



TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OVERVIEW



THUNDER BAY CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Student Safety is Our Number One Priority.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Function of STSTB	1
Mission Statement	1
Transportation Eligibility	2
Walk Distance to Stop	2
Stop Locations	3
Ride Times	3
Distance Calculations	4
Child Care Address	4
Joint/Shared Custody	4
Courtesy Transportation	5
Out of Zone Transportation	5
Specialized Transportation	5
Visible Parent Rule	5
Inclement Weather	5
Student Discipline	5
Use of Video Cameras	6
Communication	6
Appeal Process	7
Student Responsibilities	7
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities	9
Principal Responsibilities	10
School Bus Drivers Responsibilities	11
Rules of Conduct	15

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OF THUNDER BAY - OVERVIEW

Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay (STSTB) is an inter-board transportation consortium formed in January 2008 through an agreement between Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales, Lakehead District School Board and Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. The purpose of the consortium is to provide common administration of student transportation services for its member Boards within Thunder Bay and surrounding municipalities and townships. STSTB is one of more than thirty student transportation consortia within Ontario established under mandate by the Ministry of Education. As of September 2023, STSTB also provides student transportation administrative services to Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario through a shared service agreement with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board.

In a collaborative effort to increase efficiencies in all aspects of home to school transportation, each member school board has adopted joint policies and procedures regarding student transportation for the Thunder Bay area. A Governance Committee comprised of Trustee and Senior Administration representatives from each member school board oversees the activities of the STSTB consortium.

STSTB endeavors to provide safe and efficient transportation services to and from school each day for students who are eligible based on the mutually agreed transportation policy of its member Boards. The consortium plans and implements home to school transportation for over 8,000 students within a 5,086 square kilometer service area.

Our Mission

To develop, implement, administer, and provide a safe, efficient, cost-effective transportation system for students of Lakehead District School Board, Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board and Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales, that meets the needs of eligible students, parents/guardians, schools and staff.

Provision of Transportation

The Education Act places no mandatory responsibility for school boards to provide transportation services. Accordingly, it is understood that transportation is a privilege, not a right. Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales, Lakehead District School Board and Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board believe that there are conditions that may warrant the provision of transportation services for students in accordance with a mutually agreed Transportation Policy. Student transportation vehicles are an extension of the classroom and, as such, students are responsible to the principal for their conduct on these vehicles in accordance with legislation and all applicable member board policies. Transportation can be withdrawn for violation of the behaviour code of each Board.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

TRANSPORTATION POLICY & PROCEEDURES - Overview

(see STS-GEN-23 Transportation Policy and other STSTB documents cited in this overview for more details)

The policy outlined below provides the guidelines regarding eligibility for and provision of transportation of students under the jurisdiction of Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales (CSDCAB), Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario (CSPGNO), Lakehead District School Board (LDSB), and Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (TBCDSB).

Transportation Eligibility Policy (see also STS-ELG-001 Transportation Eligibility)

An Eligible Student:

- will be a resident of Thunder Bay or surrounding area for CSDCAB, CSPGNO, LDSB or TBCDSB who is registered in, and attending, a school operated by, or under, the jurisdiction of these Boards.
- must apply for transportation when registering into a school and for each year attending a senior elementary school or secondary school.
- address is beyond the following distance criteria from their board-designated school, but within the catchment boundaries for that school:

○ K1/K2:	800 meters		Eligibility Distance from School
○ Grades 1 – 8:	1600 meters		
○ Grades 9 – 12:	3200 meters		

- Who, if attending board of education programs which are approved for transportation outside their home school areas, and who, during the school year, change to a program available in their home school, will no longer be eligible for transportation to the out of zone school.
- who is assigned transportation and reported as not riding for 20 or more consecutive school days will be removed from transportation upon notification to parent/guardian.

Walk Distance to Stop Policy (see also STS-ELG-002 Walk to Stop)

Eligible students may be required to walk up to the following distances to and from regular centralized school bus stops in urban and developed rural areas with priority given to students in kindergarten in determining stop locations.

○ K1/K2:	400 meters		Walk to Stop Distance
○ Grades 1 – 8:	800 meters		
○ Grades 9 – 12:	1600 meters		

Certain road configurations for all grades may require longer walking distances to bus stops, such as, but not limited to, dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, crescents, and courts.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

School Bus Stops and Routing

All routes and designated stops will be established by the consortium based on safety, time, efficiency, loading and economy. STSTB is not responsible for providing door to door transportation. Parents/guardians are responsible for their student to, from and at the bus stop.

Bus Stop Locations:

- centralized group stop locations will be utilized in urban and developed rural areas
- priority shall be given to kindergarten students in organizing group stop locations so that the walking distance for these students to and from the bus stop can be minimized
- generally, bus stops will not be located on dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, crescents, or courts in urban and developed rural areas
- generally, bus stops will not be located on non-through roads ("dead-end roads") in rural areas unless the student residing furthest from the closest intersecting through road is more than 500 meters from the intersection and there is an adequate turn around location that is maintained throughout the school year
- buses do not enter private roads
- the absence of sidewalks will not be the sole basis for reconsideration of bus stop locations along roads where the speed limited is 50 km/h or less.
- stops shall not be located on a steep grade, brow of a hill or a blind curve
- the distance motorists need to see and slow down for a school bus is a key factor in setting stops. The stops must be sited where they are clearly visible to approaching motorists. The following is a guide to the minimum distances from which drivers should be able to see a school bus that is stopped on a road:

Speed Limit	Minimum distance (for cars coming from each direction)
50 km/h	125 m
60 km/h	150 m
70 km/h	175 m
80 km/h	200 m

- the better the visibility of a school bus, the greater the chance motorists will be able to react safely when the bus is stopped
- as a rule, a minimum 200-meter distance between bus stops will be followed.

- when not interfering with normal school operations, the loading zones of elementary schools will be utilized as transfer points and centralized bus stops for Secondary students of the same board.

Ride Times: (see also STS-GEN-005 Ride Times)

- *Whenever possible*, ride times for students will not exceed one hour each way on a school bus.
- Ride time is calculated as time riding on the bus between pick-up/drop-off at the stop and arrival/departure at the school and is based on normal traffic and weather conditions. For students who reside in rural areas or attend programs (ie. French Immersion, IB) at schools outside their home school catchment area, ride times may exceed one hour.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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Distance Calculations (see also STS-ELG-001 Transportation Eligibility)

STSTB uses Ontario Ministry of Education approved student transportation management software for all transportation planning. Using geospatial data, the software calculates the distance from the closest property line of the student's address to the closest property line of the school or bus stop by public pathway and public road using the shortest walking route.

There are factors which will be taken into consideration in assessing the student address to school distance calculation. These factors will be used to establish the route which will be measured to determine transportation eligibility.

STSTB uses the following criteria when measuring distance for eligibility determination.

- Students are not expected to cross a multi-lane road of four (4) or more traffic lanes without the presence of either an adult crossing guard, pedestrian crossover, or traffic signals with a pedestrian crossing signal.
- Students are not expected to cross street level railway tracks that are not equipped with warning signals.
- Students are not expected to walk along roads without sidewalks if the posted speed limit is more than 50 km per hour.
- On roads where posted speed limits are more than 50 km per hour, students are not expected to use sidewalks that do not have a grassed or paved strip separating the sidewalk from the road.
- Walkways and/or pathways will be used in determining the distance from home to school based on the following:
 - Municipal and Regional Conservation Authority approved pathways/walkways for which no restriction for pedestrian use has been established;
 - the walkway is visible from a Municipal/Regional roadway or sidewalk;
 - the walkway is visible from one end to the other; and
 - the walkway/pathway consists of an engineered surface (i.e. paved, gravel/limestone screening).

Alternate Child Care/Day Care Address (see also STS-ELG-003 Alternate Address Requests)

Eligible students may request permanent transportation for locations other than their home address for childcare purposes provided that:

- The address is within the school boundaries, and,
- The address is a residential address or a registered child care centre, and,
- request is received from the parent and approved by the consortium.

Joint and Shared Custody Arrangements (see also STS-ELG-004 Joint Custody Transportation)

Eligible elementary students may request no more than two permanent pick-ups and one permanent drop-off within scheduled routes, to and from the student's designated home school

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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for joint custody reasons only (senior elementary school and high school students may request two permanent drop-off locations for joint custody reasons).

Courtesy Transportation (for Ineligible Students) (see also STS-ELG-010 Courtesy Transportation)

As a courtesy, transportation may be provided to students who are not eligible for busing if there is room on a bus. Ineligible students may be transported if they go to and from an existing stop and when eligible students require transportation on a full bus, those ineligible senior grade students living closest to the school will be the first to relinquish their occupancy.

