

**Date of Issue** March 2022

**Original Date of Issue** January 15, 2003

**Subject** **TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS – COURTESY RIDERS ON COMMUTER AND PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION**

**References** [Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students](#)  
[Policy 2317 – School Attendance Areas](#)  
[Policy 4115 – Extended FSL Program](#)  
[APM A1465 – Individualized Transportation for Students with Disability Related and/or Special Education Needs](#)

**Contact** School Services

---

## 1. General

- 1.1 The first purpose of this Administrative Procedures Memorandum (APM) is to outline the provision of transportation for Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) students who are program riders.
- 1.2 The second purpose of this APM is to outline the process for principals to administer, at no additional cost to the board, the filling of the empty seats on commuter buses, regular and program buses with out-of-attendance-area students. The APM does not apply to buses shared with the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB) or other boards.
- 1.3 Please see APM A1465 – Individualized Transportation for Students with Disability Related and/or Special Education Needs, for courtesy seats on special education routes and/or vehicles.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 Bus - includes all school purpose vehicles.
- 2.2 Commuter bus - a vehicle that is available for students to access beyond the designated walking distances of their home school. A commuter bus does not include school purpose vehicles provided for individualized transportation (e.g. school purpose minivans and wheelchair accessible vehicles).
- 2.3 Program bus - a bus that has been authorized by Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, items 4.8.1.3 and 4.8.1.4, to provide transportation for students attending a designated specialized program.
- 2.4 Program rider - an elementary or secondary student who rides a bus to and from a designated specialized program for which transportation is authorized by Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students.
- 2.5 An empty seat on a commuter or program bus - any seat for which there is no designated or assigned rider.

- 2.6 Attendance area - the area within a school's attendance boundary; including any attached holding area(s).
- 2.7 Out-of-attendance-area student - a student who does not attend their home school and is not otherwise eligible for transportation to the school they attend.
- 2.8 Courtesy rider - an out-of-attendance-area student who has been approved to ride a commuter or program bus.
- 2.9 Designated specialized program - a program available for students as defined by Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, section 3.7.

### **3. Program Buses**

- 3.1 Elementary School Students
  - 3.1.1 Elementary students will be able to access program buses to attend French Immersion (FI) school locations, if they reside outside the designated walking zone.
  - 3.1.2 Program buses are established to serve wide geographic areas, aligned with FI and Extended French as a Second Language (EFSL) secondary school catchment areas.
  - 3.1.3 Centralized community bus stops will be established to provide access for students to attend the designated specialized program. Notwithstanding item 4.8.1.3 of Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to transport the student to and from the centralized community bus stops at designated times for pick up and drop off.
  - 3.1.4 Maximum travel times for home to school transportation under Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, will not apply to program buses and routes.
  - 3.1.5 Maximum walking distance to a bus stop under Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, will not be in effect for program buses.
- 3.2 Secondary School Students
  - 3.2.1 Secondary students will be able to access program buses to attend FI and EFSL school locations if they reside outside of the designated walking zone.
  - 3.2.2 Program buses are established to serve wide geographic areas, aligned with FI and EFSL secondary school catchment areas
  - 3.2.3 Centralized community bus stops will be established to provide access for students to attend the designated specialized program. Notwithstanding item 4.8.1.4 of Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to transport the student to and from the centralized community bus stops at designated times for pick up and drop off.
  - 3.2.4 Maximum travel times for home to school transportation under Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, will not apply to program buses and routes.
  - 3.2.5 Maximum walking distance to a bus stop under Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, will not be in effect for program buses.

- 3.3 Program buses for FI and EFSL students will be implemented and routes will be established by the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC) with consideration of the location of assigned centralized community bus stops. The location of these stops will provide service to students and families within the FI and EFSL secondary program catchment area.

