



## **BU-3026 Transportation Procedure**

**Approval Date: 2020**

**Review Date: 2025**

### **1. Purpose**

Trillium Lakelands District School Board believes in providing transportation services in accordance with the Education Act to eligible students that reflects a partnership with the home, that is consistent, and that ensures the most efficient and effective use of available resources. It is the expectation of the Board that the conduct of students on school vehicles shall conform to that expected on other school property.

The Board believes that the safety of the students is a shared responsibility with the home and considers this to be of paramount importance. The Board's responsibility for the supervision of students who are transported in a school vehicle will commence with the student's entrance to the vehicle and will terminate with the student's exit from the vehicle at the designated stop(s). The Board assumes no responsibility for students at the stop before pick-up or after drop-off. Parents/guardians are fully responsible for getting students safely to and from pick-up and drop-off locations, and for the safety of the students before pick-up and after drop-off. Parents assume the responsibility for their children to be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before their scheduled pick-up time and for their child's safety and behavior while they wait to board the bus in the morning and when they are dropped off at their designated end of day stop.

The Board will endeavor to ensure that, when transportation service is provided, safe practices will be followed.

Each school shall have a designated walking zone within its attendance area. Students may be required to walk the following distances:

To the school:

- Grade JK-8            1.6 km
- Grade 9-12           3.2 km

To a designated bus pick-up point:

- Grade JK-8            .8 km
- Grade 9-12           1.6 km

### **2. References and Related Documents**

Internal

- [Accessible Customer Service Procedure BD-2086](#)
- [Authorization for Storage and Administration of Prescribed Medication Procedure OP-6601](#)
- [Response to Anaphylactic Reactions Procedure OP-6510](#)
- [Medical and Health Management in Schools OP-6603](#)

- [Student Use of Service Animals in Schools Procedure ES-5031](#)
- [Code of Conduct Procedure OP-6021](#);

External

- [Highway Traffic Act](#)
- [Bill 157 – Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act](#)
- [Sabrina’s Law, 2005](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(2005\)](#)
- [Ryan’s Law, 2015](#)

### 3. Terms and Definitions

**Home School** – the school in the catchment area where the student resides. If the student is registered in a specific program, the home school would be the school offering that Pathway program. If the student withdraws from that particular program, their home school immediately becomes the school where the student resides and transportation is discontinued at the end of the semester to the pathway school. (If eligible for transportation to home school that can commence the next semester)

**Special Education** – programs and services provided for students with needs relating to an exceptionality or disability as identified by the Specialized Services department.

**System Classes** - specialized programs provided to students where the needs, as identified by the Department of Specialized Services, exceed what can be accommodated in the regular class.

**Catchment Area** –The Board defined attendance boundary for a school.

**Parent** – Parents, guardians, or student if they are an adult or are 16 or 17 and have withdrawn from parental control.

**Principal** – Principal or designate

**Eligible Passengers** – An eligible passenger shall be considered to:

- an elementary or secondary student under the age of 21 within the Trillium Lakelands District School Board catchment area and for whom the Board has assumed a responsibility to provide transportation;
- an elementary or secondary student from out-of-province who is part of a board approved reciprocal exchange program. The out-of-province exchange student must be billeted with a student of the Board who is eligible for transportation and there must be available paid capacity on the existing bus route. The request for transportation, along with the details of the arrangements, must be made by the school principal to Transportation Services at least four (4) weeks prior to the date transportation is required;
- any staff member of the Board in the practice of their duties when arranged through transportation.

### 4. Administrative Procedure

#### 4.1. Eligibility of Students

a) Each school shall have a designated walking zone within its attendance area. Students may be required to walk the following distances:

To the school:

- Grade JK-8                    1.6 km
- Grade 9-12                   3.2 km

To a designated bus pick-up point:

- Grade JK-8 .8 km
- Grade 9-12 1.6 km

It is understood that if a street or road in the designated walk zone extends beyond the distances established above, the entire street may be designated as a walk zone.

