



## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Responsibility:	<i>Superintendent, Business Services &amp; Treasurer of the Board</i>
Legal References:	<i><u>Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, s.35, s.39 and s.190</u></i>
Related References:	<i><u>Board Policy 4000 – Pupil Accommodation Review (Consolidation or Closure)</u></i> <i><u>Board Policy 4009 – Student Transportation</u></i> <i><u>Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct</u></i> <i><u>Administrative Procedure 1030 – Student Out of Boundary Transfer Requests – Secondary Schools</u></i> <i><u>Administrative Procedure 1040 – Out of Boundary Requests Elementary Schools</u></i> <i><u>Administrative Procedure 4130 - Severe Weather Conditions (Bus Cancellation-Student Dismissal-School Closing)</u></i> <i><u>Administrative Procedure 4991 – Boundary Studies</u></i> <i><u>Administrative Procedure 4860 – Pupil Accommodation Review</u></i> <i><u>IS-20-A - Out of Boundary Request (Elementary)</u></i> <i><u>IS-20-B – Out of Boundary Student Transfer Request (Secondary)</u></i> <i><u>IS-16-01 – Walking School Designation Form</u></i>
Revisions:	<i>June 2016, August 2017, November, 2023</i>
Reviewed:	<i>September 2019</i>

### 1. Preamble

- 1.1. The procedures that follow provide guidelines and expectations regarding the provision of transportation to students of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB).
- 1.2. Student transportation for the WRDSB is planned for and overseen by Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR).
- 1.3. ***Questions regarding the application of transportation policies and associated procedures should be directed to STSWR ([www.stswr.ca](http://www.stswr.ca)).***

### 2. Definitions

**Home school:** Based on primary home address eligibility and school attendance boundary.

**Assigned school:** Any school other than the home school that a student attends because of program choices or assignments.

**Primary home address:** The student's home address as supplied by the parent/guardian to the school. The primary home address will determine the student's home school.

**Alternative address:** A secondary address supplied by the parent/guardian to reflect alternative pick-up or drop-off points for transportation purposes.

**Transportation boundary:** The calculation of transportation boundaries is determined by STSWR utilizing Geographic Information Systems software. Students residing within a transportation boundary may be eligible for transportation to their assigned school.

**STSWR:** Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region.

**WRDSB:** Waterloo Region District School Board.

**Access points:** Pedestrian access to the closest edge of the property line, whether that be a path, field, gateway, etc.

**Out of boundary:** Students not attending their home school are considered “out of boundary” and are not eligible for transportation services.

**Legacy Provision:** Permission to attend a school outside a student’s home school boundary because of a boundary change or a motion passed by the Board of Trustees.

### 3. Board Policy 4009 – Student Transportation

3.1. The WRDSB has adopted the following distance guidelines to determine eligibility for transportation.

3.1.1. To be eligible for transportation, it is necessary that a student resides within the limits of the approved transportation boundary.

3.1.2. Transportation may be provided to students living beyond the following distance to their home school:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Distance</i>
Junior and Senior Kindergarten	0.8 km
1 - 8	1.6 km
9 - 12	3.2 km

All transportation measurements will be determined by STSWR and be based on the shortest distance by road, path or walkway from the corner of the property to closest access point to the school property or bus stop, and are subject to reasonable flexibility beyond the guidelines. The use of flexibility may be exercised to support common experiences for all students residing in a neighbourhood. Flexibility will be used to establish a logical transition point between transported and non-transported areas and to extend or limit busing to the end of a street, court or the nearest intersection. In no case will the flexibility exercised exceed 200 metres.

3.1.3. In some cases, transportation may be required due to hazards that preclude a safe walking route to school. The identification of such hazards and the transportation provided will be determined by STSWR.

3.1.4. Transportation can be withdrawn for violating the student code of conduct, as outlined in Section 16 below.

### 4. Designated Walking Schools

4.1. In some cases, a school in an urban municipality or established settlement area may request that it be designated a “walking school”, in which case no motorized transportation will be provided to students at that school - with the exception of special needs transportation and other temporary arrangements (refer to conditions in Section 13 of this Procedure).

4.2. To be designated as a “walking school”, the following process must be followed:

4.2.1. Consultation with the school community (including, but not limited to, students, staff, School Council, parents, municipal staff, and School Travel Planning (via

STSWR) must take place in order to consider the impact and provision of the following:

- supervision of students to and from school as well as upon arrival (e.g., walking buddies or walking school bus program, student hand-off practices, etc.);
- the school's location and ability of the surrounding area to handle potential traffic volume increases;
- the number of students who would no longer qualify for transportation and the distance between their home and the school;
- the school community's commitment to active transportation programs and infrastructure to support students travelling to and from school (e.g., School Travel Plan, walk/roll to school days, bicycle racks, scooter storage, etc.); and
- the student achievement and well-being benefits of being a "walking school"

4.2.2. If the consultation with the school community suggests the items listed in Section 4.2.1 can be appropriately provided for and impact is minimal, a completed copy of Form IS-16-01 must be sent to STSWR by December 15<sup>th</sup> for a walking school designation in the following school year. Form IS-16-01 will include the following items:

- A summary outlining the consultation that has taken place with the school community
- Signatures of the Principal and the designated Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being.

