TRANSPORTATION
FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Transportation for students with special education needs is facilitated by the Toronto Student Transportation Group. Transportation is provided as required for all exceptional students attending Intensive Support Programs or special education withdrawal programs not offered at their home school, at the elementary and secondary level, with the exception of students identified as gifted. Due to fiscal restraints the TCDSB is not able to provide transportation for students identified as gifted. Transportation is also provided for students attending Special Education intensive support summer programs, as required.

Exceptional students who attend programs within their own community are provided the regular transportation service in place for the school if it is appropriate. If alternate transportation arrangements are required they are provided. Transportation requests for students in Intensive Support Programs (ISP) outside of their local school community are submitted by the school to the Transportation Department.

Students approved to attend Provincial and Demonstration Schools are provided transportation services according to Ministry of Education guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SEPARATE TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

If the student's needs are such that they need to be transported separately, then those decisions are made. As a specific example one student required transportation with the assistance of a health care attendant. These accommodations were provided.

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported is made on an individual basis. If a child can be transported with other children, that is the preferred method. When the regular home to school bus is possible (if the child's needs allow for them to use this type of bus), this bus is used. Placement in an Intensive Support Program class through the IPRC process (Gifted excluded) ensures transportation is provided for the exceptional students, provided sufficient funding is available as approved by the School Board. The form of transportation can be via bus, taxi, van or wheelchair bus. The decision on which type of method is dependent on the needs of the child. Some children who come from the same area and are accessing the same service at the same school are not able to access the same mode of transportation due to emotional or physical needs. The need to transport children separately is determined based on discussions with the parent, principal and the Superintendent.

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS IN CARE, TREATMENT, AND EDUCATION COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS (CTEP)

Decisions regarding the transportation of children in CTEP are made on an individual basis. Principals, Superintendents and those providing care work together to provide the children with as seamless a transfer when they move to care as possible.

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING PROVINCIAL DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS

Students who attend Provincial Demonstration schools are provided transportation.

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported to the provincially run schools is made on an individual basis. Children who require additional attendants (health-care professionals, for instance) have that care provided on the mode of transportation as well.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

1. VEHICLES – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS REGULAR TRANSPORTATION

a. All vehicles used by the Bidder in the provision of Services under the Contract (including spare vehicles) shall be properly licensed, equipped, maintained and inspected with the applicable provisions of the Highway Traffic Act of Ontario, the Public Vehicles Act of Ontario and the Regulations made thereunder and all other applicable statutes, by-laws, regulations and orders from all authorities and governments having jurisdiction over the transportation of students, as amended from time to time.
b. Wheelchair vehicles must meet safety standards as required under the Highway Traffic Act under Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers and as amended and conform to C.S.A. D409 Standards.
c. All such vehicles must be manufactured to the most current C.S.A. D250 Standards for "School Buses", or with the CAN3-D409 C.S.A. Standards "Motor Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Persons". A certificate of compliance with the standards shall be supplied to the Board(s) for its inspection for each of the vehicles to be utilized in the provision of the Services.
d. Vehicles used in the provision of the Services shall be a maximum of twelve (12) years old during the Term and average age of seven (7) years.
e. Where cars, or mini-vans are used, the passenger doors shall be equipped with child- proof locks which would prohibit the doors from being opened from the inside of the vehicle but would allow the doors to be opened from the outside of the vehicle. All vehicles shall be equipped with a back-up alarm.

f. The ambulatory, service and emergency doors on the vehicles shall be padded at the top edge.
g. All vehicles are to have their Event Data Recorders associated with the vehicle's engine enabled.

h. The Bidder shall provide the most efficient vehicles available in order to perform the Services as economically as possible. Vehicles as large as eighty-four (84) seats or as small as four (4) seats may be used. Vehicle loading shall conform to the following seating capacity:
    i. Mini-Vans – five (5) passengers;
    ii. Vans – fourteen (14) to twenty-four (24) passengers; a thirty (30) inch seat length is required to fit two (2) individuals per seat. Thirty (30%) percent of vehicles this size must hold eighteen (18) students.
    iii. Large Bus seventy (70) to eighty-four (84) passengers.

i. The Bidder shall, at the time of submitting the Proposal, provide the Board(s) with the complete specifications of all vehicles that the Bidder proposes to use in the provision of the Services and yearly thereafter.

j. The Board(s) shall be entitled, at any time during the Term, to require delivery of a current, valid mechanical fitness certificate on any vehicle(s) at its sole discretion and at no cost to the Board(s).

k. The interior of all vehicles is to be maintained at all times in a clean and sanitary condition, acceptable to the Board(s). The exterior of the vehicles will be washed as needed to ensure a clean and professional appearance.

l. All vehicles shall be owned by the Bidder or shall be vehicles to which the Bidder shall be entitled to exclusive use and possession under chattel leases or conditional sales agreements from either the manufacturer thereof or a financial organization or institution involved in the financing thereof.