The maximum walking distance to a bus stop may exceed the above distances in exceptional circumstances where the Board determines the roadway is unsafe (or unsuitable) for a school vehicle to manoeuvre or turnaround.

- Each school shall have a defined catchment area for determining eligibility for transportation. Transportation for out of area students will be the responsibility of the parent.
- The Board will provide daily transportation to and from school, for eligible students who reside outside designated walking zones and who are attending schools within their home school attendance boundaries.
- Students who have been identified with special needs through Specialized Services may be transported to their assigned school with prior written approval being given by the Superintendent responsible for Specialized Services or designate, and the Superintendent of Business Services or designate.
- Students who move outside their existing catchment area during the school year and who have received permission to continue at their original school may receive transportation to their original school for the balance of the school year for elementary students and for the balance of the semester for secondary students, provided that an approved Transfer Between School Attendance Area form has been completed by the principal. In these circumstances the service is only for the balance of the school year for elementary students and the balance of the semester for secondary students in which the move occurred and there must be existing paid capacity on the bus. The students must access an existing bus route and bus stop that serves the school where they have requested to stay. A bus route will not be re-routed along its established course.
- Registration information for all new students must be entered into the student database system by the school registering the student. This data will be exported to the transportation database on a nightly basis. Requests for transportation for newly registered students may be made by electronically emailing the Office Index Card for the student to the Transportation Services email conference. Transportation will be effective after the arrangements appear on BusPlannerWeb for schools and operators to retrieve, unless otherwise specified.
- An alternate existing stop may be granted as a pick-up/drop-off point other than the assigned stop location if that pick-up/drop-off point is on the same bus route and a written request by the parent is approved by the principal. The principal must inform the school bus driver and Transportation Services of the requested alternate pick-up/drop-off in writing.
- An elementary student living within a designated walk zone and thereby not eligible for transportation, may be eligible for transportation to and from a caregiver living in a bussing area within the same school catchment area, if that caregiver is located outside of the walk zone.

If the location of an elementary student's day care provider is in a different school catchment area from where the student resides, and the daycare provider's location is outside the designated walk zone for that school, the student may be eligible for transportation to the school in the catchment area for the daycare provider, if an approved Transfer Between School Attendance Area form has been completed by the principal

Arrangements may be made for one alternate route on a fixed regular schedule for the purposes of accessing a caregiver.

- i) In the case of shared custody of an elementary or secondary student, arrangements may be made for one alternate route on a fixed regular schedule.
- j) Transportation may be provided for special needs students and students enrolled in special education system classes not offered in the student's home school. Discretion over which special education systems classes are deemed eligible for transportation rests with the Board. Transportation shall only be provided while the student is enrolled in the specifically approved program.
- k) Secondary students who wish to enroll in a Pathway related course which is not offered at their home school or the Virtual Learning Centre (VLC) may access an existing bus route to attend the secondary school where the specific course is offered. The determination of whether the course is available at the student's home school will be made by the principal. The access to transportation is limited to the time (usually a semester) required to complete the course, if capacity on the bus is available. This access would also apply to secondary students (under age 21) who wish to attend the Adult & Alternative Education Centres.
- l) Students who live outside the Trillium Lakelands District School Board boundaries, who have applied and received permission to register at a Trillium Lakelands District School Board school, may be provided with transportation, provided that an approved Request for Non-Resident Student to Attend a TLDSB School form has been completed by the principal and submitted to Transportation Services. Approval is contingent on an existing bus route being available and there is room on the bus. A bus route will not be re-routed along its established course.
- m) The principal or designate may, in the case of an emergency, arrange on-the-spot special one-time transportation for a student, which may necessitate a change in buses. The principal must inform the bus driver(s) involved with written confirmation, and electronically submit the Daily Discretionary Transportation Arrangements form to Transportation Services.
- n) Junior and Senior Kindergarten students who wish to attend the French Immersion Program in Grade 1 (one) and have been granted Out of Area Permission to attend the local French Immersion school may be granted transportation service. Out of Area forms need to be completed and submitted to Transportation Services prior to establishing bussing.