4.2.3. Upon receiving Form IS-16-01, STSWR will analyze the proposal to confirm whether any safety or operational issues would preclude the school from being a "walking school".

4.2.4. If STSWR supports the request, notification will be sent to the school.

- The Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board, and the Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, responsible for the school should be copied on the response by STSWR.

4.2.5. If STSWR does not support the request, the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board, will refer the matter to Leadership Council for a decision.

- The school will be notified that the matter has been referred to Leadership Council for a decision.

4.3. In cases where a school no longer wishes to be designated as a "walking school", the following process will be followed:

4.3.1. A completed copy of Form IS-16-01 must be sent to STSWR by December 15<sup>th</sup> for a change in the following school year, and include the following items:

- A summary of consultation that has been undertaken with the school community and staff.
- Signature of the Principal and the designated Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being.

4.3.2. Upon receiving the request, STSWR will analyze the proposal to confirm whether any safety or operational issues should be considered. Furthermore, STSWR will provide a cost estimate for motorized transportation and indicate any changes to bell times that would be required in order to minimize costs.

4.3.3. If STSWR does not recommend implementing a change, the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board, will consult with Leadership Council before making a decision.

- ~~All changes with an anticipated cost that exceeds \$10K, or results in a bell time change, must be approved by Coordinating Leadership Council.~~

- 4.4. Decisions regarding “walking schools” should be communicated no later than the first week of February, for implementation the following school year, to provide clarity for parents during Kindergarten registration.

## 5. Distance to Bus Stops

- 5.1. While the location of bus stops will be determined exclusively by STSWR, the following guidelines will be used in determining bus stop locations.

- 5.1.1. Students living in urban municipalities and established settlement areas may be required to walk the following distances to bus stops:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Distance</b>
Junior and Senior Kindergarten	0.5 km
1-8	1.0 km
9-12	1.6 km

- 5.1.2. Generally, students living in rural areas outside urban municipalities and established settlement areas will be picked up or dropped off at their laneway. Where this is not possible, students may be required to walk up to 0.5 km from their property to a bus stop.

## 6. Limiting Time-on-the-Bus for Students

- 6.1. While time-on-the-bus depends largely on the distance a student must travel, every effort will be made to ensure that students are not on the bus longer than one hour each way.

## 7. Pick-up and Drop-off Times

- 7.1. In an effort to ensure the safety of students, while maintaining the flexibility to plan efficiently for transportation, the following guidelines will be used in determining scheduled pick-up and drop-off times:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Earliest Scheduled Pick-up</b>	<b>Latest Scheduled Drop-off</b>
Elementary (JK-8)	7:00 am	5:30 pm
Secondary (9-12)	7:00 am	5:30 pm

- 7.2. While every effort will be made by STSWR to adhere to these guidelines, there may be circumstances that require deviation from the guidelines. Any change from these guidelines will be communicated to schools by STSWR.

## 8. Late Busing – Secondary Schools

- 8.1. In some cases, schools may choose to provide late busing for secondary students to support their participation in extracurricular activities or other school programs. The provision of late busing should adhere to the following guidelines:

- 8.1.1. Transportation services will be provided in a manner consistent with the distance guidelines established by the WRDSB.
- Congregated stops will be used (i.e., stops may be provided for at distances greater than those outlined in Section 5.1.1). Student safety will be a primary focus in determining stop locations.

- 8.1.2. Late busing should not be provided in areas that are serviced by Grand River Transit, nor should bus passes be provided to students solely for the purpose of late busing.
- 8.1.3. As a general rule, late buses should only be provided Monday - Thursday; however, the days and times late buses will operate will be determined at the school level.
- 8.1.4. Consideration must be given to ridership to ensure that the provision of late busing remains economically viable and efficient.

**9. Bell Times**

- 9.1. To support system efficiencies and consistency between schools, the following guidelines will be used in determining bell times:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Start-Time Window</b>	<b>End-Time Window</b>
Elementary (JK-8)	8:00 - 9:30 am	2:00 - 4:00 pm
Secondary (9-12)	8:00 - 9:30 am	2:00 - 4:00 pm

- 9.2. The process for requesting and approving bell time changes as initiated by STSWR is as follows:

- 9.2.1. Proposed changes for the upcoming school year should be provided to affected school(s), for written comment, by December 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - In support of the WRDSB's Policy 2006 - Consultation, it is suggested that schools communicate the proposed changes at minimum to their School Council and solicit feedback.
  - Feedback from schools must be received by the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board no later than February 10<sup>th</sup>.
- 9.2.2. A report and recommendation that includes feedback from the school(s), rationale for the change and cost implications must be provided by the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board to Leadership Council no later than February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 9.2.3. All changes must be approved by Leadership Council. Decisions should be communicated to schools no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>.

