



Purpose

To establish protocols for the South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE) to determine when students who are not eligible for busing under the Provincial Transportation Policy parameters should be provided with a means of transportation.

Introduction

The South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE) believes exceptions occur to the parameters that define eligible busing. This protocol determines when to authorize a means of transportation to ineligible students.

Scope

The SSRCE makes exceptions to students who fall outside the regular parameters of the Provincial Transportation policy for reasons such as Special needs or attending designated programs. This protocol addresses those situations and assists in making decisions that provide safe and reliable transportation means where determined necessary.

Definitions

Courtesy Busing: The provision of transportation to a student who does not meet the eligibility requirements for busing in accordance with the Provincial Transportation policy.

Responsibilities

Regional Executive Director: The Regional Executive Director is authorized to ensure that these procedures are implemented.

Parents/ Guardians: Parents / guardians have the responsibility to transport students to and from school who have been granted permission to attend school outside of their school boundaries established for their residence.

School Bus Drivers: The school bus driver is responsible for only stopping at school bus stops that have been approved by the Transportation department of SSRCE. They must not initiate stops.

Specific Protocols

Transportation Outside of School Boundaries

- In the transportation of students who have been granted permission to attend a school outside of their school boundaries established for their residence shall be the responsibility of the parent / guardian/caregiver. These students may utilize the transportation system provided that there is room on the bus and they reach an existing school bus stop within the catchment area for the school they are attending.

Provisions for Granting Courtesy Busing

- Conveyance may be provided to students where:
 - The bus passes on the way to school and the bus does not have to be re-routed
 - There is available space on the bus; and



- The additional stop does not alter the existing route or extend the travelling time of the first student picked up or the last student to be taken home by bus
 - Infrastructure is not in place (i.e. sidewalks, crosswalks)
 - First consideration will be given to younger students
 - Permission may be withdrawn at any time with parental notice given of two weeks
 - Permission is granted for the current school year or less
 - Transportation staff will review all requests for courtesy busing to ensure the additional service is cost neutral to the region.
- Courtesy busing may not be approved until after October 1.

Alternate Program Students

- Transportation by school bus or private conveyance will be provided for students attending the Alternate program or Verge House programs. The Coordinator of Student Services will provide the Coordinator of Transportation with a list of eligible students, who will arrange transportation within a reasonable timeframe.

Transportation of Students with Special Needs:

- The Coordinator of Student Services will provide a recommendation for those students with special needs requiring transportation to the Coordinator of Student Services, including all necessary equipment and suggested school bus stop location.
- Transportation staff will adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Nova Scotia Handbook for the Transportation of Students with Special Needs.
- Transportation may be provided to students having a temporary disability, providing the stop meets all of the requirements of the Provincial Transportation Policy and the Regional Transportation procedures. The Coordinator of Student Services will inform the Coordinator of Transportation of the length of time that the busing will be required.
- The Transportation Coordinator will review all special needs requirements and provide transportation services in the most efficient manner possible.
- Special needs transportation is in place for the current school year only.
- The Director of Programs will provide the Director of Operational Services a list of students requiring special needs busing for the following year, no later than June 15.

Transportation for Ark Clients:

- School bus transportation may be provided to the Ark clients at existing school bus stops provided there is room on the school bus and there is no cost to the region.

Provisions for Alternate Busing:

- Busing to an alternate location may be approved by the Transportation Coordinator, provided that:
 - A written request is received from the parent / guardian/caregiver and the written request is validated by the school for occurrence; and
 - The reason for travel requires the student to travel to or from a residence other than their normal residence, or travel to and from a daycare centre, or other designated sitting service, other than the regular bus stop with parental / guardian permission granted
 - It is cost neutral to the region provided transportation, space is available on the school bus at a region approved school bus stop at, or near, the originating point of the destination of the



student, is in place. Bus drivers shall not initiate stops to accommodate space available students or to accommodate casual students who wish to off load at a location other than Board approved stops.

- A verbal request by a student for a change in pick-up or drop off location while being transported will not be accommodated. Once enroute, students cannot be dropped off at a scheduled stop, the student will be returned to the school and the parent / guardian/caregiver will be notified for pick up.
- Alternate bus stops cannot vary from day to day and must follow an approved schedules or have a written note by the parent / guardian / caregiver.
- Alternate bus stops must not alter the current bus route or affect the schedule of the bus route.
- In all cases, priority of travel shall be given to the students who legitimately require transportation because of their residence, or after school care is located within established school boundaries. All other students travel on a space available basis and may be denied access to transportation when overloading occurs, or a validated written request is not provided.

Arranging Private Conveyance:

- The Transportation Officer, in consultation with the Transportation Coordinator and the Student Development team, is authorized to obtain a private contractor at a negotiated rate, which would include the provincial travel rate.
- Private conveyers hired to transport students other than their own children must provide proof of the following to the Transportation department:
 - Minimum of a Class 4 drivers licence
 - Valid inspection certificate for vehicles used
 - Current registration
 - Driver's abstract
 - Current insurance with at least \$2,000,000 million liability
 - Social Insurance Number (SIN)
 - Successful police records check not older than three months
 - Successful Child Abuse Registry check
 - Non-smoking vehicle
- Private conveyers hired to transport their own children must provide proof of all of the above except this private conveyer must have a minimum of Class 5 driver's license
- Vehicles used by the private conveyers shall have winter tires that pass inspection installed on all four wheels from November 15 to April 15.
- The region reserves the right to have any vehicle used by a private conveyer inspected by a Motor Carrier.