

STEO
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
OF EASTERN ONTARIO



Annual Report
2020 - 2021



To access this
information in an
alternate format please
email us at
transportation@steo.ca



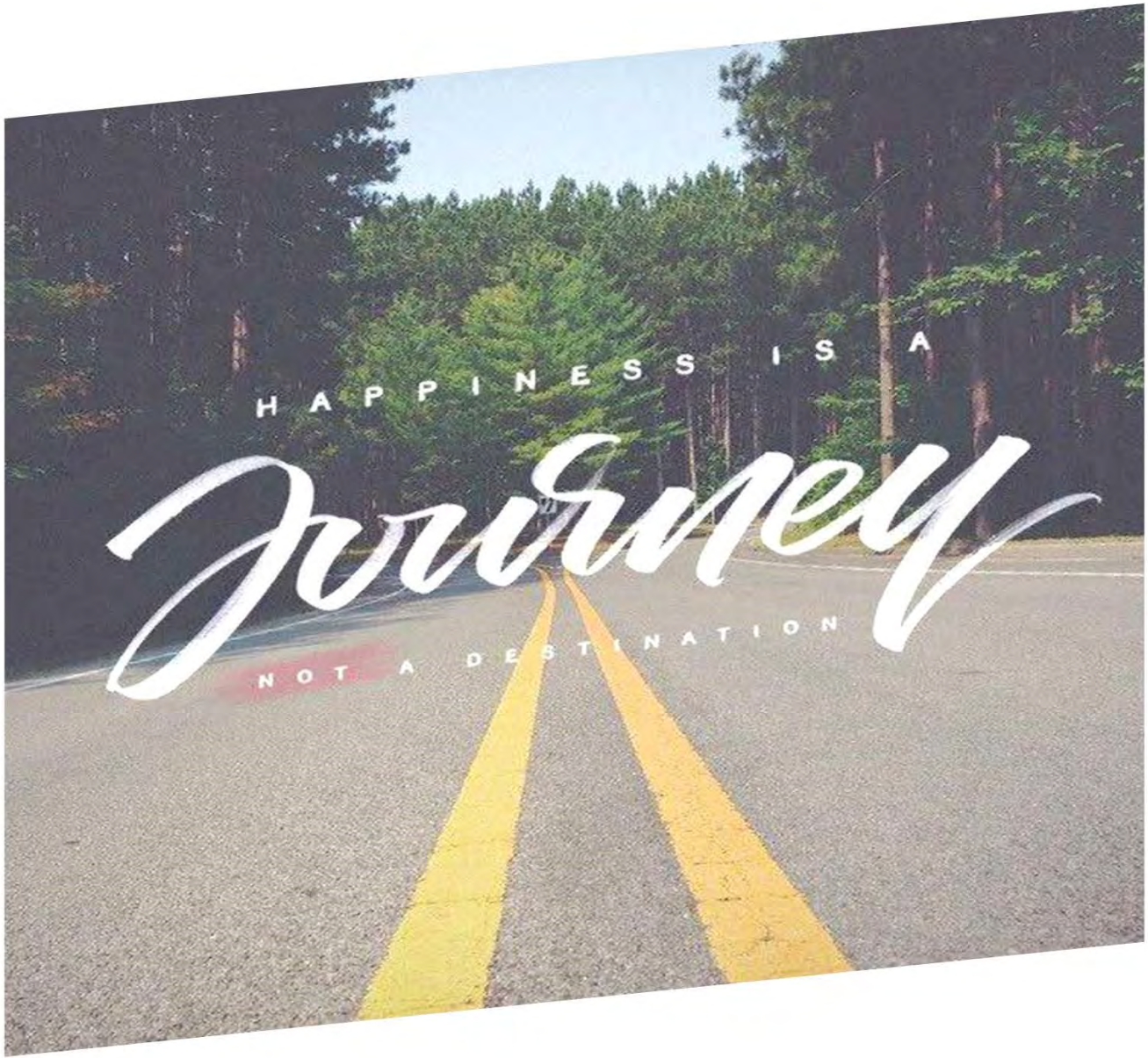


Table of Contents

Our Business Scope	4
Philosophy/Mission Statement	5
A Shared Common Set of Principles	6
Our Leadership Guiding Principles	7
Message from the GM/CAO	8
The STEO Team	10
➤ STEO Board of Directors Organizational Chart	12
➤ STEO Board of Directors	13
➤ STEO Organizational Chart	14
➤ STEO School Locations Map	15
➤ STEO’s Short and Long Term Goals	16
➤ STEO’s Key Accomplishments	18
Safety and Training	19
➤ Green Communities Canada – Walk to School Program	20
➤ Purple Band Program	21
➤ Winter Safety	22
➤ The School Bus Rider Safety Training Program	23
➤ STEO Safety Program Resources for First -Time Riders	24
➤ Kids Help Phone Poster Program	25
➤ BusPlanner App	26
➤ Policy on Gender Identity and Gender Expression	27
➤ School Bus Driver Appreciation.....	29
Departmental Year in Review	31
➤ Safety and Training	32
➤ Operations	33
➤ Information Technology	34
➤ Finance	35

COVID-19 Response – Return to School Strategic Planning Model and
COVID -19 Bus Operator Guidelines 36

Routing Efficiencies 52

Bell Time Alignment Implementation 53

Operational Metrics 54

- Quick Reference Guide 55
- Staying Connected 56
- Inclement Weather 57
- Accidents/Incidents Statistics 58
- Enrolment vs. Students Transported 59
- Average Vehicle Capacity Utilization and Total Number
of Vehicles by Vehicle Type 60
- Average Ride Times and Average of Rising Fuel Costs and
Fuel Price Trends 61



Our Business Scope

Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO) provides safe and reliable transportation services for the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB).

We facilitate safe, effective and efficient transportation for approximately 30,000 students on 643 vehicles, travelling over 102,994 kms daily, to over 150 sites and schools across Eastern Ontario.

Transportation is provided to students in the counties of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, and Prescott-Russell. This area covers over 12,000 square kms.

Vehicles under contract with the Consortium travel approximately 19,362,872 kilometres annually, which is the equivalent of 483 trips around the world each year.

Focus: We focus on the needs of students, schools and families. We strive to address their needs by carefully listening and responding to them.

Employees: We believe that each employee can be an ambassador for the Consortium. They represent our commitment to providing high quality service.

Safety: Safety is and will continue to be our number one priority. We work hard to ensure that students are transported to and from school safely.





Mission Statement



Vision

To build a strong, efficient and integrated transportation system that will ensure safe, reliable transportation for students and communities. To improve customer service to all stakeholders by providing convenient service delivery systems.

Philosophy

To deliver safe, effective and efficient transportation and fleet maintenance services, while providing outstanding customer service to school personnel, parents, students, peers, employees and members of the community.

Credo

STEO is respectful and responsive to the needs of the member boards, schools, families and students. STEO will operate in a seamless manner, as if managed by the boards themselves.



