



Memorandum Re - New Kindergarten Students & Transportation – 2012/13 School Year

Dear families of new Kindergarten students:

November, 2011

At this time, as part of preparations for enrolling your child(ren) in Kindergarten for the first time, Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) would like to provide you with important information on transportation and school bus services. STSCO is the organization which oversees student transportation service for local School Boards. You can find out more about our services by visiting www.stsco.ca and exploring the information provided which includes common transportation facts that you may wish to understand prior to school starting next September. On our website, we also offer a portal where you can check student transportation information by confidentially entering their OEN number and birth date.

Some of STSCO's Special Services:

***First Rider Program:** This is a safety training program for first time riders which is held in August every year. Dates will be provided to schools prior to June and publicized on stsco.ca and in local media prior to the sessions being held.

***Wrist Band Program:** Schools provide a wrist band with the child's transportation information to help students, staff and bus drivers at the start of the school year. You can access this Program by contacting your school prior to first day of school.

***Buster the Bus:** Buster is a motorized, talking school bus who, with the help of his friendly handlers, visits many area schools in September and October to further reinforce bus safety with young students.

***Bus Safety and Emergency Evacuation Training:** During each school year, once in the fall and once in the spring, bus companies assist us by visiting each school and teaching students about bus safety rules and what to do in case of an emergency while riding on a bus.

Some Important Transportation Service Facts:

Transportation eligibility is determined by distance from nearest property access point of the student's home residence nearest property access point of their designated school of attendance as measured by STSCO staff along maintained streets and walkways. **The policy walk distance is 1.0 km (1,000 m) for Kindergarten students, increasing to 1.6 km (1,600 m) as they move into Grade 1 and beyond.** Students residing outside this distance are eligible for School Board supplied transportation. Families of students within this distance are responsible for getting their child(ren) to school.

Transportation is a shared responsibility. The combined efforts of students, parents and families, bus drivers and companies, school staff and STSCO ensure a safe, effective and enjoyable system which provides for the needs of all eligible students.

Family Responsibility: Where a student is eligible for transportation, families are responsible for the safe passage of their child(ren) from their home or caregiver location to the bus stop in the morning and back again in the afternoon.

Bus Company Responsibility: Companies are responsible for ensuring that students have a safe ride to and from school.

School Responsibility: Schools are responsible for student behaviour while students are riding on buses.

STSCO Responsibility: STSCO is responsible for ensuring that bus stop locations are reasonable with the bus being adequately visible to vehicular traffic in the area and students being able to wait and disembark at a safe location adjacent to their bus stop.

Stop locations are generally centralized to serve several nearby families. The distance guideline for Kindergarten walk to bus stop is 1.0 km (1,000 m) and stops are reviewed annually as part of STSCO's route planning. Of course, not all families need to make their way to bus stops which are set 1 km away and most stops are at a closer distance.

Should you have any questions regarding our services, please contact the STSCO office, at either (705) 748-5500 or 1-800-757-0307, and speak with your area Route Planner (Peterborough ext. 242, Northumberland ext. 232, Clarington ext. 231, and Special Needs ext. 241). We at STSCO wish each and every new Kindergarten student all the best in the coming year.

Joel Sloggett, C.A.O., STSCO