Out of Zone Transportation (see also STS-ELG-016 Out of Zone Transportation)

Families who choose to enroll their children in a school outside of their designated school area are responsible for transportation to and from the out of zone school.

Specialized Transportation (see also STS-ELG-013 Specialized Transportation)

The consortium may provide transportation for students who cannot access regular modes of transportation. Specialized transportation may be provided at the discretion of the Director of Education or designate for injuries/medical conditions where the lack of access to school transportation presents a hardship for the parent/guardian and will be at the expense of the individual Board.

K1/K2 – Visible Parent Rule (see also STS-SAF-003 Safety Initiatives)

All students enrolled in Kindergarten Year 1 or Year 2, must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caretaker to and at the bus stop for pick up and must be met by a parent, guardian or caregiver at the bus stop for drop-off. K1 and K2 students who do not have a visible parent, guardian or caretaker at their designated drop-off will be returned to the school where their parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.

Inclement Weather (see also STS-SAF-012 Transportation Emergency Weather and School Evacuation)

School transportation service may be cancelled from time to time due to inclement weather and/or poor road conditions. For these instances parents should develop alternate transportation arrangements. Should the service be running during inclement weather it is ultimately the parents/guardians' responsibility to decide if they want their child(ren) to utilize the service.

Except for when cancellations are due to extreme cold temperatures, student transportation that does not run in the morning for other weather-related reasons, does not run in the afternoon.

Discipline on School Buses (see also STS-SAF-003 Safety Initiatives)

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 298 under the Education Act, every pupil is responsible for his or her conduct to the principal of the school that the pupil attends while traveling on a school bus that is under contract to a board. R.R.O., Reg.298 s. 23(4)

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As per the amendments made to the Ontario Education Act, September 2012, Part XIII: Behaviour, Discipline and Safety, all school bus drivers, as individuals who are not board employees, but who come into direct contact with pupils of a board on a regular basis in the normal course of carrying out their employment functions as an employee of a person who provides services to the board are required to report student misbehaviour to the pupils' principal as soon as reasonably possible.

Once the report is submitted, it is the principal's duty to investigate and administer discipline to the reported students, if necessary, up to and including withdrawal from transportation services.

Use of Interior Video Cameras on School Buses (see also STS-SAF-003 Safety Initiatives)

In the interest of safety and in an effort to reduce student discipline problems and vandalism on school buses, video cameras, upon approval of STSTB, may be placed in school buses under contract to the Boards at any time without notice.

Communications

- responsibility for providing information pertaining to transportation policies and procedures to contracted service providers shall rest with the consortium office
- responsibility for providing information pertaining to transportation policies and procedures to school bus/school purposes vehicle drivers shall rest with their employer
- responsibility for providing information pertaining to transportation policies and procedures to parents and students shall rest with school principals
 - parents and/or student inquiries should be directed to the school principal for response
 - if the school principal requires assistance, his/her inquiries should be directed to the STSTB, except in the case of disciplinary matters
 - Board Trustees shall direct inquiries or complaints to Senior Board Officials
 - It is strictly prohibited for parents/guardians to:
 - board the vehicle;
 - speak to the driver/transportation operator staff/STSTB staff in an angry or aggressive manner, or to use abusive and disrespectful language;
 - negotiate, or attempt to negotiate, with the driver and/or the school principal in order to change the designated stop, pick up or drop off time, or other transportation arrangements for their children, which would differ from the arrangements planned by the STSTB.

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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS - Overview

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied that their students' transportation arrangements are consistent with transportation policy, practices and procedures, a review of those arrangements can be requested. The consortium provides a process for parents/guardians to appeal a transportation decision:

Transportation Appeals Process (see also STS-GEN-025 Transportation Appeals Process)

1. Parent/guardian discusses concern with a STSTB Transportation Officer.
2. If Parent/guardian is not satisfied with Transportation Officer's response, they will be directed to discuss further with the STSTB Operations Officer.
3. If parent/guardian is not satisfied with Operations Officer's response, they can appeal to the Consortium Manager in writing who, after receiving the appeal and obtaining all pertinent information from STSTB staff, will make a decision in writing within 10 working days.
4. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the Consortium Manager, the appellant can make a further written appeal, through the Consortium Manager, to a designated senior board official of the member board at which their student attends.
5. The decision of the senior board official shall be final.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