#### **4.2. Bus Route Design**

- a) Bus routes and stops will be planned annually in accordance with the Board's BU-3025 Transportation Policy to ensure that provincial standards set out in the Highway Traffic Act are adhered to. In designing a bus route consideration will be given to Ontario Ministry of Transportation guidelines for planning safe routes. Bus routes will be integrated with partner boards to ensure maximum route efficiency.
- b) Transportation will only be provided on public roads that are maintained year round by a municipality.
- c) Where deemed impractical by staff due to distance, terrain or road maintenance, the parent of students eligible for transportation under this policy may be reimbursed by the Board to provide transportation to the nearest designated bus stop.
- d) The Board, in its sole discretion, may determine because of distance, terrain or road maintenance that it will be the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to the nearest established bus route within the appropriate walking distance to the designated bus stop.

- e) When the Board determines bus stop location, the following criteria will be considered to ensure that the students are not placed at risk. When reviewing a stop, no one criteria will necessarily determine whether or not a stop is deemed to be safe or unsafe:
- Bus visibility by other motorists;
  - Posted speed limit;
  - Bus stop signage (warning of bus stop);
  - Number of students loading;
  - Traffic patterns;
  - Condition of roads to be travelled;
  - Amount of space the bus requires to turn (turn-around points must be safe in all weather, with firm traction and good visibility to oncoming traffic);
  - Number and size of available buses;
  - Number of and distance between stops;
  - Unless exceptional (safety) conditions exist, as determined by Transportation Services, bus stop locations shall be a minimum of 200 metres apart.
- f) Wherever possible congregated bus stops shall be established as bus pick-up/drop-off points.
- g) A bus will not enter private property, nor will it travel a roadway where there is deemed to be no suitable turnaround.
- h) Walking distances will be determined by the transportation routing software from where the student's driveway meets the year round municipally maintained road or where the municipally unmaintained road meets the year round municipally maintained road to the assigned bus stop location or first (or nearest) pedestrian access to the school property. The distance will be measured based on the shortest distance on a public road or walkway. Transportation Services staff, if required, will verify distances by vehicle odometer measuring the same way.
- i) Reasonable effort will be made to limit the time on the bus to one hour per trip to a student's home school. However, in the interest of maximizing school vehicle capacity, or if a student is attending a program, routes may be extended where necessary.
- j) Bus routes/stops may change from year to year, or during a school year, given the demographics of each school's catchment area. Further, in some instances it may be necessary to change a student's bus route and stops during the year, depending upon demographics, vehicle loading or time constraints.
- k) Establishing appropriate bell times at school locations is important to ensure the efficient use of transportation resources. Senior Administration must approve any requested changes being made to bell times by the school prior to any changes being made to bell times. Transportation Services may make recommendations to the school and Senior Administration with regard to bell times in order to maximize the use of vehicles.

#### **4.3. Medical Certificates**

- a) Transportation arrangements may be considered for students when a Request for Transportation for Medical Reason form is provided. The form must be completed by an independent medical practitioner verifying for medical, physical or emotional reasons transportation is required. This form shall be submitted on an annual basis.
- b) Transportation arrangements may be considered for students with a short-term disability. These exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent of Business Services.

- c) It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school principal regarding a student's medical condition which may require individual attention.
- d) Transportation Services shall:
  - Ensure that the bus drivers are aware, where consent exists, of any Plan(s) of Care for students on their bus routes;
  - Assist in developing procedures to minimize risk while travelling on the bus;
  - Assist in the development of plans and protocols that relate to bussing.

Bus Drivers shall:

- Carry a student route list that indicates those that have Plans of Care (with consent);
  - Receive training as applicable/required (example: use of an auto-injector, etc.);
  - Contact dispatch in an emergency situation and respond according to the Plan of Care.
- e) The Board may request the Operator to direct driver(s) to administer "epipen" medication to students as may be required. It is further understood that the driver will not be expected to carry the medication.
  - f) Regardless of medical status, an out of area student not eligible for transportation will not be granted transportation.

