

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

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1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The Halifax Regional School Board will ensure that transportation service is provided in a safe manner to eligible students.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring transportation for students is provided in accordance with the *Education Act* and the following provincial and regional acts and policies:

- 2.1.1 *Motor Carrier Act*

- 2.1.2 Nova Scotia Department of Education *Special Education Policy*

- 2.1.3 B.012 *School and Bus Cancellation Policy*

- 2.1.4 B.013 *Regional Code of Conduct*

- 2.1.5 B.003 *Creating School Populations Policy*

3.0 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

- 3.1 In accordance with the Education Act and Regulations student transportation will be provided to secondary students who live 3.6 kilometres or more away from school.

3.1.1 Beyond the requirements of the Education Act and Regulations, the board will provide transportation to elementary students who live 2.4 kilometres or more away from school.

3.2 School busses are to be used only for the purpose of transporting students to and from school and other such uses as directed by the board in writing from time to time.

4.0 AUTHORIZATION

4.1 The Superintendent is authorized to issue procedures in support of this policy.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY PROCEDURES

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1.0 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is responsible for the administration of contracted transportation services and the management of the transportation policy, regulations and procedures.
- 1.2 The contractors of the student transportation service are responsible for the maintenance and safe operation of all company-owned vehicles, allocation of routes to company drivers and compliance by the drivers in conforming to the scheduled routes and time of routes complying with board policy.

2.0 COURTESY BUSSING

- 2.1 Courtesy bussing may be extended to students who reside within the qualifying distances and may be transported to school if there is room on the bus.
 - 2.1.1 The bus will not alter times or routing to accommodate students being transported as a courtesy.
 - 2.1.2 First consideration would be given to the youngest students. The Halifax Regional School Board will work with individual schools where necessary.
 - 2.1.3 When additional spaces are required for those outside the qualifying distances, those courtesy students closest to school will no longer be able to ride the bus.

2.2 No bus stop will be closer than 0.8 kilometres away from the school.

3.0 OFF-ROUTE BUSSING

3.1 School busses will not proceed into an off-route road or subdivision for the purpose of picking up or unloading students unless they live more than 0.8 kilometres therein, as circumstances permit, and more than 3.6 kilometres from school for secondary or 2.4 kilometres from school for elementary.

3.1.1 The condition of the road must be such that the bus can safely travel, and a suitable turning place must be available and maintained at no cost to the board.

4.0 SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING

4.1 Bus routes, schedules and stops will be developed under the direction of the service contractors in consultation with and subject to the approval of the board.

4.1.1 The purpose of bus scheduling and routing will be to achieve maximum service with a minimum of busses consistent with rendering equitable service to all students.

4.1.2 Where at all possible, major changes in bus routes, pick-up or delivery times shall not be made unless at least one week's notice is given to parents through the school principal.

4.1.3 Every effort will be made to minimize student time on a bus. Halifax Regional School Board will strive to ensure that no student is picked up any earlier than one hour before school starts or delivered to their home bus stop any later than one hour after school is dismissed.

4.1.4 The Halifax Regional School Board may alter bus schedules in the event of an emergency or severe weather.

4.1.5 Every effort will be made to minimize the use of bus transfers and waiting time at transfer locations.

5.0 EXCEPTIONS RELATED TO PROGRAM

- 5.1 In accordance with the Education Act and Regulations, any student requiring transportation because of special needs shall be conveyed from home to school at the board's cost, irrespective of distance.
 - 5.1.1 School principals will provide information as to those students affected and send to conveyance contract provider. The Coordinator of Programs and Student Services will provide guidance to the principals and service provider as necessary.
- 5.2 There is no obligation on the part of the board to provide transportation for those students physically disabled on a temporary basis due to injury.
 - 5.2.1 The School Administration Department will provide guidance as to which students may be considered for special conveyance and for what duration.
- 5.3 The School Administration Department will indicate which students require special conveyance to attend a school, other than their neighbourhood school for the purpose of program or administrative requirements.

6.0 REQUESTS FOR EXTENSION OF OR ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- 6.1 Requests for extensions of services or additional services shall go to the Director of Operations Services

7.0 SCHOOL BUS TRIPS

- 7.1 Schools will make arrangements with the providers of bus services and the schools will be invoiced directly. Board financial support for trips will occur through budgets allocated to schools.

8.0 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

- 8.1. The board encourages, wherever possible, the use of the contractor's school busses for the transportation of students.
- 8.2 The board recognizes the need for some school employees to use their own automobiles or to rent vehicles for school purposes regularly or occasionally.

- 8.2.1 To safeguard the students, employees and board, in matters of liability, particularly as this relates to an employee transporting a student or students, the following will be observed:
 - 8.2.1.1 All transportation of students will be in accordance with the Motor Carrier Act.
 - 8.2.1.2 Students enrolled within this board shall not be permitted to operate vehicles for the purpose of transporting students on co-curricular or extracurricular trips.
 - 8.2.1.3 School Board employees or designate(s) shall not enter into a verbal agreement for transportation of students without having completed and filed the appropriate documentation required with the school. All employees are required to complete Form J found in *myHRSB*.

9.0 SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

- 9.1 Student safety is a parental responsibility until boarding the bus at an authorized bus stop, and after debarkation at an authorized bus stop.
- 9.2 The Director of Operations Services is authorized to provide temporary services in addition to those stated in Section 2 of the procedures if, in the Director's judgement, such services are necessary for the safe conduct of students.
- 9.3 Emergency evacuation for all students must be practised at least once a year.
- 9.4 The contractors will investigate all accidents in cooperation with other agencies as appropriate and report the circumstances to the board in the case of a serious accident.
 - 9.4.1 A written report will be submitted to the Director of Operations Services in situations where there is injury to students.
- 9.5 Drivers, students, and school staff will observe all federal, provincial, and municipal laws and regulations pertaining to the safe use of school busses.
- 9.6 Principals are to ensure that adequate supervision is provided for bus arrivals and departures.
- 9.7 The transport of curriculum related materials (i.e. musical instruments, school projects) will be accommodated providing there is room on the bus and safety standards are met.

10.0 STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

- 10.1 The safety of students during their transportation to and from school is a joint responsibility that students and their parents share with bus drivers, contractors and school officials.
- 10.2 Principals will ensure that the rules of student conduct, as outlined in the regulations and procedures, are issued to every bus student at the beginning of each school year. This document can be found in *myHRSB*.
- 10.3 Students who fail to observe these rules will be subject to disciplinary action as per the school's code of conduct.
- 10.4 Where disciplinary action by the principal includes any suspension of a student's right to use the school bus, this must be immediately communicated in writing and by phone to the parents or guardians, and in writing to the contractor and the Director of Operations.
 - 10.4.1 If the suspension from the bus is for a period of longer than five days, the letter to parents must include information concerning the right to appeal.
 - 10.4.2 Any appeal of a suspension of more than five days must be made within seven days of receiving notice of the suspension.
 - 10.4.3 When a notice of appeal has been received, the balance of the suspension shall be held until an Appeal Committee either confirms, revokes or varies the suspension.
 - 10.4.4 Within ten days of receiving an appeal, the Appeal Committee shall hold a hearing and within three days following the hearing shall confirm, revoke or revise the decision to suspend.