

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PREAMBLE	3
2. PRINCIPLES.....	3
3. OBJECTIVES	3
4. TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION STANDARDS.....	4

ADDENDA

A <i>Legal Framework</i>	9
B <i>Student Transportation Organizational Plan.....</i>	12
C <i>Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities</i>	13
D <i>School Bus Safety Code of Conduct for Students</i>	15
E <i>Annual Planning Process.....</i>	16

Note that these addenda are for reference and administrative purposes. They are subject to updates and modifications without consultation.

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 School bus transportation serves as a support service for school activities. This service is offered by the Lester B. Pearson School Board (hereinafter referred to as LBPSB) for students benefiting from the educational services stated in section 1 of the Education Act (hereinafter referred to as Act), under its jurisdiction, and subject to the following norms:
- 1.2 Sections 4, 76, 188, 291 to 302, 453 and 454 of the Act state the rights, powers and duties of the school board regarding school bus transportation. Sections 453 and 454 define the awarding of transportation contracts and the establishment, composition and function of the Advisory Committee on Student Transportation. Addendum A

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Bus transportation organization and management must be consistent with the Board's mission statement.
- 2.2 Student safety, the school timetable and the route duration are fundamental considerations when establishing transportation services.
- 2.3 The focus of service is safety, quality and accessibility while at the same time responding to annual budgetary considerations.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Transportation Policy adopted by the school board:

- 3.1 Establishes organization standards and controls, including use of financial resources (Section 4);
- 3.2 Determines transportation service availability and the criteria for eligibility of each category. Service availability is established yearly through the development of transportation zones as in the Student Organization Transportation Plan (hereinafter referred to as Plan). Addendum B

Once these zones are defined by the Board's Administration, service availability and the criteria set by this policy are determined based on the annual budgetary parameters

- 3.3 Determines stakeholders' functions and responsibilities
Addendum C
- 3.4 Ensures the enforcement of the School Bus Safety Code of Conduct for all students Addendum D
- 3.5 Determines the process to be used by the Board when receiving input from the community. Addendum E
- 3.6 Ensures the delivery of an annual training program in school bus safety procedures for all kindergarten students and the commitment to work with the carriers to ensure that the drivers are properly trained;

4. TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION STANDARDS

The Board adopts the following standards regarding organization and management of school transportation (Section 291 of the Act):

- 4.1 Eligibility criteria which determines availability of daily transportation (mornings and afternoons)
 - 4.1.1 The Council of Commissioners in adopting the annual Plan determines zones where students will benefit from busing and zones where they will have to use public transportation, as well as determines the transportation boundaries for individual schools as appropriate. Addendum B;
 - 4.1.2 Kindergarten students residing more than 0.8 km from their designated school are eligible for busing;
 - 4.1.3 Elementary students residing more than 1.6 km from their designated school are eligible for busing;
 - 4.1.4 Secondary students residing more than 2.4 km from their designated school either are eligible for busing or must use public transportation, according to the zones established under the Plan;

- 4.1.5 Students with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities so identified by the School Administrator in conjunction with the Student Services Department and Transportation Services Department and having submitted a medical certificate satisfactory to the Board, are eligible for suitable transportation, notwithstanding the distance between their home and the designated school;
- 4.1.6 A student's health condition may justify access to busing. In such a case, parents must present a request according to rules and regulations established by the school board (transportation will be provided as long as this condition prevails);
- 4.1.7 All transportation eligibility distances referred to above are measured by computer software recognized by the Board for this purpose. Distances are measured using known roadways and pathways;
- 4.1.8 In all cases where transportation is provided by the Board, for free or for a fee, it will be from the same address, five (5) days a week. The morning and afternoon bus locations can be different as long as they are used five (5) days a week and registered as part of the "empty seat" program(Section 4.4.1);
- 4.1.9 Bus stops are located at intersections of roadways; not at residences. Notwithstanding this statement, "door" stops can be made to respect the "home to stop distances" as described in the Plan or for students with special transportation needs. For safety reasons, kindergarten and grade 1 student must be supervised by an adult at the bus stop, morning and afternoon.
- 4.1.10 Whenever possible, to minimize the amount of time students will spend on the bus, the "home to stop" distances will be used: Kindergartens will walk no further than 300 m to their bus stop; elementary students may walk up to 400 m to their bus stop; and secondary students up to 800 m.