#### **4.4. School Bus Service Cancellation**

- a) The Board recognizes and responds to extreme variations in weather conditions across the District. The safe transportation of students to and from school shall be the guiding principle in all decisions to cancel bus transportation services. During inclement weather, or due to road conditions, bus transportation services may be cancelled.
- b) For the purposes of cancelling transportation services due to inclement weather, the Board shall be divided into three main areas: Haliburton County, the District of Muskoka and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Within the three areas, buses may be cancelled by secondary school catchment area for localized conditions.
- c) The Superintendent of Business Services, or designate, shall be responsible for school bus cancellations. The decision as to whether or not the buses will be cancelled due to inclement weather will be made by the Superintendent of Business Services, in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor, along with the appropriate local transportation operators. The decision will take into consideration existing road conditions, weather conditions as reported by Environment Canada and any other information available at the time the decision has to be made. Notwithstanding the above, transportation cancellations will be made if the ambient (DOES NOT INCLUDE WINDCHILL) air temperature for the area is minus (-) 35oC or below.
- d) In the event of school vehicle cancellation, the Superintendent of Business Services or designate, will be responsible for notifying the appropriate media outlets and posting the cancellation on the website.
- e) If, due to localized inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, a driver feels it is necessary to alter or cancel a route, the driver must immediately notify their operator. The decision to cancel will be made in consultation with the Transportation Supervisor and Operator. The operator shall be responsible for notifying the parent listed on the route manifest of any changes, and the school principal. If the localized conditions improve, the route may operate in the afternoon.
- f) The decision to either keep a student home or to send a student to school on an inclement weather day ultimately rests with the parent.

- g) There may be an emergency occasion, when it is necessary to have early dismissal in advance of the regular departure time. On such occasion, the school principal or designate will contact Transportation Services to make arrangements as per the respective school's emergency plan.

#### **4.5. Transporting Articles or Equipment**

- a) No article/equipment will be transported on the bus unless:
- it can be safely secured on a bus, and
  - it is properly protected and contained so as not to cause injury; and not become a projectile, and;
  - it can be safely stored beneath the seat or on the lap of the student.
- b) No eligible student shall be refused transportation in the morning because an article/equipment is not to be transported under this regulation. However, the article will be left at the school and the principal shall ask the parent to pick it up.
- c) The bus driver will exercise the right to refuse to transport unsafe or unauthorized articles when leaving the school.
- d) No animals are to be allowed on a school bus, with the exception of a Service Dog as defined by the Student Use of Service Animals in Schools Procedure ES- 5031, or in exceptional circumstances approved by the Director of Education The Specialized Services Department will provide the appropriate documentation to Transportation Services prior to the animal being transported for the first pick-up time.
- e) For excursions, it is the responsibility of the supervising teacher under the authority of the principal or designate to ensure that alternate arrangements are made to transport articles/equipment.

#### **4.6. School Bus Accidents**

- a) All accidents involving a bus and/or student on the bus, no matter how minor, must be verbally reported immediately by the Operator to the Transportation Supervisor or designate and the principal(s) of the school(s) affected by the operator.
- b) In the event of an accident, the bus driver's first responsibility is to the passengers, using the following guidelines:
- remain with the bus and students;
  - immediately report the accident by radio to their dispatcher and, if necessary, ask for assistance;
  - call emergency services to assess students;
  - if emergency services are present at the scene no student shall be removed from the scene until the officials at the scene of the accident agree to release them.
  - provide pertinent details of the accident to their Operator or Dispatcher immediately to be shared with Transportation Services and emergency responders, as necessary.
- c) In the event of an accident, the notification responsibilities are as follows:
- the Operator will immediately notify Transportation Services and the appropriate school(s), providing complete details;
  - a reasonable attempt to contact the parent shall be carried out as follows:
- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| up to 8:00 a.m.        | Operator responsible |
| 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. | School staff         |
| 4:30 p.m. and later    | Operator responsible |

