

Student Transportation Update – Tuesday, August 8th, 2017



Dear Parent/Guardian:

As we approach the beginning of the school year, we wanted to provide you with an update on how the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG), together with schools and school bus operators, have been working to ensure a much smoother and reliable level of transportation service for our students and families this fall.

Over the summer, we have been meeting weekly with our school bus operators to discuss and assess plans for student transportation in September. Among other steps being taken, school bus routes have been delivered to operators three weeks earlier than usual to allow more time to ensure driver availability and training. In addition to being able to review the latest information and provide input that we've received from parents, these weekly conference calls also allow us to identify any issues or concerns and address them well in advance of September start-up.

We are pleased to inform you that at this time school bus operators which include Attridge, First Student, McCluskey, Sharp, Stock, Switzer-Carty and Wheelchair Accessible Transit have all indicated that they do not anticipate any significant challenges like those of last year and are continuing to hire and train drivers throughout the summer. We have made very clear to all companies that should they not have sufficient drivers by August 11th, 2017, bus routes will be removed and distributed to other companies which have the capacity to take on the work.

Several thousand families have already registered to receive information, such as bus delays, directly to their email via the new online transportation portal and we encourage those that have not yet done so, to register anytime at our website.

Updates for the 2017-2018 school year will be available after August 7th. As always, you may also contact the transportation unit in early/mid-August, or visit the school the week before school starts to receive updated transportation information. As an added measure this year, we are also increasing the number of call centre staff during peak times, such as the start of school, to improve responsiveness and communication to schools and parents.

You may be aware that Ontario's Ombudsman Paul Dubé will release a report of his review into last year's school transportation issues on Thursday, August 10, 2017. Rest assured, we will be reviewing the report in its entirety and will make any needed adjustments in addition to those that have already been made.

We hope everyone continues to enjoy the rest of summer.

Toronto Student Transportation Group

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