- 4.1.11 When planning for bus routes, an optimal capacity of large buses at 60 passengers at the elementary level and 48 passengers at the secondary level will be sought throughout the system.

4.2 Use of public transportation

- 4.2.1 An allocation to help offset the expense incurred in purchasing the public transit Monthly Student bus pass will be sent to parents of students using the public transportation system according to zones established by the Board's Plan
- 4.2.2 The Board establishes the percentage, terms and conditions for the distribution of this allocation to parents.

4.3 Identification of danger zones

- 4.3.1 The Advisory Committee on Student Transportation must respond to any request from a school's Governing Board that has identified an area on their territory as dangerous.
- 4.3.2 Within 60 days, the Committee will examine the situation and make its decision known to the Governing Board and the Council of Commissioners.
- 4.3.3 If the zone is declared dangerous, the Transportation Services will organize transportation amending any rules and procedures accordingly.

4.4 Additional transportation services

4.4.1 “Empty Seat” Programs

The "Empty Seat" Program offers a variety of services permitted under section 298 of the Act.

- 4.4.1.1 The "Courtesy" service is provided, if available, to students residing within the distances established under section 4.1 who would not normally be eligible for daily transportation (morning and afternoon);
- 4.4.1.2 The "Accommodation" service is provided, if available to students residing outside the transportation zones as established by the Board under the Plan and who would not normally be eligible for daily transportation (morning and afternoon).
- 4.4.1.3 The "Alternative Address" service is provided, if available, to students requiring transportation to and from an address other than their residence.
- 4.4.1.4 The "Empty Seat" Program service should not incur additional cost to the Board.
- 4.4.1.5 These services may be reduced or canceled at any time if the number of eligible students on a given bus route increases and no more seats are available.
- 4.4.1.6 The cost for "Empty Seat" Program services is established by the Board. Each year, parents must apply for these services by completing the prescribed form and forwarding the established payment. The Board sets the procedure and collects the fee.
- 4.4.1.7 The school will assist the Transportation Service in establishing the use of the school bus and its available “empty seats”.
- 4.4.1.8 Upon an agreement signed between the school board and a third party (MRC Vaudreuil-Soulanges, private schools), services may be offered under this program.

4.4.2 Extra-curricular services

- 4.4.2.1 The Board may negotiate with the carriers, on behalf of schools, charter rates for extra-curricular trips and activities including "late" buses.
- 4.4.2.2 The school makes reservations with and is invoiced directly by carriers when requiring transportation for extra-curricular services.
- 4.4.2.3 The Board will provide the school with an approved list of carriers. A carrier that is not on this list is not recommended by the Board.

Modification

None of the Addenda is part of the present policy. The addenda of this policy may be modified without consultation.

Addendum A

Legal Framework

The following articles from the Education Act and the Regulation Respecting Student Transportation provide the legal framework for student transportation services to be funded, contracted and organized by the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

Education Act

Choice of school

4. Every student, or the student's parents if the student is not of full age, shall have the right to choose, every year, the school that best reflects their preferences from among the schools of the school board whose jurisdiction the student comes under that provide services to which the student is entitled

Transportation services provided by Board

The exercise of the right does not entail the right to require transportation services where the transportation services required for the student concerned exceed the limits established by the school board.

Rules of conduct on school buses

76. The governing board is responsible for approving the rules of conduct and the safety measures proposed by the principal. In addition to the elements the Minister may prescribe by regulation, the rules of conduct must specify:
 - (1) the attitudes and conduct that are required of students at all times;
 - (2) the behaviours and verbal or other exchanges that are prohibited at all times, including during school transportation, regardless of the means used, including social media; and
 - (3) the applicable disciplinary sanctions, according to the severity or repetitive nature of the prohibited act.

The rules of conduct and the safety measures must be presented to the students during a civics session held each year by the principal in collaboration with the school staff, and must be sent to the parents at the beginning of each school year

Addendum A

Legal Framework

Advisory committee on transportation

- 188.** Every school board which provides student transportation shall establish an advisory committee on transportation the composition, operation and functions of which shall meet the norms established by government regulation.

