

Policy Code – Version: T24 – V1

Policy Name: School Bus Rider Usage Policy

Approved by motion of Board on

19/08/2024

Cross Reference

T1 – Access to Empty Seats;

T10 – Stakeholder Responsibilities;

T14 – Transportation Services;

T18 – Transportation Eligibility;

T22 – Transportation for Students in a Joint Custody Arrangement and Having Two Homes

Related Forms

Policy Statement

1. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) is responsible for the effective, efficient and fiscally responsible delivery of transportation services to eligible students.
2. Transportation grants are intended to support students who need and rely on the bus as their primary means of getting to and from school. The transportation system is, therefore, designed with the intent that registered riders are using the service on a daily or regular basis.
3. The OSTA recognizes that the sporadic or irregular use of transportation services adversely impacts other students and families on the affected routes, is costly and creates inefficiencies in the system.
4. The General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer is authorized to develop procedures to identify and address sporadic ridership, which may include the removal of transportation services in prescribed circumstances. Such procedures will be developed and implemented in a manner that is consistent with OSTA’s commitment to the principles of fairness, transparency, equity, and human rights.

Procedure

1. In order to maintain a seat on the school bus, students are expected to use the service as their primary mode of transportation to and from school on a daily or regular basis.
2. Students assigned transportation and reported as not riding the bus either to or from school for twenty (20) or more consecutive school days will be removed from transportation upon 5 days' written notification being provided to their parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified of the decision to remove bus service under this procedure through the school.
3. This procedure applies to all students granted transportation, including students who were granted a seat under the "Empty Seat" provisions.
4. Exceptions to this procedure will be made in joint custody or other shared family situations, situations involving temporary illness or disability that prevent a student from using assigned transportation for a period of time, and other exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer, or designate. Parents/guardians may be requested to provide supporting information, including the anticipated duration of absence from the bus.
5. Frequency of use will be monitored via regular communication with the school and bus operator(s) and through regular route audits.
6. Transportation may be reinstated at any time and with reasonable notice upon receipt of information confirming that regular service is required.