

Dear MPP McLeod,

I'm writing to you regarding the Ministry of Education's new Transportation Funding Formula, which will lead to a loss of more than \$6.5 million for the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA). OSTA has indicated it will be impossible to maintain current van service for students starting in September 2023 under this funding formula (<https://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/potential-changes-or-cuts-to-van-service/>).

My son, [REDACTED], will be attending CHEO School in the fall. He is very fortunate to have a spot in the JK/SK program that CHEO offers. [REDACTED] has a genetic deletion syndrome called 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome. Due to his genetic deletion syndrome, [REDACTED] also has a number of other medical and developmental complexities. He has a congenital heart defect (Tetralogy of Fallot) that has been partially repaired and will require a second open heart surgery when he is strong enough to withstand the procedure and recovery. He has also been diagnosed with Global Developmental Delay. He is non-verbal and uses a communication book and AAC device for speech. He also needs to use a walker and AFO's for mobility as he cannot stand or walk on his own. He is also exclusively g-tube fed due to a laryngeal cleft as part of his genetic deletion.

Despite [REDACTED] various medical and developmental challenges, he is a bright boy who loves to interact with others and has thrived within the CHEO Preschool setting. While attending CHEO Preschool, [REDACTED] receives OT, PT and SLP therapy in order to continue to develop his skills. While [REDACTED] attends CHEO School, he will also be able to receive his OT, PT and SLP therapy to continue his progress.

I am unable to provide transportation for [REDACTED] to attend CHEO School. I am a teacher with the OCDSB (Ottawa-Carleton District School Board) and my teaching schedule does not allow me to provide transportation for [REDACTED] from our home to CHEO.

It is essential that [REDACTED] attends CHEO School for his Kindergarten program. [REDACTED] is unable to attend a community school for the Kindergarten program. [REDACTED] has a right to attend public education, however this new Transportation Funding Formula puts his transportation services at risk. This funding formula will have a significant impact for the many other vulnerable students who have physical and developmental disabilities that require van transportation.

Please advocate for changes to this funding formula to ensure van transportation continues.

Thank you for your consideration,

Courtney Fontaine

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