Transportation provided by Board

- 291.** A school board may, with the authorization of the Minister, provide transportation for all or part of its students.

Service contract with carriers

It may provide the transportation itself if authorized by the Minister, or enter into a contract with a carrier for that purpose.

Cost of transportation to parents

- 292.** Student transportation provided by a school board before the beginning of classes and after the end of classes each day is free of charge.

Adult student transportation

- 293.** Section 292 does not apply to the transportation of persons enrolled in adult education. A school board that provides transportation to persons enrolled in adult education may claim the cost thereof from the users.

- 297.** **Anti-bullying and anti-violence measures**

A school board may grant a student transportation contract after negotiating an agreement or following a call for public tenders.

Every student transportation contract shall be made in writing and in accordance with government regulation. The contract must require the carrier to adopt measures to prevent and stop any form of bullying or violence during the transportation of students, and to inform the principal of the school concerned of any act of bullying or violence that occurs during transportation. The contract must also require the carrier to make sure, in collaboration with the school board, that the driver completes proper anti-bullying and anti-violence training as soon as possible.

Addendum A

Legal Framework

“Empty seat” users

298. A school board, after determining the number of available seats, may allow any person other than a person to whom it provides student transportation to use such transportation service until all available seats are filled, and determine the fare in requires for such transportation.

Transportation allocation paid to parents

299. A school board, whether or not it is bound by a student transportation contract, may pay directly to the students an amount to cover all or part of their transportation costs.

Advisory committee defined by regulation

454. The Government may, by regulation, establish the composition, mode of operation and functions of the advisory committee on student transportation.

Regulation Respecting Student Transportation

Advisory committee’s role

7. A committee shall give its opinion on each issue for which it must make a decision and on each issue submitted to it by the board. An opinion must be given within 15 days of a request, unless the board grants the committee a longer period of time.
9. A committee shall give its opinion on the planning, coordination, financing and administration of student transportation.
10. A committee shall give its opinion on the student transportation organization plan of the board and on the terms and conditions for the granting of contracts for the transportation of students, before the board adopts that plan or sets the terms and conditions for granting those contracts.
11. A committee shall give its opinion on the criteria and the terms and conditions for using a service referred to in section 298 of the Education Act, before the board establishes those criteria or set the terms and conditions for using that service.

Addendum B Student Transportation Organizational Plan

Introduction

Under the Education Act, Section 454 specifies that the *Regulation Respecting Student Transportation* will dictate how the Board will establish its Advisory Committee on Student Transportation.

Under the Regulation (Sections 7 to 11), the Advisory Committee is mandated to give its opinion to the Board on the Board's Student Transportation Organizational Plan.

The Plan is proposed each year, as early as possible before the end of May, by the Board's Administration to the Advisory Committee in order that it may give its opinion to Council as required by Regulation.

Once adopted by Council, the Plan becomes the Board's course of action in matters related to student transportation in full compliance with the Education Ministry's "Règles Budgétaires pour le transport scolaire".

School hours and **transportation zones** are thus set in this Plan to maximize available financial resources and to comply with the Board's Operating Budget approved by the Council.

The current Organizational Plan is available for consultation at:
https://transportation.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/extra/img/74--2018-2019_Student_Transportation_Organizational_Plan.pdf

Addendum C *Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities*

In order to achieve the Policy objectives, stakeholders' roles and responsibilities are determined as follows:

The Council of Commissioners:

- Adopts school bus transportation policy;
- Approves the identification of “danger zones” as submitted by the Advisory Committee on Student Transportation;
- Allows specific transportation services to be offered, other than those determined in this Policy;
- Receives input from the schools' Governing Boards, Central Students Committee, Pearson Teachers' Union and the Central Parents' Committee before the annual Student Transportation Organizational Plan is adopted.

The school's Governing Board:

- Reviews danger zone requests and decides whether to submit them by resolution to the Advisory Committee on Student Transportation for decision.