A Shared Common Set of Principles

Developed by STEO Staff on March 6, 2013

Customer Service

Our Customer Service promises to deliver;

- Customer-focused service
- A welcoming, caring and open-minded environment
- Equality and fairness to all customers
- Clear, accessible and honest communication by knowledgeable employees
- Responses in a respectful and timely manner, ensuring we listen to customer feedback
- Quality, safety-minded and adaptable solutions

Teamwork

We achieve effective Teamwork through;

- Understanding expectations, a clarity and meeting of objectives
- Strong effective communications
- Ensuring team members reach their highest potential
- Valuing and accepting each other's opinions and differences
- A high level of engagement and involvement in the organizational culture
- Shared common processes to achieve objectives
- Understanding strengths and weaknesses of the team and the capacity to adapt to change
- Offering innovative and creative solutions and tools to implement them
- An environment of FUN!

Revisited by the STEO Team through a Values Audit in July 2018



Our Leadership Guiding Principles

We will go **beyond what is expected** of us as leaders.

We will become **world class**, providing our stakeholders with the resources, guidance, technology and/or training needed to ensure the organization is **operationally excellent** and a **great place to work**.

Deliver Surprisingly Good Service

- Understand the needs of both internal and external clients
- Be collaborative with all our stakeholders
- Exceed expectations and create raving fans by always being 1% better
- Be aware of what other organizations do to support their service delivery
- Embrace change, high expectations and different methods of service delivery
- Continuously offer training and tools to support the delivery of service

Be Caring Professionals

- Be aware and understanding of other people's views, beliefs and ways of looking and thinking
- Be open and honest
- Deliver on what is promised
- Own our mistakes
- Be consistent, but flexible

Get the Job Done Right

- Do what we say we are going to do when we say we will
- Own our work
- Be budget-responsible

Communicate for Understanding and Collaboration

- Make communication a two-way street with stakeholders
- Provide information through various channels
- Encourage the sharing of ideas

Create a Happy Place

- Recognize successes and milestones
- Be playful
- Provide opportunities to celebrate
- Embrace individual differences

Put Safety First

- Provide leading edge training and service for staff, bus contractors, drivers and students
- Offer group, individual and online materials

Never Stop Learning

- Offer training and support for growth and expertise





Message from the GM/CEO



Reflections on 2020/2021

As always, I am thankful that you are here. STEO is excited to share the 2020 - 2021 Annual Report as a summary of some of the year's key projects, accomplishments, challenges, and metrics.

District Wide Bell Time Alignment

The 2020 – 2021 school year saw the second phase of the implementation of a District Wide Bell Time Alignment for both of STEO's coterminous school boards – the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB).

Bell time alignment supports consistent planning for families, the implementation of district wide learning opportunities for the coterminous boards, and results in significant transportation related savings, without loss of transportation services to families. Expanded learning opportunities within CDSBEO and UCDSB resulting from common bell times could ensure that high school students have a wider range of access to curriculum options offered by the boards, regardless of their location. Aligned bell times also support the coordination of extra-curricular activities between schools.

Strategically aligning bell times allows for the doubling of routes, where a single vehicle and driver are used to service multiple schools, thereby reducing the number of busses required to service a particular area. As a result of bell time alignment, in the first year and second year of implementation, STEO reduced more than 60 buses without eliminating transportation services to students and families. The ability to reduce required vehicles is further impactful considering the province-wide school bus driver shortage and may additionally have a positive impact to the overall carbon footprint, by reducing the size of the fleet required to provide service.

COVID-19 Transportation Response Plan

The 2020 – 2021 school year saw the continuation of COVID-19 constraints. STEO again collaborated extensively with the Ministry of Education, our local school boards and school bus operators, neighbouring consortia, and local public health to develop a plan to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19 for transported students and school bus drivers. This plan had as its driving factors the health and well-being of students, bus drivers and the community and it incorporated the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Transport Canada, and our wonderful and engaged local health authorities.

#gratitude

My sincere hope is that you are delighted with the service STEO has provided you, but perhaps you are taking this 'deeper dive' into STEO's operations because you feel your needs have not been met as you would have liked or to better understand the workings of this organization. Whatever brings you, that you are here now is significant, because it means that our work touches your life in some way. My hope is that your engagement with this information can be a catalyst for meaningful understanding and transparent dialogue about the role of student transportation in our communities.

I remain very fortunate to call STEO my place of employment, to engage in the work that I do and with the people that I call colleagues, partners, clients, and friends. I am privileged to do work that is meaningful and important to our community, surrounded by people who are smart, engaged, and talented.

Wishing you safe and joyful travels.



Janet Murray, CHRL
Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario
General Manager/CAO



TEAM STEO

Caring. Engaged. Innovative.



DYNAMIC

From less than five to over 30 years of service, the STEO team embodies a wide diversity of skills and experience. These varied insights, strengths and perspectives come together to create a dynamic environment of innovation, dedication, professionalism and fun!

VIRTUAL

Like much of the globe, March 2020 saw the STEO team transition to a virtual platform to support continuity of service under the challenges and constraints of COVID-19. The team continued uninterrupted to ensure that transportation service resumed promptly and safely when schools reopened.



FLEXIBLE

The STEO Team remained engaged in a virtual capacity until mid-summer 2020, at which time the STEO office site was reopened in consultation with the local health authority. During the virtual period, a fulsome COVID-19 Transportation Response Plan was developed for the 2020-2021 school year.



ENGAGED

We feel good about the achievements of another challenging year, which have provided STEO an opportunity to further develop a responsive service delivery model. STEO's employees are at the heart of the organization and we are proud of the impactful work they do everyday. In its second year impacted by COVID-19, the team demonstrated immense adaptability and commitment in the delivery of responsive service to students, families and schools, at a time when assurance, continuity and support were greatly needed.

STRATEGIC

Strategic planning for the 2021-2022 school year has begun, taking into consideration opportunities for integrating the transportation requirements of both school boards, while honouring their unique programs and characteristics.

STEO will continue to strive to be fair, accountable and adaptable and to ensure an appropriate balance between service and efficiency.

