

**ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
SECTION 9: TRANSPORTATION**

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	POLICY 9.2
EFFECTIVE: 2000 12 01/ 2001 05 22 / 2001 11 27	

VALUE STATEMENT:

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board recognizes that where distance is a factor, transportation may be required to enable a student to participate in the school curriculum.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board may provide transportation to qualifying day school registered students of the Board within parameters provided for in the Education Act, the Ministry of Education transportation funding model and the Administrative Procedures section of this policy.

Transportation will be provided in a safe, effective and efficient manner.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

A. Eligibility for Transportation Service

The Education Act permits the Board to provide transportation but does not obligate it to do so.

1. Only students qualified to be admitted in a school operated by the Board may be eligible for transportation service under the following provisions:

Distance Eligibility Criteria Under Review – Former policies prior to amalgamation in effect until review process is complete.

2. **Distance Calculations**

- a) The distances stated in the Distance Eligibility Criteria shall be used to determine eligibility. The distances measured will be the shortest safe walking route along road or walkway from school property to home property.
- b) The Transportation Department using transportation software with the appropriate municipal map will make all measurements for transportation purposes.

3. **Eligibility Other Than Distance**

At the discretion of the Transportation Department, transportation may be provided for a period up to one school year under the following circumstance:

- a) The walking route is deemed to be unusually hazardous by the Transportation Department.
- b) The provision of transportation shall be provided to a student for a physical disability upon completion of a medical certificate.

These exceptions would be reviewed annually.

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4. Courtesy Seats

The school principal(s), in consultation with school bus operator(s) may authorize transportation for students residing within the minimum distance required for transportation eligibility, subject to all the following conditions:

- a) That available space exists on an existing bus route.
- b) That the student gets on the bus at an existing bus stop location.
- c) That requests be forwarded to the school principal or their designate, who at their discretion and based on their knowledge of seat availability may assign an empty seat.
- d) That permission to ride the bus may be withdrawn at anytime. Permission to ride a courtesy seat shall not be considered to constitute a precedent or to establish a right for transportation.
- e) Requests to ride under the "courtesy seat" policy are sent in writing to the school principal.
- f) That permission to ride is granted for the remainder of the school year unless an eligible student requires a seat.

5. Temporary Courtesy Seating

Temporary Courtesy Seating will not be permitted for students attending elementary school. The school Principal or their designate, in consultation with the school bus operator(s) may authorize temporary transportation for secondary students who meet the distance eligibility requirements subject to all the following conditions:

- a) that space is available on an existing bus route.
- b) that the student get on or off the bus at an existing bus stop location.

6. Alternate Location/Daycare Procedures

Transportation is authorized from home-to-school and return. As an alternate to the home location, Transportation may be provided at the discretion of the Transportation Department in consultation with the school bus operator, to and/or from a daycare location subject to all of the following conditions:

- a) That the caregiver is located within the designated transportation area of the school the student is qualified to attend.
- b) That there is no additional cost to the Board.
- c) That the Principal as well as the Transportation Department is notified by the parent/guardian of the student's alternate location.
- d) That the route is not significantly altered.
- e) That there is room on an existing vehicle.
- f) That the change is not for a temporary situation.
- g) That the student's pick up and/or drop off point(s) is consistent, five days a week.

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7. Out of Boundary Attendance

No transportation will be arranged for those students who attend a school or classes outside their designated school area. However, transportation may be provided subject to all of the following conditions.

- a) That available space exists on an existing bus route.
- b) That no additional bus stops or route adjustments are required to accommodate out of boundary students.
- c) That granting permission to ride does not create any additional cost to the Board.
- d) That transportation privileges may be withdrawn at any time should the seat be required for a student eligible under the Transportation Policy, or adjustments to the existing route or its time be necessary for operational reasons.
- e) That requests are forwarded to the school Principal or their designate, who at their discretion and based on their knowledge of seat availability may assign an empty seat.
- f) That permission to ride is granted for the remainder of the school year unless an eligible student requires a seat.

8. September Procedures for Transportation

The following procedures will be in place every September:

- a) Bus routes may not be altered the first four weeks of school – except for minor changes. Requests for adjustments will be considered and if approved implemented in October. All requests after this date will be reviewed and if approved implemented within three (3) working days.
- b) Additions/changes the first few weeks of school may take up to seven (7) working days to implement, e.g. requests received in the Transportation Department on September 5th will be arranged to begin on September 14th. The incoming volume of information makes this timeline necessary.
- c) All new arrangements or changes must be approved and implemented in accordance with the Transportation Procedures Manual.

B. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

1. Riding Time

- a) Other than in exceptional circumstances, students in Elementary School will not spend more than 60 minutes on the bus, one way, each day.
- b) Other than in exceptional circumstances, students in Secondary School will not spend more than 75 minutes on the bus, one way, each day.

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2. **Distance to Bus Stops – Urban** (as defined by the Transportation Department)
- a) In urban areas students in Elementary School (excluding students in the French Immersion program), shall not be required to walk more than 800 meters to the bus stop from the nearest point of access of their property.
 - b) In urban areas students in Secondary School (excluding students in the French Immersion program), shall not be required to walk more than 1600 meters to the bus stop from the nearest point of access of their property.
 - c) French Immersion students in Grades Junior Kindergarten - Graduation may be picked up and dropped off at centrally located bus stops as designated by the Transportation Department.

3. **Distance to Bus Stop - Rural** (as defined by the Transportation Department)
- a) In rural areas, where possible, students shall not be required to walk more than 800 meters from the resident gate to a designated bus stop.
 - b) Where houses are grouped in rural areas, students will be requested to utilize community stops, which will be determined by the Route Technician.
 - c) In rural areas, every attempt will be made to ensure that Junior Kindergarten through Grade I students are picked up and dropped off as close to their home laneway as safety will allow.

4. **Stop Location**

Bus stop locations shall be a minimum of 300 meters apart, and should allow a minimum of 150 meters of clear vision in both directions. Bus stops should not be located on a steep grade, brow of a hill or a blind curve. All stop locations are subject to conditions under the Ontario Highway Traffic Act.

5. **Loading Guidelines**

- a) Bus loading guidelines shall be as follows whenever possible:
 - Grades K-6 – Manufactured rated capacity
 - Grades 7-Graduation - Manufactured rated capacity less 33%
- b) Standees or sitting in stairwells will not be permitted under any circumstance.

C. RESPONSIBILITY

1) **Parental Responsibility**

- a) Parents are responsible for the safety and conduct of their children prior to their pickup by the bus and after leaving the bus at the end of the day.
- b) Parents should impress upon their children the need for good behavior and observance of safety precautions while riding the bus.
- c) Parents of physically handicapped students are required to assist the student on and off the bus at his/her home stop.

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- d) Parents are responsible to monitor the radio stations as listed in the Inclement Weather Procedure.
- e) Parents have the right to make the final decision in sending children to an open school during inclement weather.
- f) Parents should ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the weather.
- g) Parents of kindergarten children should arrange for the student to be met at the bus stop after school.
- h) Parents of students not eligible for transportation per Board Policy will be responsible for their own Transportation.
- i) Parents should ensure that all student information and/or changes are sent to the school in a timely fashion.

2) Student Responsibility

Riding on a school bus both to school and on planned excursions is a privilege, not a right. Improper conduct may result in the withdrawal of this privilege. Reinstatement will be at the discretion of the school officials after consultation with the student, parent or guardian and school bus operator.

Students are expected to:

- a) Be at their bus pickup point at least 5 minutes prior to bus arrival time. If buses are more than 20 minutes late beyond the scheduled stop time, information can be obtained by contacting the school or the Transportation Department.
- b) Choose the safest walking route to and from the bus stop and keep well clear of the traveled roadway while waiting for the bus.
- c) Be certain that the road is clear or traffic is stopped before crossing any roadway.
- d) Take their place on the bus as directed by the driver; students must remain in their seats throughout the trip to and from school.
- e) Not abuse, damage or litter private property while waiting for their school bus.
- f) Line up and board the bus promptly in single file without crowding or pushing.
- g) Be picked up and discharged only at their designated school bus stops; responsibility for a student boarding or leaving the school bus at other than his or her designated stop, rests with the parents.
- h) Hold their books, lunch boxes, backpacks and other bulky items on their lap and not place them in the aisle where they may trip someone. Bats, hockey sticks, snowshoes and other large objects will not be permitted on the bus except by mutual agreement between the principal and the bus operator - ice skates must have guards.
- i) Not open or close windows unless authorized by the driver.
- j) Keep arms and head inside the bus at all times.

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- k) Not at any time create a disturbance by distracting the driver's attention, or by interfering with another student or his/her belongings.
- l) Not carry any dangerous or annoying objects on school buses.
- m) Not eat or drink on school buses.
- n) Not smoke on school buses.
- o) Not use profane language on school buses.
- p) Be financially responsible for any damage done to the bus resulting from improper behavior.
- q) Follow the instructions of the driver.
- r) Not bring animals or pets onto the school bus.
- s) Not talk to the driver while bus is in motion unless in an emergency.

3) Principal Responsibility

Ontario Regulation 298, 23 (4c) states that every student is responsible to the principal of the school that he/she attends for his/her conduct while traveling on a school bus. Supervisory responsibilities are delegated to the bus driver while students are on the bus.