1. Rules for getting on the bus safely

The student(s):

- a) Shall be at pick up points at least five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus. Never run to or from the bus.
- b) Must wait at the stop in a safe place, well back from the side of the road.
- c) Must recognize that a danger zone exists in the immediate vicinity (approx. 3 meters) of school vehicles. The danger zone is anywhere close enough to the bus to touch it. The bus driver cannot see you when you are in the danger zone. Children must never enter the danger zone unless the driver has given them permission.
- d) If you cross the street to get on the bus: When the bus comes, you must wait until it has come to a complete stop. The bus driver will make sure all the traffic stops. The stop arm will come out and the red lights will be flashing. Watch the driver. When the driver knows it is safe, he or she will signal you to cross, but watch for traffic yourself. Walk, don't run.

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- e) Board and leave the bus in an orderly fashion. Hold onto the handrail as you get on and off the bus. Don't push or shove.

2. Rules for school bus riding

The student(s):

- a) May be transported from a designated bus stop to school and return only.
- b) Must recognize that the bus driver is in complete charge of the bus.
- c) May be denied the privilege of riding the bus for not observing regulations and instructions as per the member Boards' rule of conduct policy.
- d) Are prohibited from smoking (including e-cigarettes/vaping), or using/possessing non-prescribed drugs, or consuming/possessing alcohol on all school buses at any time.
- e) Shall not fight or use obscene language or gestures on the bus.
- f) Will be held responsible for any willful damage to the bus.
- g) Will not bring annoying, dangerous, or disturbing objects on school buses. This includes, but is not limited to, firecrackers, toy weapons, weapons, explosives, ammunition, birds, animals (except pre-approved service animals), etc. Skateboards are not allowed on buses unless they fit safely into a packsack or are properly secured for transport.
- h) Will behave in an orderly fashion while on the bus.
- i) Will inform the driver if anyone is known to be absent.
- j) Will remain seated facing forward at all times and will not distract the driver and/or other students.
- k) Will keep the aisle clear of feet, bags, and pack sacks to avoid tripping others.
- l) May open windows only with the driver's permission. Will keep head, hands, and arms inside the bus.
- m) Must not tamper with emergency doors, windows, or equipment.
- n) Must not throw anything inside, out of, or at the bus at any time.
- o) Will maintain a clean bus by using the refuse containers provided on the bus when safe to do so.
- p) Must realize that objects which may hinder the safe operation of the vehicle, or the safety of the students may be refused on the bus.
- q) Will talk quietly while on the bus. The driver must not be distracted to drive the bus safely.
- r) Must save snacks for snack time at school or until you get home. Snacks may spill or you may choke if the bus goes over a big bump.
- s) Must be familiar with rules for emergencies.
- t) Must not fight or shout or play in OR around the bus.

3. Rules for leaving the bus safely

The students(s)

- a) Hold the handrail and then take two large steps away from the bus when leaving it.

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- b) If crossing the street, must do so in front of the bus by walking ahead of the bus at least three metres (ten (10) giant steps). Cross only when the driver gives a signal. Cross the street in single file.
- c) If you drop something near the bus (in the danger zone), don't pick it up. Tell the driver or other adult.
- d) If everyone is getting off the bus, the people in front leave first. Do not push.

4. Winter Safety Tips While Waiting at Your Stop

- Leave yourself some extra time in the morning to get on the bus.
- Dress appropriately to ensure protection from the cold, wind, snow or rain.
- Stand away from where the bus stops. The bus needs extra room to stop when there is ice and snow.
- Don't throw snowballs at the bus.
- Don't slide on ice and snow while waiting for the bus
- Don't push or shove near the bus stop, someone may slip on the ice.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians can help in our efforts to maintain high standards of safety and acceptable behaviour for students while traveling on school buses.

