

Important Reminder – Young Student Drop Off Procedures

As part of our efforts to ensure safe transport of students, we wish to remind students and families of the procedures related to afternoon drop off of students, particularly our youngest students.

Currently, bus companies are required to train their drivers and staff to apply the following steps for dropping off students.

- 1) Each bus driver carrying elementary students must familiarize themselves with all student names on their bus route lists and each student's correct bus stop.
- 2) The bus driver must pay particular attention to the young students on their bus lists, particularly those in JK to Grade 3.
- 3) As new students are assigned throughout the year, bus drivers are to ensure they familiarize themselves with the new students and their assigned bus stop.
- 4) When loading students at the school each school day, bus drivers must ensure they note which young students are aboard and take steps to verbally communicate with them and remind them of their correct bus stop.
- 5) When at a bus stop, the bus driver must ensure they carefully watch which students are marshaling for unloading.
- 6) At the bus stop, the bus driver must question the youngest students before allowing them to exit the bus. This should include confirming the student's name, that they are being met by parent or designate or being escorted by an appropriate older students, and that the stop is the right one for the young student.

In the event that a bus driver sees that a parent is not at the stop to meet a young student or if they are unsure if a parent is there, the following emergency steps are to be applied:

- 1) The driver will question the student involved to determine if they recognize their parent or designate and, if the child does, the driver will confirm with the parent or designate that the child is correct.
- 2) If still in doubt, the driver will ask other students with the student or at the same stop who is meeting the student or who, from the bus, is their designated bus stop partner.
- 3) If still in doubt, the driver will ask the student to remain on the bus.
- 4) The driver will then radio/contact the bus company office to report their concern and request direction.
- 5) Bus company officials, in turn, will contact the school, parent or Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO), for assistance and clarification on how best to proceed.
- 6) Once a suitable course of action is agreed upon, bus company officials will instruct the driver on how to proceed. For purposes of further clarity, examples of appropriate courses of action may include:

- a. waiting for the parent or their designate, who is determined to be nearby, to reach the subject bus stop and receive the student;
 - b. continuing with the bus route while keeping the subject student on board the bus pending bus company, school or STSCO officials reaching the student=s parent or their designate and determining a suitable location for them to meet the bus; or
 - c. should the route be completed in its entirety, returning to the school to meet school officials who will receive the student pending contact with the parent or their designate.
- 7) The driver will proceed in accordance with direction received from bus company officials.

As an additional reminder, parents are asked to ensure that their young children are familiar with their bus stop and who will be meeting them on a daily basis. Parents should also carefully note the bus route number and company name and keep the information handy throughout the school year. These additional steps will serve to help students and families assist in safe transport.

From time to time, parents or their designate may be delayed in getting to a child's bus stop and, in such cases, parents are reminded that they can call the bus company assigned to their route directly to alert them and have them contact the bus driver to advise that the child should be kept on the bus. This contingency will serve as an early warning of the issue and will help companies and drivers keep students safe.

If you are unaware of your bus company's phone number, please visit the following link on the STSCO website where company contact information is provided:

http://stsko.ca/bus_company_info.pdf

Together, the young student drop off procedures and the emergency procedures if a parent is not at the stop are intended to best ensure safe transport of students.

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Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO)