



OSTA

Ottawa Student
Transportation
Authority

Stakeholder Responsibilities

Effective Date: September 28, 2015

Policy Code – Version: T10 – V2

Policy Name: Stakeholder Responsibilities

Approved by motion of Board on

28/09/2015

Cross Reference

Related Forms

Policy Statement

1. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority recognizes that the safe and efficient transportation of member school board students requires the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders, including OSTA officials, member school board administration and school staff, contracted vehicle operators and their drivers, caregivers, parents/guardians, students, the City of Ottawa, and the general public.
2. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority and its stakeholders shall share the responsibility for the safe transportation of students.
3. The General Manager of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority shall establish policies and procedures that establish and support the responsibilities of all stakeholders and the expectations and obligations of those stakeholders.
4. The General Manager shall ensure that all stakeholders comply with the requirements of this policy.
5. The General Manager shall review and revise this and associated policies and procedures annually or more often as may be required.

Procedure

1. The General Manager of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority will establish, review, and update as required, detailed responsibilities and expectations of all stakeholders concerned with ensuring the safe transportation of students on vehicles contracted by the organization.

2. Stakeholders will be required to comply with all associated OSTA policies relating to the transportation of eligible member school board students. Stakeholders who are unable to comply with established policies may be subject to the forfeiture or delay of transportation service or contracts.

3. **Stakeholder Responsibilities**

a) Ottawa Student Transportation Authority

- Facilitate the provision of transportation services to eligible students of member school boards, in accordance with policies and procedures established by the OSTA and member school boards;
- Establish school bus and small vehicle routes for eligible member school board students prior to the commencement of each school year;
- Maintain approved transportation information systems to ensure schools, parents, operators, and bus drivers have up-to-date route and passenger information for regular home to school routes and special needs transportation services;
- Liaise with member school boards and the City of Ottawa Planning Department to maintain road network information;
- Provide the on-going review of safety hazards and recommend adjustments to transportation entitlement zones as required;
- Review existing transportation network and routes to identify and effect service efficiencies.

b) Member School Board Staff

- Ensure and maintain the accuracy of student demographic information in student database systems;
- Advise parents of their children's approved transportation arrangements during September and October each year;
- Teachers and/or Principals supervise and assist with the loading and unloading of buses and provide adequate supervision where students are required to wait for buses;
- Ensure that school buildings are open when necessary for transportation purposes during a period beginning fifteen (15) minutes before classes begin for the day, and ending fifteen (15) minutes after classes end for the day;
- Ensure that only those students approved by the OSTA for transportation services are brought to school bus vehicles for transportation;
- Ensure that "*Life-Threatening Medical Condition – Emergency Transportation*" forms are submitted to the OSTA under timelines established by member school board policy;
- Ensure the accurate coding of students with life-threatening medical conditions in student database systems;

- School Principals ensure compliance with OSTA and member school board policies regarding student conduct on school vehicles;
- Secure students into and remove seat belts where students are transported using such equipment;
- Coordinate ongoing school bus safety education programs and bus evacuation drills with the school bus operators servicing their school;
- Ensure that all papers, books, etc., are secure in backpacks or bags before the child leaves the classroom, and discourage children from taking items out of their backpack or bags while they are on school vehicles;
- Distribute transportation route schedules, as needed, to students prior to the start of the current school year;
- Provide advance notice to all passengers of vehicles where a service animal is to be working;
- Place into and remove students from car and booster seats;
- Cooperate with contracted drivers, operators, and OSTA officials in the provision of transportation services.

Information Technology Departments

- Coordinate and cooperate with the ongoing transfer of up-to-date student data to the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority;
- Provide pre-registration and pre-transition information to the OSTA by April 1 of each year for use in school bus route planning;
- Maintain server and software and provide hardware, network, and data systems assistance to the OSTA;
- Maintain student database systems and information as supplied by schools;
- Perform data transfers to the OSTA for incorporation into approved transportation software on a daily basis, or as otherwise required;
- Perform necessary procedures to upload transportation information from transportation systems to the appropriate fields in the member school board student database systems;
- Ensure software support personnel and other approved outside agencies have secure access to the OSTA server(s) as authorized by the OSTA.

c) Contracted Large and Small Vehicle Operators and Drivers

- Be familiar and comply with all applicable OSTA and member school board policies and procedures as they relate to the transportation of students, including:
 - i. Cooperating with OSTA officials and school Principals in matters relating to student discipline on contract vehicles;
 - ii. Ensuring the confidentiality of student information;