1. Bus riding privileges may be suspended for any misconduct by students.
2. Requests for transportation to or from a caregiver must be within the school zone and on an everyday basis. Children should be registered at the school which serves the caregiver address. Requests for students to be dropped off or picked up at different addresses on occasion cannot be accommodated.
3. Shall remind their children, on an ongoing basis, of the rules and regulations to be observed when riding a school bus.
4. Have their children at their bus stop at least five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus.
5. Are responsible for their child's or children's safety and conduct prior to boarding, after dropping off and while at the designated stop.
6. When Kindergarten students are being picked up or dropped off, are required to meet the bus at the designated stop, be visible to the bus driver, or have a caregiver or responsible, (school principal approved) older sibling to meet the student.
7. Are expected to cooperate with the principal and bus driver in resolving misconduct involving their child.
8. Know that the bus driver is not authorized to change bus stops or routes. All changes must be authorized through Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay. Attempts to negotiate changes directly with the bus driver may result in removal of transportation privileges.
9. Should report any problems about late arrivals, departures, etc. to STSTB.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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10. Must notify the school office of any changes of transportation address who will in turn notify STSTB. Except for the busy startup of the school year, three school days are needed to implement changes in most situations.
11. Are financially responsible for any willful damage done to the bus by their children.
12. Are not permitted to board the school bus without authorization from STSTB.
13. Must realize that in order to ensure safe transportation, objects that may hinder the safe operation of the vehicle or the safety of the students will not be permitted on the school bus.
14. Should remove all long drawstrings and toggles from outer clothing to prevent these from being caught in handrails and doors.
15. May request last minute changes through the school only during real family emergency situations.
16. Are responsible for ensuring that adequate bus turnarounds are available year-round on roads where the bus must turn around to service their stop. Parents may have to contact the local roads boards or M.T.O. for assistance.
17. Should make their children more visible using retro-reflective tape on clothing, and light-coloured clothing.

Principals

Every pupil is responsible to the principal of the school that they attend for their conduct on the school premises or while traveling on a school bus under contract to the Board.

The Principal:

1. Is responsible for supervision of all loading and unloading at the school and will ensure that a supervisor is available to monitor loading and unloading activities.
2. Notifies STSTB of any problems with routes: arrivals, departures, driver performance, discipline, etc.
3. Will have knowledge of the routes and schedules of buses serving their school. Schools must request from STSTB additions/deletions of students to routes.
4. Takes the lead in investigating and resolving, in cooperation with STSTB, the bus company and bus driver, all reported student misconduct on the bus. May request video surveillance through STSTB, if necessary.
5. Informs parents/guardians of the misconduct and the disciplinary action that has been taken.
6. Will arrange emergency transportation through STSTB only.
7. Will ensure that elementary schools have classroom instruction on school bus safety and bus evacuation drills each year. The bus operators will provide buses and trained personnel for conducting drills.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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8. Will inform parents/guardians and students of any rules and regulations established to ensure safety on the buses. Ensures that students and parents are familiar with all student and parent guidelines on the STSTB website.
9. Must ensure the school has a contingency plan for the safe care of students in the event of early closure.
10. Will have knowledge of their school zone and is able to provide this information to parents when they register.

School Bus Drivers

1. Driver and Student

- a) Students must be let off only at their scheduled stop as designated by STSTB unless provided with a Temporary Transportation form approved by STSTB.
- b) Revisions of routes or stops are only to be made with authorization from Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay.
- c) Requests from parents to change stops, or to make any other special arrangements, are to be directed to School Principals and STSTB.

2. Establishing Rules of Conduct

- a) Students are expected to board the bus promptly and carefully, to take their seats and to make sure that bookbags and other belongings are not in the aisle.
- b) Students must remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- c) Children may converse among themselves quietly, but crying out or shouting is not allowed.
- d) Passengers are not allowed to distract the driver.
- e) Passengers must not open windows without permission.
- f) Passengers are not allowed to throw things about, or from the bus.
- g) Fighting or horseplay is not allowed.
- h) All student codes of conduct must be followed without exception. If a student does not observe the codes of conduct, the driver or bus operator shall notify the principal as soon as possible, with a Student Behaviour Report.
- i) Drivers are to comply with Bill 157 Education Amendment Act - Keeping Our Kids Safe at School. To report to the principal if they become aware that a student may have engaged in an activity for which the student must be considered for suspension or expulsion (done as soon as reasonably possible) Report to be submitted on Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form.

