

TORONTO STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GROUP

FALL/WINTER PARENT NEWSLETTER

Providing access to education services for the Toronto Catholic and Toronto District School Board

November 2018

Transportation 101

Many families are new to transportation and are unclear about the process to secure student transportation services. A short 'new parent guide to transportation' has been created that will assist with that process. This is located on our main website in the bottom left corner under [Information](#).

Winter Safety At Bus Stops

Students using the school bus, and their parents, are reminded that extra caution should be taken during the winter months. Please take a moment and review this important information with your children.

- Children should be dressed appropriately for the colder weather. Unexpected mechanical problems with buses may occur more frequently at this time of year. Children must be prepared for this as buses cool off very quickly.
- Cold or stormy weather can result in buses being unavoidably delayed. We encourage parents to use extra caution with children on those days. Children should be accompanied to the bus stop or have very clear instructions on what to do if the bus does not arrive. Never leave children at the stop with no backup arrangements for an emergency.
- A build-up of ice and snow can create a safety hazard for children waiting at the bus stop. Ensure that your child understands the importance of standing back from the curb as the bus approaches the bus stop.
- Children will find it easier to walk through the ice and snow when their school books and lunches are carried in a back pack. It is also much safer for them to board the bus with their hands free to use the bus handrail.
- Tell your child never to exit the bus into a snow bank. If the bus stops and the child is unable to get out because the exit is blocked by snow, have your child tell the driver the path is not clear.



- Make sure children stay off snow banks piled near the street. While they are attractive nuisances, those snow banks can cause a child to fall into the roadway and in front of oncoming traffic.



- Transportation Portal:** Parents can now sign-up online to access Transportation information. Go to the main TSTG [Webpage](#) and select "Parents" from the top right corner to set up an account and get access to the following information:

Your child's transportation information

School bus delays and cancellations delivered to your inbox on internet enabled devices after signing up.

Coming Soon: The ability to look up your child's bus in real time via 'where's my bus'

(you'll need your child's 9 digit OEN (found on their report card) to access this information)

Parents / Guardians

- Our first issue is sent to all students on transportation. Future issues will only be sent to those who are signed up on the transportation portal.

Inclement Weather Protocol

With the clocks turned back an hour it is time to start thinking about what will happen on inclement weather days here in the City of Toronto. School bus service in the City of Toronto is rarely cancelled but it is important that each family discuss what is in their best interest in terms of sending your children to school that day. If the City of Toronto initiates a severe weather warning or watch the student transportation unit will launch our inclement weather protocol. Early the next morning student transportation staff will consult with our school bus operators, review relevant information from various media and data sources, and contact on the ground personnel to determine if the school buses can run in a safe and somewhat timely manner. If the buses are to be cancelled then notification will go out to our stakeholders via updates on the School Board and Consortium websites, and messaging out through social media. If there is no recommendation to cancel then parents should consider the storm conditions and decide if they want to send their children to school that day (especially those students who are medically fragile or live far distance from school) where road and traffic conditions may make transportation difficult to get students home in a timely manner at the end of the day.



School Bus Drivers Wanted!

Our school bus operators recruit and train drivers constantly throughout the year. Driving a school bus can be extremely rewarding for those who enjoy dealing with children but only want to work part time. All of our school bus operators provide free training and there are a variety of vehicles to choose from including your standard large school bus, mini school buses, mini-van work, and wheelchair accessible vehicles. We've found that the best drivers are generally those individuals who are from the local area and have a vested interest in ensuring that our students get to and from school safely and in a timely manner. If you're interested in driving a school bus please contact one of our school bus operators for more information.

Attridge Transportation—10 Akron Road—416-255-5199

First Student Ajax—225 Mackenzie Avenue—905-683-2350

First Student Markham—30 Heritage Rd—905-294-5104

First Student Toronto—35 Crockford Blvd—416-444-7030

McCluskey Transportation—163 Carlingview Dr—416-246-1422

Sharp Bus Lines—77 Crockford Blvd—416-477-4809

Stock West—60 McCulloch Ave—416-244-5341

Stock North—1365 Kennedy Rd—416-757-0565

Stock East—17 Upton Rd—416-754-4949

Stock Richmond Hill (York)—550 Edward Ave—905-883-6665

Switzer-Carty Transportation—3075 Lenworth Dr—905-361-1084

Wheelchair Accessible Transit—2727 Steeles Ave W—416-884-9898

Reminders

- If changes have to be made to your child's information, parents must contact the school; school bus drivers are not authorized to accept changes from parents.
- Have you tried walking? Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend 60 minutes of physical activity per day for students.
- Please arrive at your bus stop 5-10 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time .
- Do you know your child's bus route number and phone number for the bus company? Remember to use the proper route numbers as the 'orange' bus or bus 5 does not provide sufficient information to determine the bus in question.

Have Questions?

- Check out our website at www.torontoschoolbus.org where you will find helpful information regarding Transportation policies and procedures, bus company contact information, and answers to most of your transportation questions or contact our office directly at 416-394-4287.

Contact Us at transportation@torontoschoolbus.org; 416-394-4BUS or 416-394-4287; www.torontoschoolbus.org