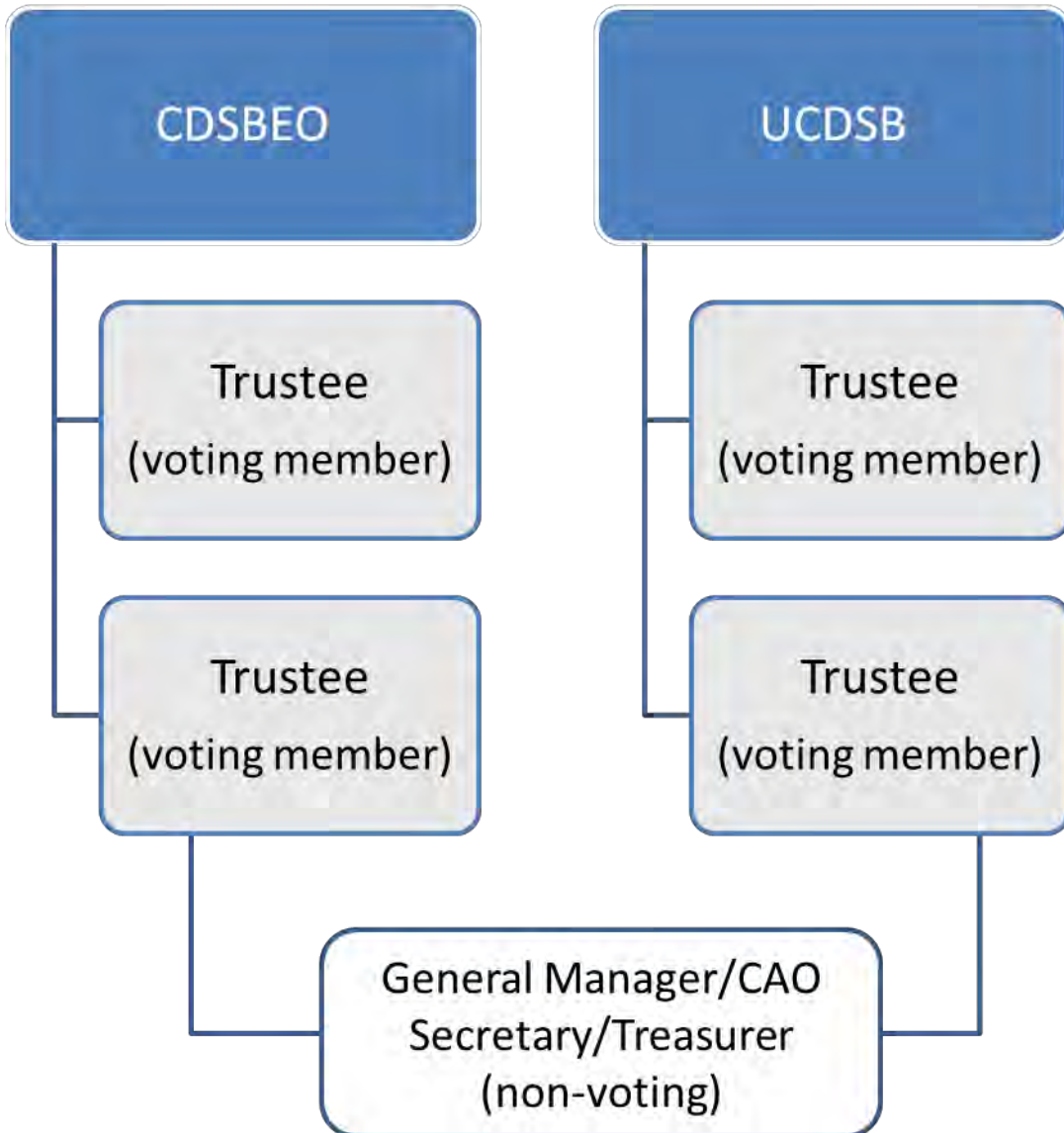


RESPONSIVE

Team STEO will listen actively and to be responsive to the needs and feedback of students, parents, school staff, board administration and the community as we work to enhance accessibility, refine service, manage operating costs and build respectful relationships.



STEO Board of Directors Organizational Chart



STEO Board of Directors



Trustee—John McAllister (UCDSB)



Trustee—John Danaher (UCDSB)
STEO Board Chair



Trustee—Robin Reil (CDSBEO)
September 2020—February 2021

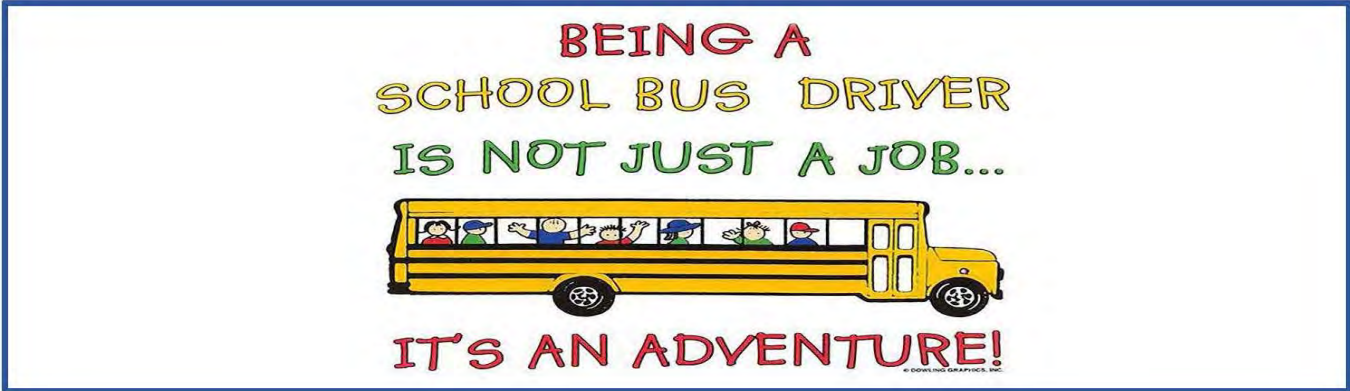
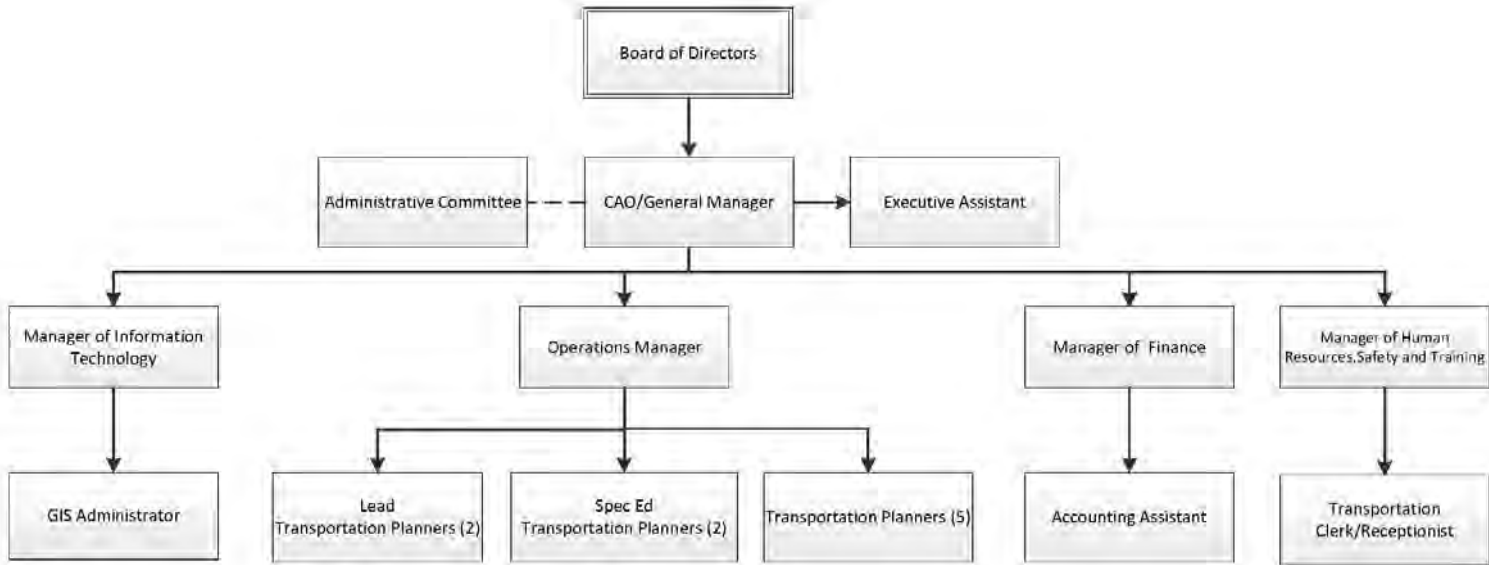


Trustee—Brent Laton (CDSBEO)
March 2021—August 2021



Trustee — Ronald Eamer (CDSBEO)