#### **4. Courtesy Riders**

- 4.1 Due to the need for supervision, out-of-attendance-area elementary school students are permitted on commuter buses and program buses only if the bus delivers the student directly to the elementary school they attend.
- 4.2 Parent(s)/guardian(s) of an elementary courtesy rider may apply to the school principal for the use of an empty seat on a commuter or program bus.
- 4.3 Out-of-attendance-area secondary school students may apply to the school principal for the use of an empty seat on a commuter bus or program bus.
- 4.4 Empty Seat Determination
- 4.4.1 The number of seats available for courtesy riders will be determined approximately the end of September. Courtesy seats available will also be determined as early as possible at the beginning of semester two.
- 4.4.2 The receiving school will keep track of the seats on commuter and program buses filled by eligible riders and courtesy riders.
- 4.4.3 If more than one school is requesting use of courtesy seats on the same bus, the principals involved will determine the priority of the requests before requesting approval from the superintendent responsible for transportation and a recommendation is made to the SCSTC.
- 4.4.4 The school will ensure that the SCSTC is kept up to date on the courtesy riders of commuter and program buses, providing the SCSTC with a list of courtesy riders approved by the superintendent responsible for transportation on or before October 15 and at the earliest opportunity courtesy changes occur to ridership.
- 4.5 A request in writing for a courtesy rider spot at existing bus stops on existing routes to attend a school that is not a student's home school, will only be approved if there is surplus space on the bus and there is no additional cost to the board.
- 4.5.1 The board reserves the right to reverse previously approved out-of-attendance-area transportation approval when safety, service, behaviour, or capacity conditions warrant.

#### **5. Compassionate Grounds**

- 5.1 Consideration may be given on the basis of compassionate grounds by the superintendent responsible for transportation, or designate, when a parent(s)/guardian(s) is critically ill, and/or injured, and unable to arrange transportation and/or supervision to and from school for their child.
- 5.1.1 The parent(s)/guardian(s) must make the request in writing and provide appropriate detailed medical documentation to the superintendent responsible for transportation for consideration.

- 5.1.2 The request will be considered only after all other options (e.g. walking-buddies, riding with neighbours, etc.) have been explored and exhausted by the family and school.
- 5.1.3 If approved, transportation will only be provided for a limited period of time, not to exceed three months and/or until the end of the term/school year, whichever is shorter.
- 5.1.4 This is intended as a one-time only request. The parent(s)/guardian(s) is expected to arrange alternate transportation, if necessary, when the one-time exception has concluded.

## **6. Determination of Available Seats for Courtesy Riders**

- 6.1 The principal will evaluate the request of an out-of-attendance-area student seeking to be a courtesy rider based on the priority list and of determining factors for seat availability established under section 6.
  - 6.1.1 Commuter Buses – eligible riders include:
    - 6.1.1.1 secondary school students attending designated specialized programs (Policy 2410 – Transportation of Students, subsection 4.8.1.4); and,
    - 6.1.1.2 special education students.
  - 6.1.2 Commuter Buses – courtesy riders include:
    - 6.1.2.1 Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)/Alternative Secondary Education Program;
    - 6.1.2.2 students who moved during the school year;
    - 6.1.2.3 siblings of eligible riders; and,
    - 6.1.2.4 local considerations.
  - 6.1.3 Program Buses – eligible riders include:
    - 6.1.3.1 students enrolled in designated specialized programs.
  - 6.1.4 Program Buses – courtesy riders include:
    - 6.1.4.1 OYAP/Alternative Secondary Education Program;
    - 6.1.4.2 out-of-attendance-area secondary students;
    - 6.1.4.3 students who moved during the school year; and,
    - 6.1.4.4 local considerations.

## **7. Bumping**

- 7.1 Since seats occupied by courtesy riders may be needed for students with higher priority or eligibility, the principal will apply the priority schedule in the reverse order for bumping riders with last on, first off, established under section 6.
- 7.2 The principal will render immediate notice to the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) and the SCSTC in the event that the student is losing the privilege of using the empty seat (FORM A1225 - 2, Courtesy Rider Agreement - Withdrawal of Permission).

## **8. Process**

- 8.1 An application will be made by the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) to the school principal, or designate, (FORM A1225 - 1, Courtesy Rider Application/Agreement).

- 8.2 Out-of-attendance-area transportation application is initiated by the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) to the school principal, or designate, (SCSTC FORM TF-018 Out-of-Area Transportation Request for Approval).
- 8.3 The principal will forward the recommended request for use of an empty seat on a commuter or program bus to the SCSTC and the superintendent responsible for transportation, for final confirmation.
- 8.4 The principal will inform the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) of the decision regarding their request for use of an empty seat, as well as withdrawal of permission.
- 8.5 Courtesy rider approvals for elementary students are only valid for the balance of the school year.
- 8.6 Courtesy rider approvals for secondary students are only valid for a semester.
- 8.7 Courtesy rider approvals are only for existing stops on existing routes.

**First Issued**                    **January 15, 2003**

**Revised**                         **December 2004, September 1, 2005, January 9, 2013, June, 2013, November 2013, April 2015, April 2018, March 2022**

***Issued under the authority of the Director of Education***



---

**Courtesy Rider Agreement – Withdrawal of Permission**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal (print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date