



OSTA

Ottawa Student
Transportation
Authority

Newsletter

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The OSTA Transformation Project

The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority is a consortium which provides transportation services to the Ottawa-Carleton District and Ottawa Catholic School Boards in a safe, efficient and effective way.

OSTA receives its funding through the two school boards and is required to be transparent and accountable to the Ministry of Education and all stakeholders for the use of public funds.

The Ministry of Education has established the Effectiveness and Efficiency Leading Practices Guideline which outlines all the goals and strategies each transportation consortium is expected to undertake. Check out: http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/images/documents/EE_Leading%20Practices%20Guide_Final_EN.pdf

OSTA has made many improvements over the past few years and has moved from an initial "moderate-low" rating to a "moderate" rating. The ultimate goal is for OSTA to achieve a "high" rating, which would demonstrate appropriate use of public funds, while offering substantially better service to as many students as possible.

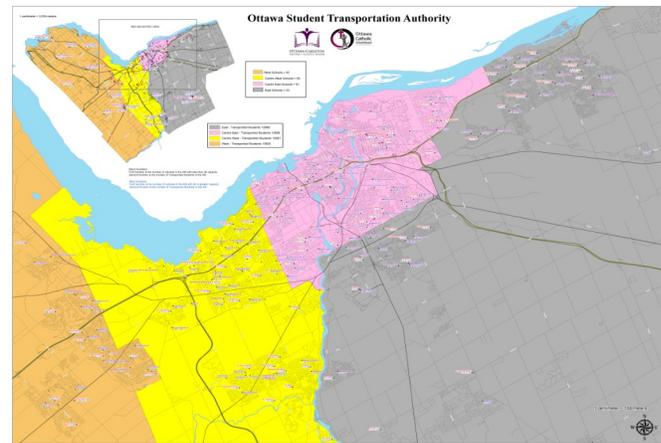
The key elements that lead to routing efficiency are as follows:

1. One set of walk zone maps using the same distance measurement for both school

boards, and which include a standardized set of walking hazards.

2. Establishing school bell times that allow each bus to service up to 3 schools within geographical areas, whenever possible and regardless of school board.
3. Reducing the number of kilometers run by and paid to Operators.

Other elements of the project which are also underway include a review of OSTA's technology needs and competitive procurement for all contracted vehicles, among others.



Upcoming Consultation

The OSTA has posted information regarding proposed bell time changes and how hazard zones were assessed on its website www.ottawaschoolbus.ca.

All changes are proposed to be implemented for the **2015-2016** school year.

Further public consultation will occur in April and May 2014 through open houses and presentations.

We encourage parents and staff to submit comments to a special email box feedback@ottawaschoolbus.ca.

The best way to ensure clear feedback OSTA can use to look for alternate solutions, or to address your needs, is as follows:

1. Put the school name in the subject line

2. In the comment area, put your full name, address and contact information in case we need some clarification.
3. Make sure your comments are detailed and demonstrate a tangible or justifiable reason why the proposed change CANNOT be made.

For example, rather than stating "I can't make my bus", please state, "I take bus route number XX at X time in order to get to work for X time. This bell time change means I can't get to work until XX time and that's too late for my employer".

Thank you in advance for your feedback. It is essential in balancing the need for efficient and effective transportation, with the other needs of each school community.

School Active Transportation Charter

The Ottawa Catholic School Board and the Ottawa Carleton District School Board took a leadership role in promoting the health and well-being of their students by signing the School Active Transportation Charter and committing funding to OSTA to create and implement programs that encourage students, and their parents, to walk, bike or roll to school every day.



Did you know that walking to school improves students' health and ability to learn?

Studies show that children need at least 60 minutes of exercise every day in order to maintain a healthy weight and to develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

Schools have also reported that students who exercise in the

morning before class tend to improve their grades and be more alert and ready to learn throughout the day.

Students who have participated in Green Communities Canada's School Travel Planning projects at Ottawa-area schools say they enjoy connecting with their friends and parents in the morning and generally feel better

all around and are more aware of their communities.

"Students who exercise in the morning before class tend to improve their grades."

Walking School Bus Pilot Project

In the 2014-2015 school year, OSTA, in partnership with Ottawa Public Health, the Ottawa Safety Council and Green Communities Canada, will be establishing up to 8 walking school bus routes at Ottawa-area schools that are already participating in active transportation projects. Selected schools will be located in a variety of settings (urban/rural, etc). This pilot will allow OSTA, and its partners, to evaluate how such a program may be applied system-wide, the funding required to make it happen, as well as the relative benefits to the students who participated.



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