m. All vehicles in use to transport Board students that have GPS/AVL and/or video recording devices will be required to display a sign provided by the Consortium so that passengers are aware of their use on those vehicles.

n. The Bidder is encouraged to use fuel conservation and anti-idling technology wherever possible and feasible. The Boards' may implement an incentive program as a means to help the Bidder realize greater environmental efficiencies.

o. The Bidder will be required to adopt the Boards' 'Healthy School Bus Plan' as a means to minimize environmental damage.

p. If in the future the Ministry mandates the use of child seats on school buses the Bidder will purchase integrated seats where necessary and legislated by law. Older vehicles not equipped with integrated seats will require car seats to be installed. The Bidder will purchase the car seats and bill the appropriate Board for the cost of the seat. All labour costs for the installation of the car seats shall be borne by the Bidder.

2. VEHICLES – WHEELCHAIR REQUIREMENTS

a. Wheelchair vehicles must have a minimum rated capacity of three (3) electric wheelchairs and two (2) ambulatory passengers. All wheelchairs in the vehicle shall be secured facing forward.

b. For every one hundred fifty (150) buses a Bidder operates as part of this Contract (am/pm count) they shall make available a large seventy-two (72) passenger integrated wheelchair bus with a minimum of two (2) wheelchair spaces for use by schools on charter trips.

All Wheelchair vehicles must be able to accept a variety of wheelchair configurations including, but not limited to, manual, electric, high back, reclining, and any combination of these types.

3. DRIVERS' QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Drivers shall have and maintain in good standing at all times an Ontario Class B or Class E School Purpose Vehicle driver's license and any additional licenses required by the Public Vehicle Act, the Highway Traffic Act (Ontario) and/or the Toronto Licensing Commission By-Laws. Drivers shall satisfy all governmental requirements, and be trained according to the Ministry of Transportation and Communications "Training Guidelines for Drivers of Transportation Services for Physically Disabled Persons". A clear vulnerable sector search must be completed prior to transporting students.
b. All drivers must be trained in School Bus Safety Programs and Orientation/Evacuation Drills. New drivers shall be given a two week period to obtain this training.
c. All drivers must comply with the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 545, Licensing Article XV Chapter 545-208.

The Bidder shall provide each driver with a wallet-sized identification card bearing a photograph of the employee, suitable identification, and the employer's name and address. This identification shall be visible to students and parents as they enter the vehicle.

The Bidder shall ensure that the driver of each vehicle utilized in the provision of Services shall at all times have in his/her possession on the vehicle or access to via dispatch an up-to-date list of the students being transported on such vehicle indicating their full names, pick-up addresses, destinations, schedule times and any other special instructions. The transportation on any vehicle of any persons other than bona fide students of the Board is expressly forbidden unless the prior authorization of the Consortium is obtained.

Drivers must not smoke at any time during their route. Smoking on any vehicle, at any time, is not permitted even when passengers are not present. Smoking is not allowed on any school or Board property.

Drivers must not eat or drink on the bus while loading, unloading, or driving.

Drivers will under no circumstances strike or use undue physical force on any student.

Drivers shall report any student conduct problem immediately to the School Principal. Recurring problems will be reported to dispatch to be relayed to the Transportation Supervisor at the Consortium.

Drivers shall not give students any food, beverages, or toys. Drivers are not to take pictures or videos of the students.
Drivers shall not leave students unattended in the vehicle. The engine is to be turned off and the ignition key removed by the driver when leaving the vehicle and all proper precautions shall be taken to ensure that the vehicle cannot be set in motion.

Drivers shall ensure that all seatbelts and harnesses are properly secured and fastened around the student at all times.

Students must be picked up at their Board designated pick up location, delivered to their respective schools and returned to their designated drop-off location.

Drivers must make sure the vehicle doors are closed and the safety locks are used at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

All drivers shall maintain listening radio contact with central dispatch at all times during the trip. The idling of school bus motors while waiting to pick up or drop-off students outside schools is prohibited except in those cases where the medical conditions of the students or the extreme temperatures require that the vehicle remain idling.

Buses must use the designated bus loading zones marked at each school unless otherwise specified. Vehicles must not be driven in excess of eight (8) kilometres per hour when on the school property.

Driving is totally prohibited while the children are at play in the school yard.

At no time may the number of students in any vehicle exceed the manufacturer's specifications. Under no circumstances shall students be required to stand on the vehicle. Students incapacitated because of age or other conditions must be left in the care of a responsible adult when dropped off at school and when returned home.

Students identified with a purple tag must be met by a child recognized adult or older sibling/student that will be responsible for the student.

The driver must perform a child check of the vehicle at the end of each trip for any sleeping students or abandoned articles.

Bus supplies (i.e. windshield washer fluid, oil, power steering fluid etc.) shall not be stored near the driver or inside the passenger compartment of school busses.

Seat belt cutters for all buses shall be located within reach of the driver's seat.

