

**THE PROTESTANT SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE TOWN OF PENETANGUISHENE**

POLICY MANUAL

POLICY TITLE:

Transportation of Students

SECTION/CODE:

Transportation E – 1

APPROVAL DATE:

September 8, 2025

SUPERSEDES:

May 10, 2021

NUMBER OF PAGES:

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September 2029

***Upon request, this policy will be made available in large print. Please call (705) 549-6442**

POLICY STATEMENT

Whereas the *Education Act, 190 (1) Transportation of Pupils*, states that a Board “may” provide transportation for students, it shall be the policy of the Board to provide transportation to and from school as outlined in the Administrative Guidelines and Operating Procedures.

The Board will establish a transportation service that reflects a partnership with all stakeholders that is fair and consistent and that ensures the most efficient use of available resources.

POLICY PURPOSE

To outline the process required to select a bus operator, establish routes, criteria to determine eligible riders and ensure transportation services are safe, equitable, efficient, and cost effective.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Board" shall mean The Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene (PSSBP).
2. "Operator" shall mean an individual, individuals or firm owning and/or operating vehicles under contract with the Board and shall include the Board.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

1. Funding for transportation is determined by the Ministry of Education and the Terms and Conditions regarding the contract with the Operator shall be established collaboratively by the Board’s Transportation Committee and the Manager of Finance and Treasurer and approved by the Board.
2. The bus route(s) shall be established as stated in this policy.
3. The Principal/Designate, in consultation with the Board’s Transportation Committee and the Manager of Finance and Treasurer, shall establish the bus route(s) for September of each year.

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OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Board will endeavour to ensure safe practices in the design of routes, in the location of stops and in the operation of school vehicles. The Board's responsibility for the supervision of students who are transported on a school bus will commence with the student's entrance to the bus in the morning and will terminate with the student's exit from the bus at the designated stop at the end of the school day.

1. The Board sets walking distances to school that shall be no greater than as follows:
 - 1.1 Kindergarten 0.8 km
 - 1.2 Other Elementary Students 1.6 km
 - 1.3 In the case where students in one family are represented in both grade groups, as stated in 1.1 and 1.2 above, the youngest student in the family will determine the applicable walking distance for that school year
2. The boundaries of each walking zone will reflect the most direct and practical walking route from home to School.
3. Students who reside within the designated walking zone for the school are not eligible for transportation unless otherwise agreed upon by the operator/Board/School
4. A request in writing for a courtesy rider spot at existing bus stops on existing bus routes may be made Principal of the school for consideration only if there is surplus space on the school vehicle.

BUS ROUTES

1. The Board is authorized to provide transportation to and from school for students residing outside designated walking zones and to make all decisions related to the organization of bus routes.
2. Bus transportation will not be provided for students residing outside the boundaries of the Town of Penetanguishene.
3. Bus routes will be organized in the most efficient and economical manner, with regard for student safety as the overriding determinant for establishing routes.

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4. Students will ride only on assigned buses and will be picked up and dropped off only at designated stops.
5. If/when space is available, alternative transportation arrangements may be made for bus students upon the request of families provided that:
 - 5.1 The request clearly identifies the alternate drop off location
 - 5.2 The request is presented to school office staff for confirmation of available space
 - 5.3 The request is signed off by office staff and then presented to the driver by the student
 - 5.4 The requested drop-off point is served by an existing bus route

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

1. In addition to eligible day-school students, only the following persons are authorized to travel on buses:
 - 1.1 With the prior approval of the principal, adult supervisors on buses transporting students on approved co-instructional activities;
 - 1.2 On recommendation of the Principal, and with the prior approval of the Board, an approved school volunteer or staff member to accompany a student with special needs, as per the requirements of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), to and/or from school;
 - 1.3 Employees/Chair of the Transportation Committee of the Board or the Operator and those otherwise authorized by the Board or School administration in order to investigate matters related to routes, stops and/or seating capacity.

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL AND CO-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Transportation of students for instructional and co-instructional activities i.e. activities that occur as part of the school-day program, is normally provided by buses.
2. Employees and other adult volunteers may transport small groups of students in private vehicles or rented vehicles provided that the Principal has given approval in writing. The stipulation of

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requirements for volunteer drivers is presented by the Principal to each volunteer driver in advance of such arrangements.

3. As per Board Policy D – 11, Student Field Trips and Excursions: All volunteer drivers must complete a Volunteer Transportation Authorization (Form 3); Families of a student must sign a consent for a volunteer driver to transport the student as per Standard Consent form (Form 5)
4. In extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary for a Parent/Guardian (or alternate, with Parent/Guardian permission), to personally drive a student to/from a co-curricular activity. The Parent/Guardian will notify the supervisor of the activity and follow-up appropriately.

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

1. Conduct which is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus or, to the safety of others riding the bus will not be permitted.
2. The driver of the bus is in charge of the operation of the bus, as well as the safety and welfare of students on the bus, and must be given each student's co-operation and support.
3. Every student is responsible to the Principal of the school for his/her conduct while on a school bus.
4. Loss of transportation privileges (permanent or temporary), as determined by the Principal/designate, shall result for a student whose behaviour while traveling on a bus is considered detrimental to the safety and welfare of self/others.

PROVISION OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

1. Home-to-school/designated bus stop transportation shall be provided on buses under contract with the Board.
2. Transportation service contracts with licensed operators shall be negotiated by the Manager of Finance and Treasurer in collaboration with the Transportation Committee and shall be presented to the Board for ratification, as required.
3. Where feasible, sharing of transportation service with another Board may be arranged.

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4. Buses used to provide transportation for students shall be maintained in safe operating condition by the Operator, and shall meet the mechanical fitness standards specified by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. The Board/School will notify the Operator if/when there are reported concerns of mechanical fitness, in order to remedy the situation immediately.
5. It is expected that all vehicles provided by the Operator for Board use shall be equipped with functioning two-way radios. The Operator assumes responsibility for the drivers of vehicles transporting students of the Board.

CANCELLATION OF TRANSPORTATION OR CHANGES IN BUS SERVICE

1. The Board/Operator is authorized to make special arrangements to cancel or alter service to ensure the safety of students during inclement weather.
2. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the school has a contingency plan for the safe care of students in the event of early closure or when homeward bus service must be cancelled.

STUDENT SAFETY

1. To help ensure safety during transportation, the following items, without limitation, will not be permitted on the bus: scooters, skateboards, ski equipment, hockey equipment, large school projects or other items that could become projectiles and can injure someone. Items such as sport balls and ice skates must be kept in an appropriate secured bag.
2. School bus safety shall be part of the program of studies in the school, the area of focus to be determined by the Principal.
3. The school in conjunction with the Town (i.e. signage or pavement markings) shall develop appropriate safety guidelines with regard to bus loading areas. These safety guidelines will be appropriately available for students and parents.