



# OSTA

Ottawa Student  
Transportation  
Authority

## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Denise Andre, OCSB Director of Education  
Camille Williams-Taylor, OCDSB Director of Education

**FROM:** Vicky Kyriaco, General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** September 9, 2019

**RE:** **School Start Up 2019-2020**

### Students

There are **70,000** students in the Bus Zone and receiving motorized transportation (including hazard zones, not including empty seats). There are **447** students receiving transportation to 2 homes who are in a joint custody arrangement (so far).

There are **45,823** students in the Walk Zone. Last year there were 48,761.

### Route Planning

	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
<b>Large Vehicle Routes</b>	627	631	620	607	606	677
<b>Small Vehicle Routes</b>	1237	1305	1148	2116	1055	988
<b>Presto Passes</b>	11266	10485	9234	9099	9601	8385
<b>WSB Routes/Leaders</b>	8/12	13/18	12/15	12/16	8/10	6/7
<b>Hybrid WSB Routes/Leaders</b>	4/5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Routes were given to operators for distribution to drivers as of July 31, 2019. As of August 19, 2019 parents could access transportation information for their own children via the online Parent Web Portal, or by calling OSTA.

**6317** route changes were processed between August 15 and September 7, 2019. Last year we processed 5,617 route changes during the same period. We have approximately **1044** outstanding requests for changes or inquiries to address via Transportation Issues form or emails.

### Delays

OSTA ran a total of **18,556 runs** the first week of school. There were **262** delays posted that week. The majority of delays were due to construction, traffic, break downs and delays at the school (loading).

## **Driver Shortage**

There are currently 20 routes which do not have permanent drivers assigned to them. These are being covered by spares, operator staff and some route doubling. Trained drivers are ready to be deployed, but cannot receive their Class B license as MTO is experiencing a backlog due to a system failure that lasted a week and a half over the summer. OSTA is reporting status updates on driver shortages to the Ministry on a weekly basis.

## **Communication**

OSTA implemented an internal call centre set up, much like last year, using newly hired staff. They are able to field calls relating to FAQ's and gave out basic information about transportation arrangements for individual students. Being employees of OSTA, new staff have access to Bus Planner Pro and can give specific information relating to all inquiries. While they cannot not make changes, they are better able to respond to inquiries than last year, thereby providing better support for zone staff. This staff will also be involved in processing 7000+ empty seat applications for the OCDSB and OCSB this year.

Parents can access transportation information for their children via OSTA's web-based Parent Portal. We actively encouraged subscription of email notification of delays, and other messages, and we currently have **53,504** email subscribers (a 13% increase over last year). @OTTBus has 28,100 Twitter followers 16%.

Schools can access OSTA via the emergency school lines or OSTA staff direct lines. They also have access to OSTA's web-based school portal.

From August 15 to September 7, OSTA's website was visited by **75,132** users (a 14% increase over last year).

## **Transportation Contracts**

All Transportation contracts have been signed for large and small vehicles. The Presto agreement has been signed with OC Transpo. The contract with Ottawa Safety Council for Walking School Bus and the contract with EnviroCentre for School Active Transportation planning have been signed.

## **School Bus and Pedestrian Safety Day**

School Bus and Pedestrian Safety Day was held on Sunday August 25, 2019. There were some issues securing OCDSB locations. Consequently, all but one location were at OCSB high schools.

First Time Riders: 1,402 (up from 1,251 last year)  
Parents/siblings: 2,110 (up from 2,081 last year)  
Pedestrian training: 822 (up from 540 last year)

A follow-up survey was conducted to gauge effectiveness. Approximately 85% of respondents who attended the event said it was great and it was a good learning experience for their child(ren). Of the 15% who felt there was room for improvement, the reasons given indicated a greater need for better way-finding within the building and the need for standardized presentations for drivers during the bus ride portion. We had provided

guidelines for operators and drivers, done the latter, but clearly, we need to improve the delivery according to our guidelines.

### **Public Transit Training**

OSTA and OC Transpo teamed up to deliver public transit training. This occurred in two locations (St Paul HS on Aug 27, and Notre Dame HS on Aug 28) and were well attended (estimate 500 attendees, students with their parents). The effectiveness of the training was not measured, however, OSTA is planning on revising the training for next year.

### **Changes in the Member School Boards and OSTA's System**

This year, a few changes have impacted our routing system:

1. **Elmdale PS** – The entire school community is being bused to Century PS this year while the school is renovated.
2. **Canterbury PS/Colonel By** – We anticipate some issues during the implementation of LRT on September 14 and for the weeks thereafter, particularly once the parallel bus routes are eliminated.
3. **Merivale HS** – A new IB program is re-directing some students from Colonel By and other areas.

Overall, a reasonably good start-up.

Regards,

Vicky  
Vicky Kyriaco  
General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer  
Ottawa Student Transportation Authority