Transportation Services:

- Consult school administrators and governing boards well in advance of any proposed changes to the transportation plan that effects their school's population;
- Apply rules and procedures relating to transportation including the enforcement of the Code of Conduct for drivers;
- Draft routes and determine stops with special consideration for students with special needs;
- Ensure the respect of contractual obligations for regular transportation (mornings/afternoons) including anti-bullying, anti-violence measures;
- Offer support to school administrators including the delivery of an annual training program in school bus safety procedures at the kindergarten level and School Bus Safety Code of Conduct for all students;
- Organize “empty seat” programs and other additional transportation services as requested;
- Will make every effort to present the proposed Student Transportation Organizational Plan to Central Parents Committee prior to its adoption by Council;
- Answer general queries from the public.

Addendum C *Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities*

School Administrators:

- Apply rules and procedures relating to day-to-day transportation services;
- Discipline students who do not adhere to the School Bus Safety Code of Conduct up to and including suspension of privileges;
- Make available to parents: all forms, bus routes and maps, policy and procedures as well as the anti-bullying, anti-violence plan;
- Answer general queries from the public.

Carriers:

- Carry out transportation contracts;
- Ensure students' safety and well-being on board the buses and around stops, loading and unloading zones;
- Ensure that drivers report all incidents before, during and after school bus routes using the prescribed forms;
- Routes are not to be changed without authorization of Transportation Services (drivers are not to engage in conversation with parents concerning a change of route).
- Ensure that drivers receive proper training and actively participate in the anti-bullying, anti-violence plan adopted by each schools;
- Answer general queries from the public.

The Advisory Committee on Transportation:

- The Advisory Committee on Student Transportation submits its opinion (s) to the School Board on topics related to school transportation, according to provisions of the Act and its Regulation and its decision (s) when asked to review a danger zone request from a Governing Board.

Parents

- Cooperate with the school and Transportation Services in applying rules and procedures related to student passengers' safety and well-being.
- Parents may also attend the Advisory Committee on Student Transportation;
- Must ensure that their child attends school in the event of a suspension of transportation privileges;
- Are responsible for damage or vandalism caused by their child.

Addendum D School Bus Safety Code of Conduct for Students

All school rules as well as predetermined Board and bus safety rules as stated below will apply while students are being transported by any vehicles under the jurisdiction of the school board.

All riders must:

- be at the bus stop 10 minutes before the scheduled bus stop time indicated on the bus pass or as modified during the school year;
- wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, board the school bus in single file, in an orderly fashion, using the handrail;
- find their assigned seat quickly without pushing other students;
- keep the aisle clear of any body part and objects at all times;
- remain seated, talk quietly, not fight or be involved in “horseplay”;
- not eat, drink or leave trash on the bus;
- always listen to the driver's instructions, be polite and courteous;
- never put their head or any other body parts out of the windows;
- know where the emergency exits are but NOT tamper with them;
- when getting off, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before leaving their assigned seat and descend in a single file without pushing;
- walk a safe distance from the bus so that the driver can see them and know that they are out of danger;
- if they need to cross in front of the bus, keep a safe distance from the bus, proceed with caution watch for the driver's signal when it is safe to cross and cross without running.

Unruly Conduct on the School Bus

Depending on the seriousness of the offence, a student may have transportation privileges suspended immediately, or as follows:

1st offence: warning by school administration

2nd offence: letter to parents/guardians with warning of suspension

3rd offence and subsequent: suspension of privileges at the discretion of the Principal

Addendum E

Annual Planning Process

Date	Activity	Participants
By November 30 th	Advisory Committee to meet and review the application of the Transportation Plan adopted the previous May.	Advisory Committee on Student Transportation
During February	Advisory Committee to be briefed on issues likely to be discussed as part of the next Annual Transportation Plan discussion.	Advisory Committee on Student Transportation
During March	A draft Annual Transportation Plan presented to Admin group	Administration Group
By March 31 st	A draft Annual Transportation Plan presented to Advisory committee	Advisory Committee on Student Transportation
During April	“Empty Seat” Program’s fees and guidelines distributed for information	Commissioners School Administrators Central Parents’ Committee
By April 30 th	“Empty Seat” Program’s fees and guidelines to be adopted by Council.	Commissioners
During May	Draft Annual Transportation Plan distributed for information	Commissioners School Administrators Central Parents’ Committee Pearson Teachers’ Union
By May 31 st	Annual Transportation Plan to be adopted by Council.	Commissioners
By May 31 st	If necessary, Transportation Contracts for subsequent years or call to tender to be approved by Council.	Commissioners