STEO Organization Chart

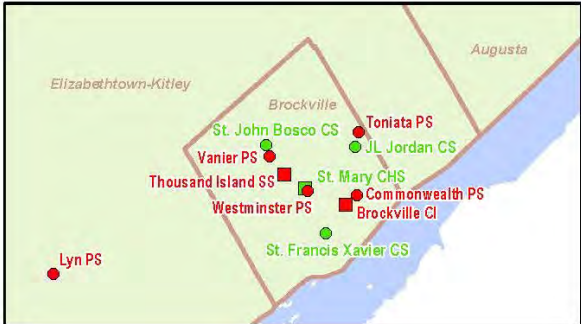
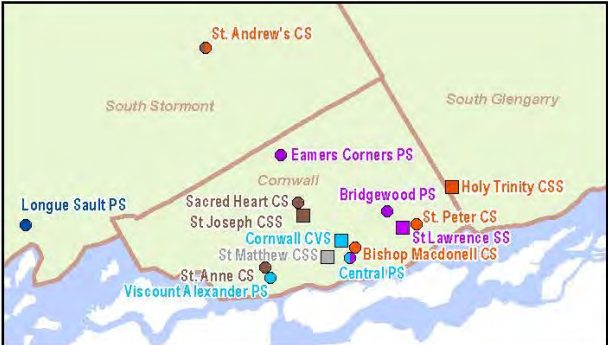
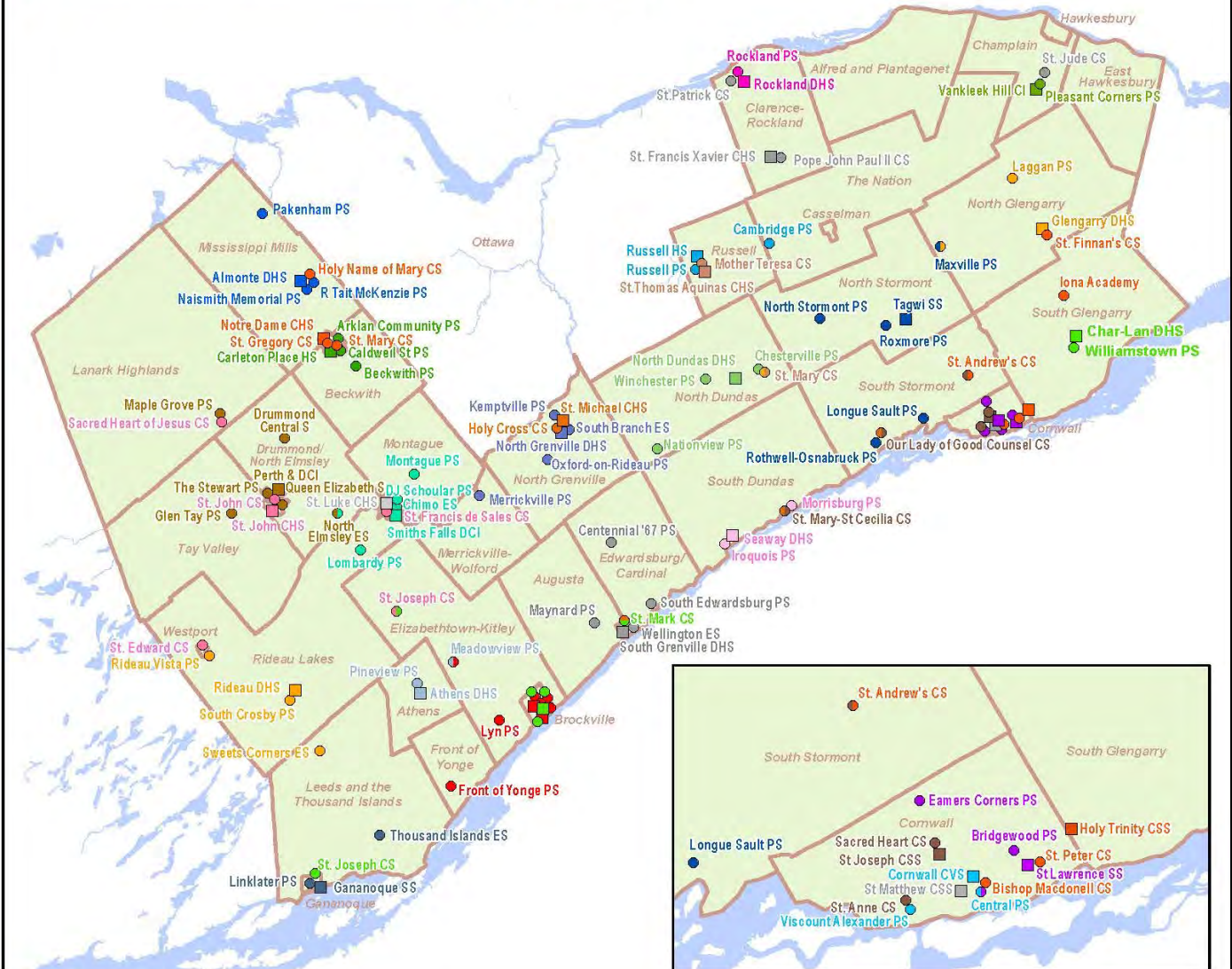


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School Locations 2020-2021



Legend

- Secondary School
- Elementary School
- Elementary School that feeds to two Secondary Schools

NOTE:
School colour represents a secondary school and the affiliate (feeder) elementary schools or Family of Schools.





short-term

- Participation in annual BusPlanner training and conferences to support innovation, skill-building and staff engagement *
- Staff training and teambuilding sessions
- GPS reporting compliance for safety, comparative analysis and accountability
- Development of STEO driver training resources and enhancement of bus driver portal
- Routing software enhancements including transition to new releases of BusPlanner and related training for end-users
- Review of Misconduct Reporting process for enhancement and improvements
- Coordination of MOE funded Standardized School Bus Rider Training
- Initiatives to support positive behaviour on school vehicles
- Pilot for First Time Walkers program in consultation with Active Travel partners
- Enhanced awareness of Active Travel opportunities
- Support coterminous boards in implementation and communication of district-wide bell time changes
- Phone system review for enhanced functionality, contingency planning and financial efficiency
- Hazard Assessment Tool development
- Streamline access to transportation information via electronic platforms
- Review of privacy related policy and procedure to ensure accountability and compliance (video cameras on school vehicles, handling of student data)
- Review media and public relations messaging to support clarity of messaging and stakeholder engagement
- Individual contractor performance meetings
- Driver appreciation and engagement initiatives
- Continue #staytuned#staysafe initiative to ensure that stakeholders remain informed and engaged throughout COVID constraints

**For long-term victories. set
short term goals.**





long-term



- Further development of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) inventory
- Continued development of route optimization strategies and software
- Exploration of student ridership and tracking tools (tablet-based system)
- Continued development of Special Education transportation guidelines and support processes
- Development of Contractor Performance Dashboard
- Exploration of Wi-Fi on school vehicles
- Exploration of camera programs on school vehicles
- Ongoing hazard zone review
- Development of innovative driver engagement initiatives
- STEO employee engagement project (caring conversations; staff recognition; training and development; succession planning)



