



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO
Student Services Consortium



TRANSPORTATION POLICY	NWOSSC - 001
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Statement	The Northwestern Ontario Students Services Consortium, comprised of the Kenora Catholic District School Board, Northwest Catholic District School Board, Conseil Scolaire De District Catholique des Aurores boréales, and the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board provides harmonized student transportation services that are safe, efficient and effective.
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Rationale	The Education Act states that School Boards may provide transportation for students enrolled in schools operated by the Boards. As such, transportation is considered a privilege and not a right. This policy sets out the terms and conditions under which the Northwestern Ontario Student Services Consortium will exercise its discretion to provide transportation service.
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1.0 Eligibility	<p>Transportation may be provided for students meeting the following conditions of eligibility:</p> <p>1.1 Pupils of the Boards registered in and attending a school operated by the Boards.</p> <p>1.2 Other Pupils of the Boards who attend a school operated by the Boards.</p> <p>1.3 Eligible students who reside, or whose caregiver resides, more than the following distances by public road or publicly owned and maintained access route from the designated school may be provided transportation:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>JK, SK</td> <td>Over 500 metres</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grades 1,2,3</td> <td>Over 1.0 km</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grades 4 -8</td> <td>Over 1.6 km</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grades 9-12</td> <td>Over 3.2 km</td> </tr> </table>	JK, SK	Over 500 metres	Grades 1,2,3	Over 1.0 km	Grades 4 -8	Over 1.6 km	Grades 9-12	Over 3.2 km
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Grades 4 -8	Over 1.6 km								
Grades 9-12	Over 3.2 km								

2.0 School Boundaries	2.1 In cases where students have been granted permission to attend a school other than the designated school according to established school boundaries, parents or guardians are responsible for transportation. If the transportation address/stop is within the attending school boundary transportation may be provided.
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	<p>2.2 Children and youth in care may be considered for cross school boundary transportation to remain in their attending school providing the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the accommodation would involve existing school bus routes; ▪ there is room on the bus; ▪ there is no route extension; ▪ there is no route deviation; and ▪ there is no additional cost to the system; ▪ if space is required by another eligible student, the student may lose his/her riding privileges if no other reasonable alternative can be found. <p>The Consortium may require documentation from the appropriate agency.</p>
3.0 Safety	<p>3.1 Students may be transported for reasons of safety rather than distance at the discretion of the General Manager.</p> <p>3.2 Parents/Guardians are responsible for the safety and conduct of students to, from and at the bus stop.</p> <p>3.3 School principals are responsible for ensuring that school bus safety practices are taught annually, including evacuation drills for all elementary students (Kindergarten to Grade 8).</p>
4.0 Bus Stops	<p>4.1 The Consortium has a responsibility to provide a bus stop at a location that is safe for students boarding/disembarking as well as for those already on the bus.</p> <p>4.2 Bus stops will be located according to established operational procedures.</p> <p>4.3 The distance between bus stops will be approximately 275 metres apart where it is reasonable and safe to do so.</p>

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<p>5.0 Route Design/Changes</p>	<p>Student safety is the first priority of the Northwestern Ontario Student Services Consortium and all reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that routes are designed and maintained in a manner which is safe, effective, efficient and fiscally responsible.</p> <p>5.1 All routes are designed to operate only on publicly owned roads that are adequately maintained year-round. The exceptions may be turnarounds which may be located on private property, subject to review and approval by the General Manager. The Consortium is not responsible for maintenance or snow clearance for any road infrastructure or turnarounds. Transportation will not be provided in any situation that does not provide adequate accommodation for the safe operation of buses.</p> <p>5.2 Route extensions may be considered if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i)</i> the route extension is over 1.0 km based on the address of the student making the request, and the extension distance is not excessive; <i>ii)</i> the change, modification or extension shall not adversely affect the route; <i>iii)</i> the road's conditions are adequate; <i>iv)</i> an adequate turnaround is available and properly maintained and is within a reasonable distance from the stop; <i>v)</i> the financial impact is deemed reasonable. <p>5.3 Where the requested route change meets all other criteria and the total change exceeds ten kilometres (10 km) one-way between the existing closest stop and the route change request, there must be a minimum of four (4) eligible students requesting service before a school bus route extension will be considered.</p> <p>5.4 There may be occasions where parent contracted transportation would be the most appropriate mode of transportation. As such, financial assistance may be available as determined by Consortium procedure.</p>
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	<p>5.5 Route changes or modifications may be made at any time. However, every effort will be made to provide reasonable notice to parents.</p> <p>5.6 In the event of any facility change (eg: school opening/closing) or in an immediate or extended emergency, the Consortium may make any necessary changes or modifications in routing.</p> <p>5.7 Students may be required to transfer buses.</p> <p>5.8 Routes are subject to review and students must continue to meet all criteria in order to maintain service levels.</p>
<p>6.0 One Destination/One Pick Up</p>	<p>6.1 For reasons of safety and efficiency, students are permitted to have one pick-up and one destination point only. These points may be different, providing this is a daily occurrence and there is room on the bus to accommodate daily different a.m./p.m. arrangements.</p> <p>6.2 Transportation is provided from caregiver to/from school or home to/from school only. Requests that students be picked up and dropped off at other locations will not be accommodated.</p> <p>6.3 Students in Grades 7 to 12 may occasionally use alternate stops, providing it is the same bus and the stop meets the required distance criteria for eligibility.</p> <p>6.4 For eligible registered bus students, school bus transportation is intended to be the primary mode of transportation to and/or from school. As such, regular ridership is required as determined by the operational procedure.</p>

