other Considerations

On an as needed basis, as approved by the director of education or designate, transportation may be provided to students where the lack of access to school transportation presents an undue hardship for the parent/guardian.

5. Use of Video Cameras on School Buses

The use of video cameras on buses will be as per STSTB STS-GEN-024 Transportation Procedures 4.0.

6. Discipline on School Buses

6.1 Breaches of conduct detrimental to the safe operation of the school bus to other students riding the bus will not be tolerated.

6.2 Every student is responsible to the principal of the school that s/he attends for her/his conduct on the school board premises or while travelling on a school bus that is under contract to that board.

6.3 Reference of Conduct and Discipline on Buses is in the STSTB Consortium 'Transportation Services Overview' booklet.

7. Transportation Contracts

7.1 Transportation contracts with independent bus operators will be on the basis of tendered submissions.

7.2 Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay is mandated to administer member Boards' transportation contracts.

- 7.3 Bus operator shall ensure that each driver has required safety training as described in contract documents. Such training shall include, but not limited to, current Emergency First Aid, Adult and Child CPR, and Epinephrine autoinjector training.

8. Route Reviews

- 8.1 The consortia shall conduct reviews of routes to ensure the maintenance of an efficient, safe, and cost-effective transportation system.
- 8.2 Routes may be designed as to facilitate the use of central pick up and drop off locations to encourage efficiency and economies in the system.
- 8.3 Routes shall be established to minimize the amount of travelling time on the school bus. Pick ups before 7:00 a.m. and drop offs after 5:00 p.m. will be kept to a minimum, depending on the length of the route.
- 8.4 Routes will be designed to accommodate the concepts of double and triple routing and route sharing with all member boards of the consortia, where feasible and cost efficient.

9. Employee and Private Individual Use of Private Cars:

- 9.1 Policy Item 4.11, Employee and Private Individual Use of Private Cars shall have adequate public liability insurance coverage (minimum coverage shall be \$2,000,000).
- 9.2 Policy Item 4.11.2, Requirements for student use of cars:
- ensure that the student has adequate public liability insurance (minimum coverage should be \$2,000,000);
 - be satisfied that the driver is a reliable, responsible person;
 - advise students that they are under the jurisdiction of the school and that rules and regulations of the school apply while on school event trips;
 - advise students that they are to go directly to the event and return within a given time authorized by the principal, or their designate;
 - obtain written approval from the owner that the driver has permission to transport other students in the vehicle;
 - give written authorization to the student granting permission to drive the vehicle for a school event; and
 - be satisfied that the number of students transported shall not exceed the loading capacity of the vehicle and that all passengers are properly seat belted.

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10. Disposal of School Bus Business

10.1 An operator may dispose of their school bus business or change the ownership of the firm in whole or in part as per conditions contained in the signed contract.

10.2 Notification of Relationship

Upon request of the superintendent of business, and, in any event annually, all bus operators shall file a declaration as to their relationship, if any, to the controlling common share ownership of any other bus operator or a statement that they are unrelated to any other bus operator verified by affidavit or statutory declaration.

11. Board and Lodging

11.1 Eligibility for board and lodging assistance will be for students who reside more than 64 kilometers (40 miles) from home to school and are not resident students of another board.

11.1.1 When a student travelling on a regular daily route provides proof that the long distance of the regular route is detrimental to their progress in school.

11.1.2 When a student travelling on a regular daily route wishes to participate in a regular recognized extra-curricular program.

11.1.3 When a non-resident student attends LDSB and resides in a district where there is no other board jurisdiction.

11.1.4 Board and lodging applications shall be submitted to the school but are subject to the approval of Board administration.

11.1.5 Assistance payments shall not exceed the maximum amount approved by senior administration.

12. Instructions

12.1 The Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay Consortium booklet 'Transportation Services Guide' will be provided as a reference guide.

12.2 Emergency procedures for transportation and school closures are referred to in 6010 Emergency Evacuation and School Closure Policy and Procedures.

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13. Communications and or Complaints

- 13.1 Responsibility for providing information pertaining to this policy and its regulations to operators and/or bus drivers shall rest with the consortia office.
- 13.2 Responsibility for providing information pertaining to this policy and its regulations to parents/guardians and students shall rest with principals.
- 13.3 Parent/guardian and/or student inquiries should be directed to the principal for response.
- 13.4 If the principal requires assistance, their inquiries should be directed to the consortia office, except in the case of disciplinary matters.
- 13.5 Board trustees shall direct inquiries or complaints to the director of education or designate.
- 13.6 The transportation manager of the Board shall have the authority to make decisions consistent with Board policy.
- 13.7 Any individual may appeal decisions made under this policy after pursuing the matter through the appropriate administrative personnel. All appeals must be presented, in writing, for consideration by the consortium manager and further to the director of education or designate, should the appellant wish to challenge the decision of the consortium manager.

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These procedures shall be reviewed in accordance with the 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy.

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
Transportation Services Overview	March 19, 1991	Education Act. Reg. 262 Section 24(5)
Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay (STSTB) STS-GEN-023 Transportation Policy		Child and Family Services Act R.S.O. 1990
Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay STS-GEN-024 Transportation Procedure		Ontario Public Vehicles' Act R.S.O. 1990
Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay STS-SPE-001 Specialized Transportation Manual		Ontario Highway Traffic Act R.S.O. 1990
6010 Emergency Evacuation and School Closure Policy/Procedures		
3070 Personal Use of Vehicles Policy/Procedures	<u>Date Revised</u> April 28, 2009	
3100 Accessibility Policy/Procedures	October 22, 2013 November 26, 2013 November 23, 2021	
7030 Human Rights & Workplace Harassment Policy/Procedures	February 27, 2024	