**Think big. trust yourself and
make it happen.**





2020 - 2021

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ❖ District Wide Bell Time Implementation - Phase Two
- ❖ Ongoing enhancements to STEO's website, social media and IT platforms
- ❖ Development of new safety and training initiatives for school bus drivers, including virtual Bus Driver Training Sessions
- ❖ Ongoing initiatives to support STEO staff training, development and team building
- ❖ Streamlined processes for financial and statistical data reporting
- ❖ BusPlanner Software Update
- ❖ Updated COVID-19 Transportation Response Plan
- ❖ Internal Communications Audit for clarity and transparency of messaging



2020 - 2021

SAFETY AND TRAINING INITIATIVES



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OF EASTERN ONTARIO





To the Parents/Guardians of Student Walkers,

Did you know that increased physical activity specifically associated with the school journey increases alertness and attention during the school day? Physical activity supports healthy brain development, which can lead to improved learning and academic outcomes. *Source www.ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca

If your child walks to school, you may be interested in connecting with other parents in your neighborhood to organize a **Walk to School Group** to support a safe and social experience for your child. With your permission, we will share your contact information with other interested parents. If a space to meet is needed, the school will arrange to provide a space for your first meeting. Please keep in mind the following:

- Parents/Guardians may create a schedule by volunteering to supervise the walk to and from school on given days. They would then communicate the schedule and their contact information to each other so they can communicate as needed. If appropriate to age/ability, the group may arrange for their children to walk together without adult supervision. Plan a route and practice the journey with them.
- Volunteers are responsible to find a replacement from within the group should they be unable to provide supervision on a given day.
- Parents will establish a route with approximate times established so that all interested children/families are considered.
- The group must understand that the school has offered to help with the initial contact but that the school is not responsible for maintaining or managing the walk to school group. This is a parent-to-parent structure and is not the responsibility of the school beyond the initial support in connecting.

Parent/Guardian Name	
Child(ren) Name and Grade	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

I give permission for the school to share my contact information with other parents for the purpose of discussing/organizing a walk to school group.

Parent/Guardian Signature	
---------------------------	--

Sincerely,

School Principal

#MySchoolNameTeamTravelers



PURPLE BAND PROGRAM

BE A PURPLE PARENT

A Program for Junior and Senior Kindergarten Students

The Purple Band Program provides an efficient means to help protect our tiniest travelers – our junior and senior kindergarten passengers. Simply, school personnel attach a purple band around the handgrip on the top of a junior or senior kindergarten student’s backpack. The purple band is a quick visual tool that tells bus drivers that the student with a tagged backpack needs their special attention, as well as adult/guardian supervision at the drop-off point.



Parents play a key role in the program:

Ensure that the band the school provides is in place on your child’s backpack

Ensure that the school has your correct contact and caregiver information

Ensure that a responsible guardian is at the bus stop on time to receive your child

Contact your school and bus company if your child’s guardian is unable to provide supervision at the stop and you have made alternative arrangements



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 1-855-925-0022
 transportation@steo.ca
 www.steo.ca



WINTER BEST PRACTICES

To avoid slips, keep the area around your bus as clear from snow and ice as possible. Wear proper footwear and take short steps or “shuffle” on ice or snow when you are doing your walkaround check. Keep bus steps clear of snow and ice build-up.

Clear snow and ice from the vehicle, paying special attention to lights, windows, mirrors, stop arm and signage. Check the back of your bus between runs during snowy conditions. Van drivers should ensure that the ‘School Children Being Transported’ lettering is visible on the rear of the vehicle.

Top up windshield washer fluid and ensure heaters, defrosters and wipers are working properly.

Keep the fuel level above half full to avoid condensation and freeze-up.

Drive with extra caution and adjust your speed to the road conditions, allowing for more stopping distance on wet, snow-covered and icy roads.

If you are running late or are unable to access a bus stop due to road conditions, keep your Dispatcher informed. It is important for dispatch to post delays, especially during inclement weather.

STUDENT SAFETY

Remind students to wait well back from the roadway in snowy and icy conditions. Approach bus stops with caution and watch for children playing on and around snowbanks.

In extreme cold, allow a bit of extra time at the bus stop at pick-up to ensure that nobody is left behind.

Remind students to hold the handrail as they board and exit the bus to avoid slipping. Take a second look as students exit to make sure they are clear of the vehicle and that no clothing, bags or personal items are caught in the door before closing it and leaving the stop.



CHILD CHECK

Thoroughly check the school vehicle immediately following each school drop-off and following the last drop-off for each school, as soon as it may be done safely, to ensure that all students have disembarked.

Be sure to check on and under every seat. Warm and bulky winter clothing can make it more likely for children to fall asleep on route. Diligent checks are of the utmost importance as children are highly vulnerable to cold weather injuries.

PURPLE BAND

The Purple Band is a visual reminder that a child with a purple tag on the handle of their backpack requires the driver’s special attention and must be met by a guardian at the stop.

If you notice any Kinder students without Purple Bands, please inform the school or bus company, who will arrange for a new band to be provided.





The School Bus Rider On-Line Safety Training Program for 2020-2021

The Auditor General's Report of 2015 revealed a gap in consistent training provided to school bus riders in the Province of Ontario. **Due to COVID-19 Intertrain Incorporated has developed two Standardized Ministry of Education approved School Bus Rider On-Line Safety Training sessions**, which are age appropriate and which use engaging themes. The program content includes key bus rider safety messages with training sessions of approximately 30 minutes in length, presented by skilled trainers. The following training will be provided:

- **A Primary session for students from JK to Grade 3**
- **A Junior session for students from Grades 4 to 8**

The Ministry of Education will fund the delivery of these programs to 50% of elementary students for each board annually, to be delivered to *all* elementary students for both CDSBEO and UCDSB.

Schools have been divided into two regions. The training for the 2020-2021 school year will be provided to the schools in the Eastern Region as well as to those schools in the Western region who were unable to schedule the training during the 2019-2020 school year. Please find attached a PowerPoint which includes a list of schools who will be provided the training during this school year.

The On-Line 2020/2021 training sessions will be available to schools from January until June. Each school will be provided a URL link to the program to allow teachers to access the training from their individual classrooms.

Schools will be asked to track the number of students from each classroom who receive the training including at home synchronous learning students.

Starting in December, Intertrain will be contacting each school principal individually to schedule the training sessions and will discuss the program details.



NEW STEO Safety Program Resources for First Time Riders

STEO has joined with Intertrain to provide in-school training in the early fall each year to JK and SK students on how to ride the bus safely. Intertrain has been in business since 2003 and provides dynamic programs for first time riders and primary and junior school grades.

Buzzy the Bee's School Bus Safety Rules Video

The video provides an example of standardized school bus rider safety in Ontario for first time riders of the school bus. Buzzy the Bee 'flies' students through the ins-and-outs of riding the school bus for the first time. This first-time rider training video teaches children about danger zones and how to wait, ride, and disembark from a school bus safely. It also shares tips on how to sit safely and to ask for help. Watch and learn the A-"Bee"-Cs of school bus riding safety with Buzzy the Bee!





Kids Help Phone Poster Program

The CMHA in partnership with Kids Help Phone, STEO, CDSBEO and UCDSB worked extensively on a campaign to have posters placed on all school vehicles servicing STEO, which include resource information for mental health supports for students.