Busses to be kept clutter free. The dash, front steps, areas near the emergency equipment and all emergency exits must be kept clear. No loose boxes or other items to be kept insider the bus.

The Bidder is required to have the driver perform a dry run of their routes in the week prior to the commencement of each school term, preferably the last Wednesday prior to the start of the school year.

The Bidder must provide confirmation that the dry run took place. Failure to provide supporting documentation will be subject to penalties as outlined in Section 22 of the RFP.

Drivers should be provided the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Fleet Smart training or equivalent in order to reduce driving habits that are not conducive to fuel conservation. The Bidder must provide confirmation that the training took place. Failure to provide supporting documentation will be subject to penalties as outlined in Section 22 of the RFP

The Bidder shall ensure that every driver is provided with a copy of Performance Requirements.

4. WHEELCHAIR SERVICE

Parent/guardian and/or school staff and drivers are collectively responsible for ensuring that each wheelchair is properly fastened and that each student is secured by a seatbelt. The driver of each vehicle shall ensure that each student in the vehicle is secured by a seatbelt properly fastened while the vehicle is in motion. The bidder shall be liable for any injury resulting from the failure of a driver to ensure that each student transported is secured properly fastened at all times while a vehicle is motion.

Students in this category must be transported and secured in vehicles specifically designed for this purpose.

The driver will assist physically handicapped children when and where necessary. All wheelchair- locking devices shall be properly secured immediately after entering the vehicle.

There shall be no more than one (1) wheelchair loose or free in the vehicle ready for unloading at any time with driver in attendance.

5. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

a. The Bidder shall safely transport those students with developmental handicaps, designated for transportation from time to time by the Board, from the nearest curb side in front of their residences to their respective schools and return to the nearest curb side in front of their residences at the time designated for each student in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Contract.
b. Parents/guardians are responsible for their students to and from said curb side and are instructed to have students ready at the time designated for pick-up so that no vehicle shall be required to wait longer than two (2) minutes on average to pick-up a student after the regular pick-up time.
c. For student(s) designated as being medically at risk, the Bidder will transport safely and securely any necessary equipment or apparatus (e.g. a ventilator, oxygen supply, suctioning device, etc.) for such students, as required when directed by a Board.
d. Booster Seats – Are the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a Government approved booster seat that conforms to current safety guidelines. The seats must be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Bidder and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat. If a second seat is required the carrier is to purchase an approved unit and bill the Board for the seat. The carrier is to maintain a record of all Booster seats that are in use and those paid for by the Board.
e. Car Seats – Are the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a Government approved car seat that conforms to current safety guidelines. Car seats are to be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Bidder and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat. If a second seat is required the carrier is to purchase an approved unit and bill the Board for the seat. The carrier is to maintain a record of all Booster seats that are in use and those paid for by the Board. Car seats are not to be installed in any seat adjacent to an emergency exit or emergency exit window.
f. Harnesses – Where required and approved by the parent/guardian and medical practitioner, the Board will provide harnesses. Drivers will be instructed as to how to properly install them by the Bidder. Students in vests/harnesses shall not be located in any seat adjacent to an emergency exit or emergency exit window.

6. SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAMS AND ORIENTATION/EVACUATION DRILLS

The Bidder must provide safety orientation and evacuation drills for all drivers, permanent or temporary, a minimum of once annually. The Bidder must provide the Board with the date(s) and agenda for any such orientation or drills and the Board shall have the option to attend such orientation or drills. All such orientation or drills shall include a reference to the evacuation signs posted in the vehicle. The Bidder is required to keep accurate records of all employees training and make them available to the Board when requested. Board staff will be available to assist in the delivery of programming around the evacuation drill and item listed below.

The Bidder must perform an evacuation drill with students on their to school trip before the end of October. Bidders will be required to work with the schools to identify the best time to perform these evacuation drills.

The programs shall consist of at least the following:

INITIAL TRAINING

• Awareness of sensitivity for Special Needs Students & AODA Requirements	4 hrs.
• Awareness of racial and Ethnocultural Issues (Human Rights)	2 hrs.
• First Aid, Epipen	6 hrs.
• Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures, Fire Extinguisher	3 hrs.
• Student Management, Maintaining Bus Discipline (Conflict Management)	4 hrs.
• Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent, Child Check, and Ride Refusals Procedures, and Ride Refusals Procedures, Authorized Stops	2 hrs.
• Defensive Driving	6 hrs.
• Dealing with Street Cars and Traffic Management	30min
• Restraint Systems – How to secure and release students in restraints	30min
• Purple Equals Parent Program	30min

ANNUAL REFRESHERS

• Student Management, Bus Discipline	2 hrs.
• Human Rights and Racial Ethno Cultural Issues	1 hr.
• Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures	1 hr.
• Epipen	1 hr.
• Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent, Ride Refusals, Child Check, and Authorized Stops	1 hr.

EVERY THREE YEARS

• Defensive Driving	6 hrs.
• First Aid	6 hrs.