3. The Driver

- a) **Shall not:**
 - suspend a student's bus riding privileges
 - put a student off anywhere except their designated stop or school

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
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- administer any form of punishment
 - ridicule students or embarrass them in front of their peers
 - lose their temper - bus drivers shall demonstrate they are leaders and professionals
- b) Shall maintain good behaviour and conduct of students in transit.
 - c) Shall carefully observe the number of students getting off the bus and account for the safety of all before proceeding further.
 - d) Must ensure a visible parent or guardian or caregiver or an approved, responsible sibling is available for all Kindergarten students.
 - e) Is responsible for designing a seating plan to ensure the safety and proper loading of students. This should be done in consultation with the school principal.

4. Route

- a) Any changes of assigned routes may be made only with the approval of STSTB . Emergency situations requiring a detour are acceptable but should be reported immediately to the operator dispatch by radio.
- b) Dangerous situations such as a difficult turn-around, construction zones, washouts, narrow roads, bad turns or stops, etc., must be reported to the operator who will inform STSTB immediately.
- c) Elementary students transferring from one bus to another must not be left unattended. Transfers must be made at authorized transfer points only.
- d) Overloaded buses must be reported to the operator immediately by radio. Buses will not proceed if overloaded.
- e) Elementary students will not be unloaded at the school until a supervisor is visible.
- f) The driver should notify operator of any students who have not been riding for 20 consecutive school days or more ("no shows").
- g) The driver must ensure proper route identification, designated by STSTB, are always visible on both sides as well as the back of the bus.
- h) Never arrive more than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled stop time and notify dispatch if late by 10 minutes or more.

5. Driver Responsibility for Loading and Unloading

The time of greatest danger for students occurs when the bus is stopped for loading and unloading. The driver must:

- a) Be courteous and considerate to motorists and allow them to pass whenever possible before stopping and after discharging passengers.
- b) Be in neutral and the emergency brake engaged when loading or unloading students.
- c) Stop on the traveled portion of the road while loading or unloading, except where school bus loading zones are designated.
- d) Prior to stopping, activate the alternating flashing amber advanced warning lights and, once at a complete stop, deactivate the flashing amber lights while simultaneously

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

activating the alternating flashing red stop lights and stop arm and leave activated until all students are safely loaded/unloaded, and across the road.

- e) Not proceed until all students are safe on the side of the road and clear of the bus.
- f) Ensure students are seated before bus is set in motion.
- g) Make sure, when students must cross the road at any point, that all traffic in both directions has stopped, and then motion the students to cross the road in front of the bus. Students should be visible to the driver and at least 3 meters (10 feet) in front of the bus when crossing.
- h) Ensure that students are not picked up or discharged on a steep grade, a blind curve, or the brow of a hill, or at any other unsafe locations. Suggested visibility in both directions at any stop is 150 meters (500 ft.).
- i) Make sure that children get off at their own bus stop.
- j) Greet children (by name if possible) and say goodbye.
- k) At the completion of every run, complete a child check, checking between and under every seat.

6. Driver Responsibility for Vehicle

- a) Must always observe the posted speed limit and adjust the speed of the bus when encountering hazardous road conditions and inclement weather.
- b) Must make the required walk around inspection (as specified by M.T.O.) of each unit before departure, and spot checks prior to each trip, with a final inspection at the end of each run.
- c) The bus is to be kept clean and swept out.
- d) Bus doors and emergency windows are to be always closed while the bus is in motion.
- e) When approaching railroad crossings, the driver must bring the bus to a complete stop in the prescribed manner, open the door, look both ways, listen for oncoming trains and, when all is clear, proceed with caution.
- f) Must immediately report all accidents involving buses or students to the police and the operator, by phone or radio and if possible, the principal as soon as arriving at the school. In the case of serious accidents, or when the degree of injury is in doubt, appropriate medical assistance should be obtained as soon as possible. STSTB must receive a phone call regarding the information about the accident from the Operator as soon as possible and then a written report must be submitted to the office by the Operator within 24 hours of the incident.
- g) In the case of an emergency where the driver and passengers must evacuate the bus, the driver must turn off the engine, remove the ignition keys, engage the emergency brake, put on emergency four-way flashers, and set flares if necessary.
- h) Must not fill fuel tanks when students are in the bus. The driver shall ensure that the bus has sufficient fuel to complete the trip before departing.