Need Help?
Get Support 24/7

1 800 668 6868
Kids Help Phone

REACHOUTNOW.CA
SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION
OF CHAMPLAIN EAST

Download the
Always There
App

STEO • CDSBEO • UCDSB

Policy on preventing discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression



Approved by the OHRC: January 31, 2014

Summary

People who are transgender, or gender non-conforming, come from all walks of life. Yet they are one of the most disadvantaged groups in society. Trans people routinely experience discrimination, harassment and even violence because their gender identity or gender expression is different from their birth-assigned sex.

Under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) people are protected from discrimination and harassment because of gender identity and gender expression in employment, housing, facilities and services, contracts, and membership in unions, trade or professional associations.

Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.

Gender expression is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.

Trans or **transgender** is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, trans woman (male-to-female), trans man (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer.

Discrimination happens when a person experiences negative treatment or impact, intentional or not, because of their gender identity or gender expression. It can be direct and obvious or subtle and hidden, but harmful just the same. It can also happen on a bigger systemic level such as organizational rules or policies that look neutral but end up excluding trans people. Friends, family or others who face discrimination because of their association with a trans person are also protected.

Harassment is a form of discrimination. It can include sexually explicit or other inappropriate comments, questions, jokes, name-calling, images, email and social media, transphobic, homophobic or other bullying, sexual advances, touching and other unwelcome and ongoing

behaviour that insults, demeans, harms or threatens a person in some way. Assault or other violent behaviour is also a criminal matter. Trans people and other persons can experience harassing behaviour because of their gender identity or expression (gender-based harassment) and/or their sex (sexual harassment).

Social stereotypes about gender, and prejudice and fear towards trans people are often at the root of discrimination and harassment. Negative attitudes about a trans person's racial identity, family status or other grounds can combine or intersect to make things worse.

Everyone has the right to define their own gender identity. Trans people should be recognized and treated as the gender they live in, whether or not they have undergone surgery, or their identity documents are up to date.

An organization should have a valid reason for collecting and using personal information that identifies a person's gender. They should keep this information confidential. Trans people can have their name or sex designation changed on identity documents and other records. The criteria and process should not be intrusive or medically based.

Trans people should have access to washrooms, change rooms and other gender specific services and facilities based on their lived gender identity. Dress code policies should be inclusive and flexible. They should not prevent trans people and others from dressing according to their expressed gender.

Organizations should design or change their rules, practices and facilities to avoid negative effects on trans people and be more inclusive for everyone. Any exceptions must be legitimate in the circumstances, and trans people must be provided any needed accommodation unless it would cause undue hardship.

The duty to accommodate the needs of trans people is a shared responsibility. Everyone involved should cooperate in the process, exchange only necessary information and explore options while respecting privacy.

Trans people and other gender non-conforming individuals should not be treated negatively while at work, at school, trying to rent an apartment, shopping, eating a meal in a restaurant, using health care services or shelters, dealing with law enforcement and justice services, or at any other time.

Organizations are liable for any discrimination and harassment that happens. They are also liable for not accommodating a trans person's needs unless it would cause undue hardship. They must deal with complaints, take steps to prevent problems and provide a safe, welcoming environment for trans people.

Organizations should learn about the needs of trans people, look for barriers, develop or change policies and procedures and undertake training. This will help make sure trans people and other gender non-conforming individuals are treated with dignity and respect and enjoy equal rights and freedom from discrimination.

Shared respectfully by STEO



#busdriverappreciation

Each year, STEO makes it a priority to share some love with a fabulous team of drivers during National School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in October, STEO's very own Bus Driver Appreciation Month in May and throughout the year with assorted sentiments and swag. Let's face it, without such a dedicated team of drivers, we would be nowhere 😊.





SCHOOL BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION

I DRIVE PROMISE. I DRIVE POTENTIAL. I DRIVE THE FUTURE.



Strong of character and will,

Calming conflict with grace and with skill.

Helpful to students in need of support,

Observant to the interests of those you transport.

Optimistic – always ‘half full’ is your bus,

A **L**eader – engendering respect and trust.

Brave; --- enough said.

Up early from bed.

Safe travels ahead.

Driving the future safely to school,

Reminding the future that safety is cool.

Innovative in sparking cooperation,

Our **V**alued partner in transportation.

Ever-committed to safety’s goal,

Reliable, **r**are and **r**eady-to-roll!



On School Bus Driver Appreciation Day—and every day—sincerest thanks from our team to yours for your diligence and care in transporting and supporting our most precious cargo.

- The STEEO Team

WWW.STEEO.CA

**DOWNLOAD OUR FREE
DELAY/CANCELLATION APP!**



FIND "BUSPLANNER DELAYS" ON THE APPLE/ITUNES OR ANDROID/GOOGLE PLAY APP STORE.

USE ACCESS CODE "STEO" TO VERIFY



- **RECEIVE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS FOR DELAYED AND CANCELLED SCHOOL PURPOSE VEHICLES**
- **MORNING AND AFTERNOON DELAY INFORMATION FOR ROUTES THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO BE DELAYED 10 MINUTES OR MORE**
- **RECEIVE NOTIFICATIONS SPECIFIC TO YOUR CHILD AND/OR SCHOOL**

FREE DOWNLOAD ON YOUR APPLE OR ANDROID DEVICE

BUSPLANNER APP



This application displays current morning and afternoon school bus delay information for routes that have been reported to be delayed 10 minutes or more



Download for **FREE** on your Apple or Android device to receive push notifications for delayed and cancelled buses! In the app, users can select buses they want to follow and receive alerts when the buses have been reported to be delayed 10 minutes or more.

Subscription options:



- For My Child's Transportation – individualized transportation route delays and cancellations
- For My School(s) – you will receive all Delays and Cancellations for your chosen school
- All Notifications – this will push out notifications for All routes and runs going to All schools (**IMPORTANT:** Selecting this option will potentially result in numerous notifications)



This is for information purposes only and students are encouraged to be waiting at their bus stop at the appropriate pick-up time as often buses are able to make up time as the route progresses.





**Departmental
Year in
Review**

Safety and Training

2020 - 2021



Milestones and Success Stories

- Phase II of District Wide Bell Time Implementation
- Virtual Mini Conferences on Mental Health & Wellness for school bus drivers and bus company staff
- Pivot to virtual delivery of the School Bus Rider Safety Training program
- Expansion of online training programs for drivers and bus company staff to include Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Gender Identity & Expression
- Creation of COVID-19 Response Plan and COVID-19 Transportation Guidelines for Bus Operators
- COVID-19 return to office guidelines for STEO staff, developed and implemented
- Implementation of a virtual Facility Audit process to replace onsite visits during COVID constraints
- Implementation of PPE management, storage, and distribution process for provision of PPE to bus companies
- Sharing of STEO's COVID-19 Bus Safety Video with other consortia for use across the province
- Enhanced Privacy & Confidentiality terms added to the procedure for use of cameras on school vehicles

Metrics and Measurables

- Driver and school bus company staff participation in virtual training sessions = 119
- School participation in virtual School Bus Rider Safety Training sessions = 100% CDSBEO and 98% UCDSB targeted schools. Schools scheduled for the 2019-2020 training but unable to receive it due to COVID-19 constraints, were included in the 2020-2021 sessions.
- Virtual Facility Audits conducted with 100% of bus companies

