

	POLICY NO: 3.10
Adopted	2019
Projected Review Date	2029
Revisions	2023, 2025

POLICY: TRANSPORTATION

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to providing the best possible learning environment for its students. This commitment includes providing safe, secure and on-time transportation to and from school for eligible students that is cost-effective and efficient.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

HWDSB recognizes:

- The importance of transportation that brings students to and from school on time, which supports their learning and well-being.
- That parents, guardians and caregivers share in the responsibility for the safe arrival of their children to and from school.
- That safety is also a joint responsibility of communities, municipalities and policing authorities.
- That school buses are an extension of the school. Students are responsible for their conduct on the bus in accordance with Board policies and procedures.
- Working in collaboration with Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS) to support alignment of transportation to ensure fiscal responsibility.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

When providing transportation, HWDSB will take steps to:

- Ensure the board can provide safe, timely, effective and efficient transportation services.
- Ensure transportation services support the Multi-Year Strategic Plan of HWDSB.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Chief Executive Officer

TERMINOLOGY:

Community Stop: A common area for student pick-up and drop-off which may include, but are not limited to parks, schools and places of worship. Community stops utilized by French Immersion students may not

adhere to the standard distance guidelines, while they may still be eligible for transportation under the policy.

Courtesy Transportation: Additional riders, who would normally be ineligible, are accommodated on the school bus without any increase in cost or negative impact on existing service.

Executive Council: Superintendents and the Director of Education. Executive Council is responsible for the overall operations of HWDSB.

Parent: This includes parents, guardians and caregivers.

Secondary Specialized Learning Programs: Are unique, innovative learning programs in focused areas, designed to engage students who have differing educational interests. These programs complement subject/courses consistent with the Ontario Curriculum, however, offer specialized learning opportunities that develop skills with greater depth and intensity. In secondary schools, the courses attached to these programs will be credit granting (i.e. Cosmetology, Specialist High Skills Major, and Dual Credit).

Tier 3 Alternative System Programming: Expectations that outline learning related to skill development in areas represented in the Ontario Curriculum or areas not represented in the Ontario Curriculum (ex. social skills). Under the current Ministry of Education Student Transportation Funding model, there is no funding provided for transportation to special programs. (i.e. Artsmart, International Baccalaureate, and Audition-Based Performing Arts at Glendale).

ACTION REQUIRED:

Maintain accessible operating Policies and Procedures regarding transportation through Hamilton Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS).

Eligibility

Students residing in all urban and rural areas as defined by the City of Hamilton Official Plan may be eligible for transportation services to their in-catchment school when the walking distance exceeds the following:

Elementary School	Kindergarten	1.2 km
Elementary School	1-8	1.6 km
Secondary School	9-12	3.2 km

Method

HWSTS will decide the method of transportation, ensuring it is provided in a safe and appropriate manner (i.e. school bus, school-purposed vehicle, taxi cab, Hamilton Street Railway).

Safety

Exceptions to the walking distance requirements for transportation service eligibility may be granted in extraordinary circumstances, such as safety hazards, including the absence of a safe walkway. Transportation may be arranged for students under these circumstances, pending approval from the Associate Director of Business Services & Board Treasurer.

Exceptions to the walking distance requirements for transportation service eligibility may also be revoked when the cause of the exception no longer exists or has been rectified. In these cases, students, parents, caregivers, and families will be given adequate notice of a review of the exception and in the event of a removal, sufficient notification that transportation will no longer be provided.

HWSTS will ensure that exceptions are reviewed on a periodic and timely basis in accordance with the Guiding Principles contained in this policy.

The scheduled length of time on a vehicle provided through HWSTS shall not exceed 60 minutes one way.

Parents of Kindergarten students are required to accompany and remain with the student until picked up by the vehicle. No Kindergarten student will be left unattended at a pickup point. Parents/guardians are also required to be on time and present at the drop off point to receive their Kindergarten students.

Courtesy Transportation

Under the current Ministry of Education Student Transportation Funding model from the Ministry of Education, Courtesy Transportation may be provided to students at no cost to the Board, in accordance with HWSTS Courtesy Rider / Empty Seat Procedure, by the first week of October on an annual basis.

Special Education

Transportation services will be dependent on an assessment of the individual student's needs assessment. See also Tier 3 Alternative System Programming.

Barriers to Student Achievement

Executive Council will have the discretion to provide transportation to support student success, based on available funding. It is acknowledged that the transportation allocation of the Ministry of Education's Core Education Funding model does not provide funding for certain items (i.e. short-term suspensions).

Program Priority

Notwithstanding statements elsewhere in this policy, transportation services are provided for the following program priorities:

- French Immersion – using Community Stops that may not meet the standard distance guidelines
- Secondary Specialized Learning Programs
- Tier 3 Alternative System Programming

The method of transportation provided for the above program priorities to a student's in-catchment program school will be determined based on available funding and safety.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Ensure the board can provide safe, timely, effective and efficient transportation services.	This will be measured through the HWSTS annual Transportation Consortium Update, given to the Board of Trustees every fall.

Ensure transportation services support the Multi-Year Strategic Plan of HWDSB.	This will be measured through the HWSTS annual Transportation Consortium Update, given to the Board of Trustees every fall.
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REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Child, Youth and Family Services Act