



Purpose

To establish procedures for the South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE) to effectively implement the Provincial Student Transportation Policy.

Introduction

The South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE) believes that a safe, efficient, and economically operated transportation system is an essential component of the education system.

Scope

The SSRCE believes that the school bus drivers and the school administrators have the responsibility and authority to maintain order and discipline on the school buses in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the school bus passengers, drivers, and others. The SSRCE gives the driver the authority to deal with discipline matters as outlined in this protocol. Furthermore, the SSRCE gives the school administrator the right to discipline students, including suspending their right to use the school bus, in accordance with the Provincial School Code of Conduct.

Definitions

By-Road: A by-road is defined as a deviance in the bus route such as a side road, subdivision road, off-road or diversion that requires the bus to enter and exit the main route.

School Travel Plan Committee: The SSRCS recognizes the value and importance of active and safe means of travel (i.e. walking, cycling, etc.) to and from school for the health and well-being of students, as well as its benefits to the school, the region, and the community in general. The SSRCE supports in principle, the School Travel Plan Committee initiatives presently underway at SSRCE schools, and recognizes the value of developing working relationships with local municipalities and regional organizations, as well as the school community at large, as a means of achieving greater participation in safe and accessible active routes to school.

Responsibilities

Coordinator of Transportation: The Coordinator of Transportation establishes safe bus stops that comply with applicable regulations, such as the Education Act, the Motor Carrier Act, and within the constraints of the Provincial Transportation Policy.

Parent / Guardian: The parent / guardian is responsible to ensure that the student arrives safely at the bus stop in the morning five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time and arrive home safely from the bus stop in the afternoon.

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

Specific Procedures

Bus Stops

- In establishing bus stops, they must comply with applicable regulations, such as the URB, the Motor Carrier Act, and the Provincial Transportation Policy.
- In establishing bus stops, consideration will be given to student safety, maximizing accessibility and service



to students, and efficiency.

- The distance between two bus stops shall not be less than 300 metres except in exceptional circumstances determined in these procedures.
- The SSRCE believes that when two school bus stops are viable in terms of safety and URB regulations are not violated, Transportation staff may, if requested, move a stop to accommodate a pre-primary child or primary student, provided the student(s) required to walk longer are in Grade 3 or higher, and provided the pre-primary child or primary student has no older sibling or other older student with whom to walk.
- The SSRCE believes that students in Grade Pre-Primary – Two will not be discharged from the school bus unless a parent / guardian is there to meet the student, or has an older sibling above Grade 3 to walk with, or written permission is received by the Transportation department from the parent / guardian.
- The school bus driver is not obligated to wait for the late arrival of students at the bus stop. The act of running to catch a stopped school bus is a dangerous practice that increases the potential for a serious accident and must be avoided.
- Established bus stops shall be moved or changed by the Transportation Department or upon recommendation of the Review Committee.
- If a school bus stop is not used for a thirty day period, parents will receive two weeks written notice of removal.

Walking Distance

- Student transportation will not normally be provided for students who live or attend a daycare / childcare provider within the walking distances outlined in the Provincial Transportation Policy, where infrastructure, such as sidewalks and crosswalks are in place. Where hazardous conditions prevail, the Transportation staff, where and when requested, will review each situation on a one by one basis, and where necessary will accommodate with transportation provided by the region.

Transportation on By-Roads

- The SSRCE believes that bus service will be provided on a public by-road if a student resides more than 0.8 km from the main road travelled by bus, the by-road is listed and maintained by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal or the Municipality, there is an adequate and safe turn around location for the bus near the location of the stop to be maintained by the parent or some other means acceptable to the Transportation Coordinator, and meets other conditions outlined in the Provincial Transportation Policy and these procedures.
- When bus service is removed in accordance with the Provincial Transportation Policy or these procedures, under normal circumstances, at least thirty (30) calendar days' notice will be given to parents / guardians as measured from the date of correspondence, including the option to raise their concerns to the Review Committee.
- In exceptional circumstances, for safety reasons, the Transportation Coordinator may recommend to the Review Committee transportation on a by-road where the student resides less than 0.8 km from the road.

Road Conditions:

- Transportation management, in consultation with bus drivers, will decide if weather conditions are suitable for carrying out all or part of the bus route. This requires continuous assessment of the road conditions. When the bus route is cancelled or modified, the dispatcher will notify schools and social media.
- Parents who bring their children to school in the event of a bus cancellation shall also be responsible for arranging transportation home from school in the afternoon.



Request for Bus Stops

- Requests for new bus stops shall be submitted to the Transportation Analyst in writing, on or before August 15, in order to be considered for the coming school year. On or before September 30, Transportation staff shall evaluate requests that meet this timeline and communicate the decision to parent, unless under the direction of Programs and Student Services, through the Coordinator of Student Services.
- Requests shall include the student's names, address, school, grade, and the location of the nearest existing stop. Submissions should explain why a new stop is needed or give reasons why the siting stop should be relocated.
- Requests submitted after August 15 shall only be considered if the applicant can:
 - Demonstrate a clear and specific safety risk, or
 - Show that there is no existing stop within 0.5 kilometres, or
 - Provide medical evidence of a physical or cognitive condition that would pose a challenge and / or barrier to mobility
- Transportation staff shall assess each request according to the following criteria:
 - Stop sight distance; a new stop location shall provide adequate visibility as determined by sight stopping distance procedures prescribed by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.
 - The stop shall comply with any other federal or provincial legislation or regulation and the Provincial Transportation policy.

Review Committee:

- Parents or guardians who are not in agreement with the decision of Transportation staff with regard to a Request for a Bus Stop may ask for a review by the Transportation Review Committee.
- The Transportation Review Committee shall be made up of the Regional Executive Director, the Director of Operational Services, and the Director of Programs and Student Services. The Regional Executive Director shall facilitate the Review Committee meetings, which will occur as required.
- The Request for Review is made to the Director of Operations by the parent / guardian within ten (10) days of the denial of the bus stop request. The request shall include a copy of the original request for Bus Stop and any additional information that the parent or guardian provides.
- The Transportation Coordinator may bring a school bus stop recommendation to the Review Committee. This can be done via e-mail, prior to the Review meeting.
- At the meeting, Committee members will receive a copy of the Request for Bus Stop form and any additional information provided by the parent / guardian.
- The parent / guardian will be informed of the review process.
- Parents / guardians may choose to present their case in person or make a written submission.
- Transportation staff will be asked to summarize the case and provide a rationale for the decision to deny a bus stop.
- The Committee will review all information, and may choose to make a site visit to the requested bus stop.
- The Committee shall make a decision, considering whether the Transportation Policy has been followed and whether there are special circumstances. The decision cannot violate provincial policy, legislation or regulations.
- The decision of the Review Committee will be done by consensus or majority vote, provided in writing, and will be final.