- iii. Supporting the work of School Bus Monitors who may be assigned by school Principals;
 - iv. Ensuring that only those persons approved for transportation service by the OSTA are accepted onto contracted vehicles;
 - v. Ensuring that vehicles under contract are and remain smoke-free by ensuring that smoking is not permitted in or within nine (9) feet of vehicles, in accordance with the OSTA's "Smoke-Free Workplace" policy;
 - vi. Ensuring that drivers are aware of and have received training in order to meet their obligations and responsibilities under the OSTA's "Life-Threatening Medical Conditions" policy and the potential need for the emergency administration of epinephrine medication to identified students;
- Review preliminary service schedules prepared by the OSTA over the summer months to assist in the identification of route optimization opportunities, safety issues, potential timing problems, and mileage and provide recommendations for improvements;
 - Be familiar with routes as developed by the OSTA and have completed a test run prior to the beginning of the school year;
 - Provide on-going route and service level recommendations to OSTA officials throughout the school year relative to safety issues, and potential route optimization;
 - Review and update official OSTA route manifests as of October 31 of each school year, including the identification of all passengers;
 - Ensure they and their vehicles meet all requirements of The Highway Traffic Act, The Public Vehicles Act and the regulations therein, as well as meeting the conditions specified in annual service contracts between the Operator and the OSTA;
 - Ensure, as much as reasonably possible given traffic and weather conditions, that vehicles operate on a regular and consistent schedule;
 - Provide notice to the OSTA and school Principals of vehicles operating more than fifteen (15) minutes late on its route to school;
 - Provide alternate transportation to students with a minimum of delay when a vehicle becomes inoperative on the route;
 - Provide input into and cooperate with transportation service cancellation decisions made by OSTA officials.
 - Become familiar with and ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Small Vehicle Operators will also

- Communicate with parent(s)/guardians, OSTA, and school officials concerning special transportation issues, including scheduling, policies, route modifications, problem-resolution, and information services;

- Ensure that special transportation vehicles pass an annual Provincial Safety Standard Inspection and that vehicles are maintained to such acceptable safety standards throughout the school year;
- Administer the requirements for car and booster seat service including legislative compliance, assignment, and communication with parent(s), inventory, and upkeep;
- Ensure that passengers with identified special needs are released into the care of a responsible adult at school and drop-off locations;
- Properly secure child booster and car seats in service vehicles.

d) Caregivers, Parents and/or Guardians

- Ensure school staff has accurate and up-to-date information for their child/children;
- Educate their children regarding the need for safe and appropriate behaviour while boarding, leaving, and riding the bus;
- Ensure their child's belongings are in a backpack that is fully closed and secure;
- Assist physically challenged students or students using car/booster seats to and from the vehicle at pick-up and drop-off locations;
- Ensure the safety of all children while traveling to and from school and bus stop locations;
- Arrive at bus stop locations at least five (5) minutes in advance of regularly scheduled pick-up;
- Supervise children prior to pick-up by the bus and immediately after leaving the bus on their return trip home;
- Ensure students are dressed warmly enough to cope with the potential loss of heat due to a mechanical breakdown on the vehicle;
- Be aware that drawstrings, costumes, winter hats, and bulky clothing can pose a danger to children riding on school vehicles as they can become snagged on handrails and doors, and take appropriate preventive measures;
- Securing students in seat belts and/or car or booster seats where their children are transported using this equipment;
- Provide transportation for their child for personal appointments and/or lessons, work placements, or travel to a friend's home;
- Provide transportation for their child when they must bring bulky, dangerous, or distracting items to school such as animals, projects and/or sports equipment, including skis and ski poles.

e) Students

- Conduct themselves in accordance with Administrative Procedures #4 of the OSTA's "School Bus Safety" policy whenever assigned to contract

school or OC Transpo vehicles, whether contracted for the purpose of excursion or regular home to school transportation.

f) City of Ottawa

The City of Ottawa is responsible for ensuring the clearing of roadway, sidewalk, and designated pathways of snow and debris in accordance with service schedules established by the municipality.

g) General Public

The General Public is responsible for contributing to the safety and security of all residents and users of their community by respecting school zone speed limits and being aware of pedestrian and cyclist traffic at all times.