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STSTB Controlled Document: STS-MAN-007.05 Transportation Services Overview
Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

- i) Must never operate a school bus while under the influence of alcohol or an intoxicant, or drugs of any kind.
- j) Smoking (including e-cigarettes/vaping) is not permitted on the bus at any time. Eating and/or drinking are not permitted on the bus.
- k) Must not permit non-students or unauthorized persons to ride the bus while students are being transported without written authorization from STSTB.
- l) Must not bring animals on the bus.
- m) Above all, the driver must obey all traffic signs and rules as outlined by the M.T.O. and in provincial statutes and regulations.
- n) Sudden stops by the school bus should be avoided. The driver shall keep far enough back of the vehicle ahead to allow a safe braking distance in the event the vehicle makes a sudden stop. Bus drivers should activate their advance warning flashers to indicate a stop in sufficient time to allow traffic ahead and behind to come to a safe stop.
- o) The driver will radio in before any unscheduled backing up of the bus. The driver must never back up in a loading zone

7. Radio Procedures for Drivers

- a) Communication radios must be always on.
- b) Conversations are to be limited to job-related business; kept short and to the point.
- c) When reporting an accident, give the location, bus number, number of students on board, any injuries, if ambulance and police should be advised, and whether the bus is involved.
- d) Do not describe or discuss the accident over the air. The dispatcher will notify the driver if any other details are needed other than those contained in 7. c)
- e) If a driver should encounter a discipline problem that they feel is out of control and cannot be handled in a conventional manner, the driver should stop in a safe location, secure the bus, and radio their operator immediately for further instructions.
- f) As all buses are equipped with radios, courtesy must be exercised to allow calls in progress to be completed before initiating a new one.

Despite all precautions, the possibility of an accident cannot be entirely eliminated. A driver will be trained so that if an accident should occur, they will know how to react to the emergency appropriately and in the safest interests of the students on board.

8. In Case of Bus-Related Accident, Drivers Shall

- a) Notify their operator, or the police for assistance.
- b) Stop the bus, turn off the engine, engage the emergency brake, and turn on emergency four-way flashers. Keep ignition on accessory to maintain radio contact.
- c) Check for any injuries and make sure students are as safe and comfortable as possible.
- d) If students must evacuate the bus, keep them together a safe distance from the road and the accident area.

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Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

- e) Under no circumstances allow students to proceed home by hitch-hiking rides or walking long distances.
- f) If necessary, send a responsible student for help or to use the radio to report that assistance is required.
- g) Get all other pertinent information about all vehicles and persons involved from the attending police officer.
- h) Complete an accident report.

Rules of Conduct & Discipline

Safety depends heavily on student behaviour while traveling on school vehicles and as such it is essential that students act responsibly. This also extends to areas of student pick up, drop off and transfer points. Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay will abide by the policies and procedures of each individual Board as it pertains to student behaviour on school buses.

1. Breaches of conduct detrimental to the safe operation of the bus or to other students riding on the bus will not be tolerated. Boards may provide or rescind transportation service where appropriate and, as such, this privilege is to be respected by all parties. To this end, inappropriate behaviour may lead to the withdrawal of transportation services. The creation and maintenance of a safe transportation environment is a goal which Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay is committed to.
2. The driver of the bus, by law, oversees the safe operation of the bus, and the safety and welfare of all students.
3. Where students do not observe the rules of conduct, the bus drivers must notify the principal or designate of the school concerned as soon as possible after the completion of the route. The driver must complete a Student Behaviour Report and submit it to the principal through their dispatch office.
4. All transported students are accountable to the school principal who has the authority to ensure that an appropriate level of conduct and discipline is maintained for all riders while traveling on a vehicle that is under contract to the Boards. The principal or designate shall determine, in consultation with the driver, the circumstances surrounding a reported breach of conduct by a student on a school bus. The principal will initiate a discussion with the driver to form a basis for the behaviour of students while riding the school bus. The principal, or designate, shall determine the form and extent of discipline.
5. If it is determined that the student's bus riding privileges are to be suspended, the principal or designate shall advise in writing to the student, the student's parents, the bus operator, and STSTB, before such suspension comes into effect.
6. In the interest of safety and in an effort to reduce student discipline problems and vandalism on school buses, video camera surveillance systems may be placed in school buses under contract to the Boards.

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Created: April 2018 Revised: May 2024 Reviewed January 2026

7. Should an incident occur involving students(s) from different Boards, it would be the responsibility of each principal or designate to determine the form and extent of discipline for the student(s) attending their school. The principal or designate shall determine the circumstances of the breach of conduct in consultation with the principal or designate of the other Board and the bus driver.

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