Projects

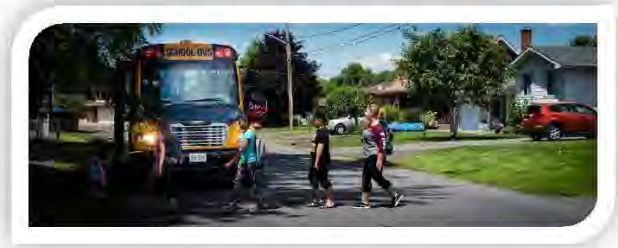
- Implementation of changes to STEO's website to enhance information accessibility and site navigability
- Delivery to schools of Standardized School Bus Rider Safety Training Sessions, facilitated by Intertrain
- Promotion of Active School Travel in partnership with the Health Unit
- Conduct and refine Hazard Assessments
- Ongoing development of Driver Appreciation and Engagement initiatives
- Enhance School Bus Safety videos and resources for parents and schools

Path Forward

- Ongoing promotion of Active School Travel across STEO's area of service
- Updates to COVID-19 Response Plan for 2021-2022 in consultation with local health authority
- Coordinate delivery of virtual School Bus Rider Safety Training sessions
- Expansion of community partnerships to support student safety and well-being
- Development of "First Time Walkers" active travel campaign
- Phase Two of Student Mental Health Poster Campaign
- Ongoing review of Hazard Zones

Operations

2020 - 2021



Milestones and Success Stories

- Strategic transportation efficiency reviews resulted in route/vehicle reductions over previous year
- A smooth September start-up with minimal operational and logistical issues and no interruption to service
- Ongoing staff training and development to support a strong and cohesive team of Transportation Planners
- Phase III of district wide bell time alignment planning on schedule

Metrics and Measurables

- Ride times over 60 minutes remain well below the 3% tolerance threshold
- Approximate average student ride time for both school boards: 22 minutes

Projects

- Unpack and deliver on key customer service objectives
- Development of innovative transportation solutions
- Bell Time reviews to explore opportunities for route doubling
- Annual Hazard Zone reviews
- Creation of strategies and partnerships to effectively manage Special Education Transportation
- Development of tools and strategies for KPI management
- Phase 3 of bell time adjustment planning in progress
- Refinement of Out of Boundary transportation
- Review of policies and procedures
- Review of travel codes and establish parameters for more consistent routing

Path Forward

- Continue to find ways to be as efficient as possible, while still meeting customer service objectives
- Provide the best customer service in the industry, delivering timely and accountable service to all stakeholders
- Preparing for Phase 3 of bell time adjustment planning
- Continue to review policies and procedures

Information Technology

2020 - 2021



Milestones and Success Stories

- STAT (Statistical Tool for Administrative Tracking) program enhancements for accountability in reporting minor updates
- Renewal of Cloud-based IaaS server hosting
- Provision of shape files for both boards to support online student registration and School Information Profiles (SIP)
- Georef software upgrade tools within BusPlanner for seating charts, contact tracer and run splitter.
- Microsoft Teams integration to support remote collaboration opportunities
- Seamless IT transition to remote work effective immediately after COVID-19 closure announcement
- Bell Time web hub updated with Phase III implementation information
- Virtual bell time alignment information sessions delivered via Zoom platform
- Virtual bus driver training conferences delivered via Zoom platform
- Enhancements to the navigability of STEO's website
- MFA implemented using cellphone App for managers
- Antivirus software - migrated to Bitdefender for all servers and staff computers completed
- Numerous forms for COVID created PPE, mask exemptions, Opt Outs

Metrics and Measurables

- STEO grade up databases created for both regular transportation and Special Needs transportation, and Board grade up
- IaaS Cloud server with no downtime during business hours
- Development of off-season messaging for STEO website to support user engagement
- Barracuda Essentials Anti-Malware Antivirus software integration for Office 365
- Barracuda Cloud solution for backup of Microsoft 365
- Development of maps based on updated boundary information provided by school boards
- Driver Portal added to STEO website to support consistent access to driver training materials
- Virtual Backpack implementation on STEO website to support access to information during the school year
- Signed a contract with KSMI for meteorological services
- Grades 7-8 were separated into "Intermediate Schools" in the transportation software to align with the Ministry of Education School Identification Numbers and to better facilitate Ministry reporting.

Projects

- Phase I of Electronic Misconduct Reporting completed
- Phase II of Electronic Misconduct Reporting in review stage - ONGOING
- CDSBEO staff contact update automation in progress
- CDSBEO new Student Information System (SIS) Aspen integration - new templates, SFTP account, file checker updates

Path Forward

- Phone system project technical specifications developed to support business continuity and financial efficiency
- Multi Factor Authentication for all STEO staff to support enhanced security, data confidentiality, and privacy
- GPS service review
- Routing software review

Finance

2020 - 2021



Milestones and Success Stories

- Unqualified audit opinion from independent auditors
- Adherence to appropriate internal controls
- Compliant with regulatory reporting
- Strategically maximized rate of return on investments
- Preparation and presentation of Compliant Budget for approval by Board of Directors

Metrics and Measurables

- Regulatory compliance with all relevant laws, policies, and regulations
- Achieve all payment processing deadlines
- Achieve all financial reporting deadlines

Projects

- Upgrade to new release of accounting software
- Recommend strategies to minimize transportation expenditures

Path Forward

- Implementation and management of revised contract with key service providers (Bus Operators)
- Successfully secure 2021-2022 Contract with key service providers (Bus Operators)
- Preparation and presentation of Compliant 2021-2022 Budget for approval by Board of Directors
- Finalization of Key Performance Metrics

STEO

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
OF EASTERN ONTARIO



COVID-19 Response

- COVID-19 Return to School Strategic Planning Model
- COVID-19 Bus Operator Guidelines

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#Staytuned*





COVID-19 Return to School Strategic Planning Model



Responsive Routing

- Regular monitoring of MOE, MTO and Transport Canada communications/directives
- Participation in the OASBO best practices working group committees
- Ongoing communication with school board SBOs to integrate transportation considerations into return to school modeling
- Exploration of Opt-In/Out process for transportation in collaboration with school boards to determine actual transportation service needs
- Regular meetings with Route Planners to “test bed” potential blended model routing strategies
- Reviewing of planning parameters (e.g. collector stops, transfers, loading strategies, vehicle capacity) to reduce exposure and support contact tracing
- GeoRef Bus Planner training for STEO staff on COVID-19 Run Splitter Tool to support the division of existing runs to fulfill requirements for social distancing on school vehicles
- Flexible staff vacation strategy to support both staff wellness and organizational needs (e.g. implementation of new routing strategies, communication to families)

Concise Communication

- Launch of **#staytuned#staysafe** social media campaign to keep families engaged throughout the summer for transportation updates, information and action required (e.g. opt-in/out)
- Promotion of STEO's Parent Portal as a resource for ongoing transportation updates
- Development of STEO's Virtual Backpack, an online hub to house tools/information for families that would be shared under typical circumstances via the student agenda/Backpack Express
- Engagement of call centre/temporary summer staff to support parent inquiries/outgoing communications as return to school approaches
- Development of new training materials (e.g. simple graphics, short video vignettes) to communicate new safety protocols/expectations on the school vehicle, to help prepare/support/comfort students and families