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<p>7.0 Shared Custody</p>	<p>The Northwestern Ontario Student Services Consortium recognizes that special consideration may be required for families with shared custody of students. The following guidelines will be used when providing transportation in shared custody situations:</p> <p>7.1 Parents must provide a Primary Transportation Address and Secondary Transportation Address, subject to the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Both addresses must be the place of residence of the parent/guardian or their appointed caregivers; ii) Both addresses must be eligible for transportation as outlined in section 1.0 of this Policy; iii) When either the primary or secondary transportation address is outside of the attending school boundary area, transportation may be provided to an existing stop within the attending school boundary area, as outlined in section 2.0; iv) There must be room on the bus(es) servicing the secondary address; v) No route extensions will be granted. <p>7.2 Where applicable, court documents will dictate which of the primary and secondary transportation address receives afternoon bus service. If this is not specified and parents/guardians cannot agree, the parent with the greater share custody (as per court documents) will make the determination. If the situation involves a 50/50 joint custody situation or no custody agreement is in place, and the parents cannot agree on either of the primary and/or secondary addresses, transportation may not be provided.</p> <p>7.3 For students in JK to Grade 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a daily basis, morning pick-up may be provided at either the primary or secondary address. ▪ The afternoon service will be provided to one of the primary or secondary address, and drop-off must be at the same location every day.
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	<p>7.4 For students in Grades 7 to 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a daily basis, students can use the pick-up or drop-off location based on either the primary or secondary address, providing there is room to assign a student to two buses. ▪ Families are not required to inform the Consortium of daily schedules regarding pick-up and drop off locations and the Consortium or bus operator/driver does not assume any responsibility in managing or tracking the student’s daily schedule. <p>7.5 Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that school administration has an accurate and up to date custody schedule.</p> <p>7.6 The Consortium has the right to withdraw service if, in its sole discretion, the safety of the student is compromised.</p> <p>7.7 For students with special needs or exceptional circumstances where a visible parent is required to accompany and meet the student at the bus stop and/or if the student travels with an Education Assistant, the policy for students in JK to Grade 6 will apply due to the specialized transportation plan involved.</p>
8.0 Students with Special Needs	<p>8.1 Transportation may be provided for students with special needs upon the approval of the General Manager after consultation with the appropriate Board/school staff regarding the student’s needs.</p> <p>8.2 There may be circumstances where parent contracted transportation would be the most appropriate for students with special needs once all other options have been exhausted. As such, financial assistance may be available as determined by Consortium procedure.</p>

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<p>9.0 Temporary Physical Challenge</p>	<p>9.1 The Consortium may provide transportation for students who cannot access regular modes of transportation due to a prolonged temporary physical challenge. Transportation will be provided at the discretion of the General Manager in consultation with the school principal for injuries/medical conditions where the lack of access to school transportation presents a hardship for the parent/guardian at the expense of the individual Board.</p>
<p>10.0 General</p>	<p>10.1 The Consortium transportation rules and regulations shall be available on the Consortium website at www.nwobus.ca as well as through a link from Kenora Catholic, Northwest Catholic, Keewatin-Patricia and Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores boreales.</p> <p>10.2 All requests, concerns and complaints concerning school bus transportation and school bus drivers shall be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action.</p> <p>10.3 In the interest of safety and in an effort to reduce student discipline problems and vandalism, video camera surveillance may be used on school buses.</p> <p>10.4 Every student is responsible for his/her conduct to the principal of the school where the student attends. The school code of conduct developed by the attending school shall govern the conduct of the student. Consistent with transportation being a privilege and not a right, any breach of any individual school's Code of Conduct may result in the suspension or cancellation of bussing privileges.</p> <p>10.5 The Consortium will not provide transportation other than home-to-school transportation. Any decision to fund transportation outside home-to-school transportation is the responsibility of the Board.</p> <p>10.6 While Consortium staff will provide charter contact information for schools, the Consortium is not responsible for organizing charter and/or field trips.</p>

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	10.7 Bus Operators may not, without prior Board approval, obtain new routes, or receive a transfer of existing routes where, as a result of the proposed actions, an existing or proposed Bus Operator would control, directly or indirectly, more than 60 percent of the transportation requirements.
11.0 Appeals	11.1 Appeals with respect to the application of this policy may be made to the Board of Directors of the Northwestern Ontario Student Services Consortium.
12.0 Procedures	12.1 The Board of Directors in conjunction with the General Manager shall be responsible for the development of Transportation Procedures based on the Transportation Policy. The General Manager will be responsible for the implementation of the Transportation Policy and the subsequent procedures.
13.0 Review of Policy	13.1 The Transportation Policy of the Northwestern Ontario Student Services Consortium will be reviewed on an annual basis. Consistent with 2.2.12 of the Consortium Agreement, the Policy Committee consists of one senior business official per Board and one trustee per Board. The Policy Committee may develop procedures to govern its operation.

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