

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE 560

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Section 59 of the Education Act (2023), the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est recognizes the need to provide a school transportation service for its students.

School bus services are offered free of charge to eligible students to facilitate access to the educational services provided by the Board.

The following terms of reference have been drawn up to clarify the obligations and responsibilities of the various parties involved in ensuring an efficient, equitable and safe service.

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES :

1.1 RIDE TIMES

Routes are analyzed annually to optimize student travel time.

1.2 SERVICE AT THE DOOR

At-the-door service is established if special circumstances justify it. These circumstances are judged individually by the CSCE transportation officer, and her decision applies. The principles to be respected for these decisions are as follows:

- a) A physical and/or mental condition makes service at the door necessary;
- b) Service at the door is clearly necessary for safety reasons.

1.3 TRAVEL TIME

All measures are taken to minimize the time students spend on the bus. Considerations:

- a) alternate the order of loading/unloading - morning/evening/day/week/month
- b) group stops
- c) avoid service at the door.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES :

2.1 THE CSCE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

- a) The CSCE Transportation officer has overall responsibility for planning and managing the organization of school transport.
- b) The CSCE Transportation officer negotiates contracts with private carriers and school bus companies.
- c) She draws up transport estimates and monitors contract completion, ensuring compliance with the financial framework adopted by the Board.
- d) The CSCE Transportation officer supervises the day-to-day running of the transportation operation.

- e) She provides the directives and procedures required for smooth operation and informs the stakeholders concerned.
- f) The CSCE Transportation officer makes changes to routes and stops.
- g) She intervenes with management and carriers on any issues that concern them.
- h) Provides the list of students transported to schools and carriers through the transportation program. She regularly updates the list with information provided by the schools.
- i) She validates the admissibility of requests for loading or unloading other than the regular route.

2.2 THE CARRIER

- a) The carrier is responsible for the completion of its contract(s) with the School board.
- b) The carrier is responsible for hiring and training their drivers, and for the day-to-day performance of their duties, in accordance with established Board guidelines.
- c) The carrier must notify their drivers of any breach of safety rules and, if necessary, take any appropriate action to the satisfaction of the School Board in the case of negligence or serious breach.
- d) The carrier is responsible for the maintenance and proper operation of their vehicles in accordance with provincial requirements and any other competent authority.
- e) The carrier must require drivers to respect the route and stops decreed by the School Board.

2.3 BUS DRIVERS

- a) Bus drivers must ensure that their assigned bus is capable of operating safely and securely, without neglecting the cleanliness essential to passenger comfort and well-being.
- b) Bus drivers must follow the routes as approved by the School Board.
- c) They are responsible for the safety and well-being of the students they transport.
- d) They are responsible for maintaining order and ensuring that the instructions given are followed.
- e) In general, school bus drivers have the same degree of responsibility and authority over students as teachers do in the classroom. They have a responsibility towards all passengers, so it's justifiable to act with authority towards a student who is guilty of behavior that jeopardizes the comfort and/or safety of others.
- f) Bus drivers must show their riders respect and dignity, both in words and deeds.
- g) They must notify the carrier or transport department in the event of a major problem in accordance with agreed procedures.
- h) They must comply fully with the Highway Code. Any infringement of the highway code, regulations or rules of good conduct that jeopardizes the safety of students will result in immediate withdrawal of the driver's license.

2.4 THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

- a) School principals communicate customer information to the transportation department in the agreed form.
- b) They ensure continuous updating of address changes and forward the information to the CSCE transportation manager.
- c) They ensure that students are properly and safely supervised when buses arrive and depart.
- d) They periodically remind students of operating and safety instructions.
- e) They inform the transportation manager of any anomaly that could reduce the safety and quality of the service.
- f) They work with the transportation department to resolve cases of non-compliance that may lead to suspension of the right to transport.
- g) They prohibit students who do not take the bus from walking in the parking lot reserved for buses.
- h) They ensure that trails, parking lots and boarding areas are always well maintained.

2.5 PARENTS

- a) Parents must be familiar with the rules and procedures governing the transportation service.
- b) They must inform their child of the rules of conduct and safety measures to be observed.
- c) They are responsible for their child before he or she boards the bus and once he or she has left the bus on the return trip.
- d) They are responsible for any breakage or damage to private or public property caused by their child.
- e) They must ensure that their child arrives at the bus stop ahead of schedule.
- f) They should encourage their children to be extra cautious, as careless car drivers sometimes fail to stop when the flashing lights of a school bus are on.
- g) They must forward any complaints regarding the use of the equipment to either the school principal or the person in charge of transportation.
school transport.
- h) They must participate in resolving any disputes that may arise.
- i) They must transport their child to school when he or she has lost bus privileges.
- j) They must obtain approval from the CSCE transportation manager for any embarkation or disembarkation other than the regular route.

