



## Ottawa Walking School Bus Program Information for Parents

### Q. What is a Walking School Bus (WSB)?

A. A Walking School Bus (WSB) is simply a group of children who walk to school together under adult supervision following a specific route and schedule.

### Q. Why should my child participate?

A. Because a WSB is a safe, convenient, healthy and fun way for your child to travel to school with their friends. It offers them fresh air and exercise before the bell rings which in turn will help them be more alert in class, less stressed, and develop a life-long healthy habit.

### Q. Who is running this program?

A. Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA), [www.ottawaschoolbus.ca](http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca), in partnership with:  
- Ottawa Public Health - Ottawa Safety Council - Green Communities Canada (Active & Safe Routes to School Program)

### Q. Which schools are participating and why?

A. Schools are chosen based on their demonstrated interest in promoting walking to school. To see a current list of the schools participating in the Walking School Bus program, visit:  
<http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/wsb>

### Q. Is it safe?

A. Each WSB will be led by an adult Leader who is responsible for a maximum of 10 students. This Leader is employed by the Ottawa Safety Council and meets the same training and other requirements as an Adult Crossing Guard. Liability insurance coverage is provided by the Safety Council. Routes use the road, sidewalk and winter-maintained pathway networks in OSTA's database and will respect OSTA's rules about walking hazards.

### Q. When will the WSB operate?

A. Every regular school day from September until the end of June. It will operate in the morning only, (ie. for the journey *to school*).



**Q. How do I register my child?**

A. Go to <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/wsb> and follow the instructions. Please note: - Completing the application online does not guarantee a space for your child. A signed copy of the registration form must also be submitted to your school. - Space is limited and assigned on a first come, first served basis. - When the first 10 spaces on your route have been filled, your child will be put on a waiting list and you will be notified if/when they can join the WSB.

**Q. Where and when will my child meet the WSB?**

A. Stops and times are indicated on the WSB route map for your school <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/wsb> Your child can join at the stop closest to your home or anywhere along the route. Please arrive a few minutes before the scheduled time. The WSB will not wait for late arrivals and door-to-door or other special stops will not be offered.

**Q. What if we miss the WSB?**

A. As the parent/caregiver you are still responsible for ensuring your child gets to school on time.

**Q. Can my child bring their bike, scooter, roller blades etc?**

A. No.

**Q. Can I or another caregiver walk with the group?**

A. Yes. However the WSB Leader will be the adult in charge of the group at all times and you will be asked to respect their authority.

**Q. What happens during bad weather?**

A. In general the WSB will operate in all weather conditions including days when the yellow school buses are cancelled. However, in the case of freezing rain or other extreme weather events (as determined by the Ottawa Safety Council) it may be cancelled. Parents/caregivers will be notified no later than 30 minutes before their WSB is scheduled to start.

**Q. How do I withdraw my child from the WSB?**

A. You must notify OSTA by email ([businfo@ottawaschoolbus.ca](mailto:businfo@ottawaschoolbus.ca)) or phone (613.224.8800 ext. 2572)