- 9.3. The process for requesting and approving bell-time changes as initiated by the school is as follows:

- 9.3.1. Any request for a bell time change that is initiated by a school must be pre-approved by the Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being responsible for the school.
- 9.3.2. Upon receiving approval of the Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, the principal of the school will submit a request outlining the proposed change to STSWR. Proposed changes for the upcoming school year should be submitted by December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 9.3.3. Upon receiving the request, STSWR will evaluate the impact of the proposed change, including cost, and provide the school with its assessment, including possible alternatives by January 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board and the Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being responsible for the school should be copied on the response by STSWR.
- 9.3.4. If an alternative has been recommended by STSWR, the school must indicate their willingness to accept/decline the alternative proposal by February 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - If the school does not accept the alternative proposal provided by STSWR, both the original proposal and the alternative proposal recommended by STSWR will go to Leadership Council for consideration.

- If an agreement is reached between STSWR and the school, only the draft proposal will go to Leadership Council for consideration.
- 9.3.5. The proposal(s) to go before Leadership Council must be provided to the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board no later than February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 9.3.6. All changes must be approved by Leadership Council.
- 9.3.7. Changes should be communicated to schools no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **10. Transportation for Out-of-District Students**

- 10.1. Where a student's primary home address is located outside the district, the following guidelines will be used to determine transportation eligibility.
- 10.1.1. Where the primary home address is within an existing agreement area, transportation may be provided in a manner that is consistent with established distance guidelines.
- 10.1.2. In the absence of an agreement governing the admission of out-of-district students, students admitted under s.35 (Resident pupil's right to attend more accessible elementary school) and s.39 (Resident pupil's right to attend secondary school in another district or zone) of the *Education Act* may be provided with transportation in a manner that is consistent with established distance guidelines.
- 10.2. Transportation will not be provided to out-of-district students that do not qualify under these provisions.

## **11. Transportation to an Alternative Address**

- 11.1. Transportation to an alternative address may be provided to students in grades JK-8 under the following conditions:
- 11.1.1. The alternative address is located in the school's attendance area and in an area eligible for transportation;
- 11.1.2. The student is always transported from or to the same location.
- 11.2. Transportation will not be provided to an address outside the school's attendance boundary.

## **12. Legacy Provision**

- 12.1. In some instances, it may be necessary to phase-in the implementation of transportation changes to provide a transition period for the community. The following conditions will be applied when legacy transportation service is provided.
- 12.1.1. A definitive end date must be declared as of the implementation of the change;
- 12.1.2. The provision of service may only be extended to students enrolled and attending the affected school(s) and living within the boundary of the affected school(s) on the date the Board of Trustees approval or a date set by Board of Trustees resolution;
- 12.1.3. Transportation service will be provided in a manner consistent with the distance guidelines established by the WRDSB;
- 12.1.4. Should a student move out of boundary, the provision will no longer apply to them.

### 13. Special Needs and Temporary Transportation

- 13.1. Students with special needs who may require transportation will be identified by their home school and the Special Education department. STSWR, in consultation with the Special Education department, will determine the most appropriate form of transportation for students with special needs.
- 13.2. In some cases, students may require transportation to accommodate a short-term medical condition or other special circumstances. The process for requesting and approving temporary transportation is as follows.
  - 13.2.1. The Principal reviews the request and, when appropriate, completes a Special Request Form (supplied by STSWR) and submits it along with supporting documentation to the appropriate Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being.
    - Where appropriate, a medical note should accompany applications for special transportation for temporary non-ambulatory students.
  - 13.2.2. If approved by the Superintendent, in consultation with the General Manager of STSWR, then STSWR will make the arrangements based on the information in the approved request form. The status of the request and confirmation of the arrangements will be sent to the school. The school will then contact the parent/guardian with transportation details and the agreed upon start date.
    - In cases where the anticipated cost of the service will exceed \$10K, approval of the Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board, or designate, is required.
  - 13.2.3. Parents will be advised that it is their responsibility to:
    - Inform the bus/taxi company directly if transportation is not required.
    - Inform the school should the transportation no longer be required.
    - Inform the school of any changes, including schedule times or locations. It is the school's responsibility to inform STSWR.

### 14. Summer School Transportation

- 14.1. The WRDSB may provide transportation for students attending summer school programs.
- 14.2. Transportation will be provided in accordance with the procedures established by STSWR, available at <http://transportation.stswr.ca/policies>.

### 15. French Immersion Transportation

- 15.1. Transportation will not be provided for students attending a French immersion program outside of their home school boundary.

### 16. Student Code of Conduct

- 16.1. To ensure that a safe and secure environment is maintained, a school bus will be treated as an extension of the classroom. As such, any student whose conduct endangers the safety or interferes with the comfort of others may have her/his riding privileges revoked. **Courtesy and respect for others are to prevail at all times.**
- 16.2. Improper conduct may result in the withdrawal of riding privileges by STSWR, in consultation with the school Principal or designate. Reinstatement will be at the discretion of STSWR and the school Principal or designate, after consultation with the student and parent or guardian.

16.3. Refer to [Board Policy 6001](#), which deals with the Code of Conduct.

**17. Appeal Process**

17.1. Issues regarding the application of these procedures will be subject to the appeals process used by STSWR.

17.2. Refer to the STSWR website for additional information:  
<http://transportation.stswr.ca/policies>