2.6 THE STUDENTS

To ensure their own safety and that of others, students must comply with the various rules and regulations governing school transport.

- a) Proper conduct while waiting for the bus
 - Dress appropriately for the weather
 - Please arrive at the bus stop in advance;
 - Wait at the designated stop;

- Keep away from the road or street;
- No pushing or shoving;
- Approach the bus only when it has come to a complete stop;
- Climb at a reasonable and safe speed, heading straight for the bench;

b) Proper conduct on the bus

- Respect the driver's authority;
- Occupy assigned seat;
- Remain seated;
- Observe regulations and guidelines;
- Keep your head and hands inside the bus;
- Do not disturb others unnecessarily;
- Refrain from throwing anything;
- Do not throw anything inside or outside the bus;
- Pick up your papers and garbage;
- Maintain absolute silence on the railway;
- Follow the driver's instructions in case of emergency;
- Never smoke, consume alcohol or take drugs;

c) Appropriate conduct on descent

- Stay where you are until the doors are opened;
- If it is necessary to cross the road, wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.

EMERGENCY

2.7 In an emergency, the following procedures apply:

- a) The school bus driver makes the decision to evacuate a bus and to quickly regroup the students on site outside the bus in a safe area.
- b) School bus drivers give students clear, precise instructions to avoid danger.
- c) Students strive to follow the directions of the school bus driver.

3. DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND APPEALS

Any dispute between the school bus driver, students and/or parents will be referred to the school administration. The school administration shall attempt to resolve disputes at this level in the spirit of transport policy.

4. RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

4.1 Dispute resolution between a school bus driver and a student will follow the steps below:

- a) The school bus driver and the student meet to clarify and review, in light of this administrative directive, the reasons for the dispute and possible solutions. In general, the school bus driver has the same level of responsibility and authority as a teacher.
- b) If the situation does not improve following this consultation, the school bus driver submits the case to the parent and ultimately to the school administration, before any other form of correction is initiated by the driver.
- c) Once a case is submitted to the school principal, the school bus driver, the student and the principal must take the appropriate action in each case. Sanctions, if any, must be made known to all stakeholders, including parents, before they are applied.
- d) The decision to defer the case to the transportation department is made once the school principal and school bus driver have done everything in their power to resolve the dispute.
- e) The CSCE transportation department has to decide.

5. APPEAL

The parties may appeal to the superintendent, who will decide the matter. If the parties are not satisfied with the decision, they can appeal to the School board, whose decision will be final.

6. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS

As described in administrative procedure 133 and 136, certain situations may require changes or cancellations to regular student transportation. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the following procedures will apply.

6.1 School bus schedule changes

- a) The bus driver notifies the transportation department of the situation.
- b) The bus driver notifies parents of the planned changes.
- c) The transportation department notifies the school administration of any planned changes.

6.2 Cancellation of school transportation

- a) The school bus service is cancelled when :
 - The official temperature is equal to or lower than - 40C or
 - Poor road conditions make travel impracticable.
- b) On days of extreme cold or inclement weather (- 40C, freezing rain), the general management or her delegate will make the decision to cancel bus transportation and inform parents accordingly.
- c) Any school bus driver who cancels his or her bus route in a particular area due to adverse weather conditions must notify the Transportation Department, preferably before 6:45 a.m. The Transportation Department will notify the superintendent, school principal and local radio stations. The transportation department notifies the superintendent, school principal and local radio stations.
- d) When transportation is cancelled, the decision is communicated to school principals and parents.
- e) The decision to cancel the school transport service for the day is taken, preferably between 5:00 and 6:30 a.m. or the previous evening.
- f) The person responsible for transportation communicates the decision to cancel school transportation to the bus drivers.
- g) The person in charge of transportation announces changes to the transportation schedule

to the local media, on board websites and sends notifications to parents.

7. RAILWAY STOPS :

The Conseil scolaire Centre-Est recognizes the need to follow provincial law and established standards regarding the stopping of school buses at controlled or uncontrolled railway crossings.

- a) To avoid confusion with general traffic, school buses make a mandatory stop at uncontrolled railway crossings **only**.
- b) School buses do not stop at controlled railroad crossings unless the lights are activated to indicate an approaching train or the lights are defective.
- c) When approaching uncontrolled railroad crossings, school bus drivers must comply with provincial law procedures.
- d) At controlled railroad crossings when the lights are activated, bus drivers must follow the same procedures as for approaching uncontrolled railroad crossings.

References

Education Act , sections 36, 59 (2023)
School Transportation Regulation, sections 67
(2023) Traffic Safety Act (2022)

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