- Transportation Services will immediately notify the Superintendent of Business Services and the Communication Department of the accident;
  - Where a media release is necessary, a statement will be issued from the Director's office.
  - Where EMS has been dispatched, Principals shall follow up with families to ensure they are aware of the circumstances.
- d) In the event of an accident, the operator shall make the necessary arrangements to complete the affected bus route.
- e) Within 48 hours after the accident, the bus driver will file a report with the Operator using the accident report form supplied by the Board. The Operator will be responsible for providing Transportation Services with a copy of the accident report form within 48 hours of the accident. In serious accidents, as determined by the Transportation Supervisor, a written report shall be submitted immediately.

#### **4.7. School Bus Conduct and Discipline**

The school vehicle is considered to be an extension of the classroom and, as such, student conduct detrimental to the safe operation of the school vehicle or to the safety of others riding the school vehicle, will not be permitted. Every student is responsible to the principal or designate of the school that the student attends for his/her conduct while on the school vehicle. Where deemed necessary by the Superintendent of Business Services, or designate, video camera surveillance systems may be placed on school vehicles under contract to the Board.

- a) Each school vehicle under contract to the Board will display the Conduct of Students on School Buses sign in a visible place.
- b) The behaviour expectations for students on school vehicles and the disciplinary process are on the Trillium Lakelands DSB website each academic year.
- c) During an excursion, the code for student conduct applies.
- d) The school vehicle driver will notify the principal of students who have violated the conduct code by using the Student Misconduct Form. The student will provide the driver with the Operator copy before being allowed back on the school vehicle. The school will send the pink copies weekly to Transportation Services.
- e) The following guidelines, at the discretion of the student's principal, shall be considered when dealing with student misconduct. In the procedures listed below serious misconduct is deemed to be any offence that could impact on the safe operation of the school vehicle including the use of abusive and foul language directed at the driver. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the principal will apply any of the disciplinary provisions.
- 1st Infraction: The school vehicle driver warns the student and notifies the principal or designate on the appropriate form and the appropriate discipline is initiated by the principal.
  - 2nd Infraction: The principal is notified by the school vehicle driver and appropriate discipline is undertaken by the principal. Notification to parent by telephone or in writing.
  - 3rd Infraction: A suspension of school vehicle riding service will be determined by the principal. Notification will be made in writing to the parent, school vehicle driver and Transportation Services. A parent has the right to appeal the suspension to the appropriate area Superintendent. Any further offenses may result in the removal of transportation service.
- f) If a serious misconduct occurs during the afternoon run, the vehicle driver may request a suspension of the student's transportation service the following morning. In this event, the Operator must contact the



Transportation Supervisor or designate, appropriate school principal or designate to request the suspension of the student.

- g) All elementary and secondary student suspensions (school and school vehicle) must be reported immediately by the principal or designate to the Transportation Services email address prior to the start of the suspension. Students who are suspended from school may not ride the school vehicle during the suspension period.
- h) If a student wilfully damages a bus or any vehicle licensed to transport students, as documented by the driver and determined by the school principal, they may be required to pay for the damages. In addition, disciplinary consequences will be determined by the school principal.

i) VAPING

Trillium Lakelands DSB Code of Conduct Procedure OP-6021 states that all students must not smoke or hold any lighted medical cannabis or lighted tobacco product, including e-cigarettes or vaporizers, on school property, school buses, or at school activities or events.

#### **4.8. School Bus Evacuation Drill and Emergency Procedures**

- a) Transportation Services will advise the principal annually of the bus operator(s) assigned to each elementary school to be responsible for delivering the safety programs to the eligible students.
- b) Transportation Services will provide the elementary school principal with the contact information for the Operator assigned to each school and the principal shall establish appropriate dates for the assigned bus operator to conduct bus evacuation drills for transported students prior to December 15.
- c) All outside drills must be conducted prior to December 15th of the current school year.

**If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact Communications Services at [info@tldsbc.on.ca](mailto:info@tldsbc.on.ca).**