The principal shall:

- a) Make students aware of the rules and proper behavior on the bus.
- b) Take appropriate action when discipline is required.
- c) Make arrangements at the school for supervision during loading and unloading of buses and provide adequate supervision where students are required to wait for buses.
- d) Inform parents and students of the Inclement Weather Procedure by October 1st of each school year.
- e) Ensure that the transportation department is aware of any student(s) who is transported that may have significant medical conditions, i.e. anaphylaxis, which may require intervention.
- f) Educate all students regarding the proper and safe conduct while riding a school bus.

4) Bus Operators Responsibility

Each school bus operator under contract with the Board shall:

- a) Be responsible for the performance of their duties in a lawful, efficient, economic and safe manner.
- b) Cooperate with school officials in matters that pertain to the transportation of students.
- c) Not deny a student the privilege of riding on a school bus because of improper conduct. Disciplinary cases are to be referred to the school principal.

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- d) File with the Board, prior to the first day of operation, documentary proof of the insurance being carried.
 - e) Post emergency phone numbers in each bus.
 - f) Properly display the route sign assigned by the Board.
 - g) Ensure that all vehicles are equipped with two-way communications.
 - h) Notify the schools and the Board's Transportation Department of any late, canceled or incomplete routes as soon as possible.
 - i) Report immediately to the Transportation Department and the principal, any accident or other mishap, which occurs while students are being transported. A written report is to be submitted to the Transportation Department within 24 hours of the accident/mishap.
 - j) Not change or alter bus routes, without prior consent of the Transportation Department.
 - k) Not transport students other than those attending a school operated by or in conjunction with the Board unless authorized to do so by the Transportation Department.
 - l) Use a motor vehicle properly licensed as required by all Acts governing public transportation.
 - m) Provide input to the Transportation Department with respect to the delivery of transportation services.
 - n) Provide input to the Transportation Department with respect to the Inclement Weather Procedure.
- 5) **Bus Driver Responsibility**
- Each school bus driver shall:**
- a) Be aware of and comply with the Board's Transportation Policy.
 - b) Abide by the Highway Traffic Act.
 - c) Notify the principal of any student misconduct as it occurs, for disciplinary action.
 - d) Not deny a student the privilege of riding on a school bus because of improper conduct. In cases of gross misconduct, the driver must report the incident to the principals or his/her designate at the conclusion of the run. **STUDENTS SHALL NOT BE PUT OFF THE BUS MID-ROUTE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**
 - e) Observe closely the regulations that are laid down in regard to the safe conduct of students on buses.
 - f) Maintain a constant time schedule. All drivers should arrive at their first pickup location immediately prior to the designated first pickup time.
 - g) Not change or add pickup locations except in accordance with Transportation Department procedures.
 - h) Report immediately to their manager or designate any accident or other mishap that occurs while students are being transported.

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- i) Not smoke on a school bus.

6) Board Transportation Responsibility

- a) Contracts with persons, firms or corporations competent in the operation of transportation facilities for the purpose of providing school bus transportation.
- b) Planning of routes and the execution of policy and procedure.
- c) Communicate all relevant bus route data to School Bus Operators, parents and school principals in a timely manner.
- d) Ensure that the school bus operator is aware of any student(s) who is transported that may have significant medical conditions, i.e. anaphylaxis, which may require intervention.
- e) Ensure that schools are notified of late, canceled or incomplete routes as soon as possible.
- f) Prepare and distribute an annual Transportation Information Pamphlet to the school community.
- g) Work in collaboration with the Lambton Kent School Bus Operators' Association.
- h) Reserves the right to initiate changes within an area and may substitute an alternate route for an existing route. All routes are subject to adjustment in terms of roads and distances traveled.
- i) Recommend change in school bell times for the provision of safe and efficient transportation.
- j) The Board will not provide transportation to summer school.
- k) The Board will not be responsible for costs involved in delay or cancellation of service.
- l) The Board will provide resources for education of safety issues.

PROBLEM SOLVING

To ensure that problems or concerns are given prompt attention, the following schedule defines the appropriate contact depending on the nature of the concern.

Nature of concern:	CONTACT
Student Discipline/Safety	Principal
Loading Problems	Principal
Stop Change/Additions	Transportation Dept.
Alternate Drop-Offs	Principal

Requests For:

Empty Seats	Principal
Temporary Transportation for Medical Reason	Principal

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General Information:

Policy/Procedure	Transportation Dept.
Driver Concerns	Operator or Transportation Dept.
Lost Items	Operator
Vehicle Related Problems	Operator