Driver/Operator Engagement

- Virtual brainstorming sessions with bus operators to identify potential service gaps/concerns and to support engagement
- Use of surveys to garner critical feedback (e.g. driver supply projections, training/licensing constraints, procurement of PPE, sanitization strategies)
- Strategies to support continuity of driver coverage/engagement by various means:
 - Virtual training sessions
 - Launch of Bus Driver Portal to access training materials
 - Bus Driver Appreciation campaign
 - Development of new training and communication protocols to support driver and monitor understanding, engagement, and comfort under new operational parameters

Regional Health Planning

- Weekly meetings of Regional Consortia to share best practices, recognizing overlapping/adjacent geographies of service and shared bus operators
- Active liaison with local Health Authorities regarding physical distancing, use of PPE and sanitization strategies related to student transportation to support safe planning
- Promotion of Active Travel initiatives in partnership with Green Communities Canada and the local Health Unit, including promotion of Walk a Block initiative to support loading zone safety/infrastructure limitations



COVID-19 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES FOR BUS OPERATORS



September 2020

STEO COVID-19 Transportation Guidelines for Bus Operators

Throughout the spring and summer, STEO has collaborated extensively with the Ministry of Education, our local school boards and school bus operators, neighbouring consortia and local public health to develop a plan to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19 for transported students and school bus drivers for the upcoming school year.

This plan has as its driving factors the health and well-being of students, bus drivers and the community and it incorporates the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Transport Canada, and our wonderful and engaged local health authorities.

Due to varying local conditions across the province, neighbouring boards/consortia may have a somewhat different approach regarding certain aspects relating to student transportation.

The information below summarizes Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario's (STEO's) Transportation Guidelines for Bus Operators to support School Reopening in September 2020. STEO will remain responsive to guidance from the Ministry of Education and our local health authorities and will augment the plan as necessary to meet or exceed safety standards.

Self Assessment and Monitoring for Symptoms

- All drivers who experience symptoms consistent with COVID 19, need to stay home and self-isolate and seek further assessment. Use Ontario's self-assessment tool <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> to screen for COVID 19. It provides guidance on next steps to take.
- If another member of the driver's household develops symptoms of COVID-19, it is recommended that the driver stay home and self-isolate and seek further assessment. To find a local COVID 19 assessment centre visit: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations/>

Contact Tracing

- If a driver or student tests positive for COVID 19, Public Health will initiate an investigation and review the bus seating assignment form and will identify and follow up with contacts as per the Public Health assessment.
- On a school vehicle, high risk exposures will be those who are less than a 2-metre radius from the positive person. On a large bus, not everyone may be deemed a close contact or high-risk exposure. Only close contacts are required to self-isolate for 14 days. All others on the bus will be considered a low risk exposure and must carefully self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. At the first sign of possible COVID-19 symptoms, they must stay home from school/work and go for testing.

Outbreak Protocol per Provincial Guidance on COVID-19 Management in Schools

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/operational-guidance-covid-19-management-schools>

SCENARIO: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER BECOMES ILL DURING THE WORKDAY

Recommended action by bus driver/bus company

The bus driver/company:

- The bus driver will notify their employer
- The bus driver will consult health care provider and follow recommendations
 - if tested for COVID-19, follow the isolation guidance provided by health care provider
 - follow guidelines on return to work depending on scenario
- The bus company will notify STEO

Recommended action by consortia

- Bus drivers who are ill should not be working and should be encouraged to consult their health care provider.
- Work with school bus operators to ensure bus(es) undergo deep cleaning as required and alternate drivers are found to deliver the service.

SCENARIO: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Recommended action by bus driver/bus company

The bus driver/company:

- The bus driver will notify their employer
- The bus driver will consult health care provider and follow recommendations
 - follow guidelines on return to work
- The bus company will notify STEO

Recommended action by consortia

- Notify potentially impacted schools
- Work with school bus operators to ensure bus(es) undergo deep cleaning and alternate drivers are found to deliver the service
- Provide bus cohort list to schools/board as required
- Communicate with impacted school communities as appropriate

Procedure for Support to Symptomatic Students

1. To reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to other students, bus drivers and school staff, parents must assess their child's health before sending them on the bus/van or dropping them off at school.
2. Parents are advised to use Ontario's self-assessment tool which provides guidance on next steps <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>. The Health Unit has also developed a school screening tool for parents to help them decide whether or not they should send their child to school <https://bit.ly/31FEF51>
3. In the case of unsupervised students displaying symptoms at the stop, the driver will contact their dispatch office and attempts will be made to contact the parents/guardians.
4. In cases where a parent/guardian is unavailable, the student will be isolated on the vehicle upon boarding, to the extent possible. The bus company dispatch office will contact the school to advise them that there is a child showing symptoms on the bus and will ask the school to have a staff member meet the bus upon arrival. No student should be left unattended at the stop.
5. To reduce the possibility of spread to other students, consideration will be given to have the bus go directly to the school. In this case, the bus company will post a route delay in the system.
6. The student will be required to wear a mask during the trip to school unless medically exempt/unable and is to be met by school staff upon arrival at the school.
7. If there is a student identified as potentially having COVID-19 the school will contact the local Public Health Unit.
8. Local Public Health has advised that a child who develops symptoms while at school should not be permitted to return home on a school bus and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.
9. After the driver has dropped the student(s) at school, the bus will need to be taken out of service until the Vehicle Cleaning Protocol has been completed (see below).
10. The operator will provide STEO with an incident report.

Hand Hygiene

- Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water is still the single most effective way to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Bus drivers should wash their hands often, including before and after completing trips.
- Bus drivers will be provided with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS) with at least 60% alcohol content and use it after assisting a child to their seat, touching wheelchairs or other assistive devices, or having other direct contact with children, as needed throughout a trip.
- Hand sanitizer is provided for the primary use of the driver and for a student if absolutely needed on a rare occasion. Students will be encouraged to bring their own personal use hand-sanitizers.
- ABHS should be properly labeled and stored in accordance with its material safety data sheet. ABHS should be stored outside the reach of children.

Driver Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

Masks for drivers are required by the Ministry of Education as outlined in their provincial guidance document for schools. **Each driver is required to wear a Level 1 Procedural Mask when transporting students unless they are unable to for medical reasons. Drivers will wear face shields or goggles in conjunction with their mask when loading and unloading students.**

If unable to wear a mask for medical reasons, drivers will be expected to wear a face shield while loading and unloading students. A face shield is not considered an equal substitute for a face mask as it does not provide filtering capacity. A face shield at a minimum should extend below the chin and cover the sides of the face.

- The local Health Unit has provided the following information around the differences of cloth versus procedural masks:
 - Cloth masks are used for what we call “source control” meaning they would protect the people around the person with the mask and not the person themselves. They act to keep an individual's own respiratory droplets contained within the cloth mask.
 - Procedural masks are Personal Protective Equipment, as they minimize exposure to hazards and prevent illnesses and infection for the wearer. The procedural mask will also decrease the risk that the driver could spread the virus to students on the bus.
- How often should disposable procedural masks be changed?
 - Daily or if they become soiled, wet, or difficult to breathe through.
 - Disposable masks should not be washed, reused, or recycled. Once used, they should be thrown away immediately into a lined garbage bin.

- Discarding of damaged or worn out masks:
 - When discarding damaged or worn out masks, drop them in a lined garbage bin. Do not leave discarded masks in places where others may encounter them.
- **Waterproof gloves are to be used by drivers during sanitization of the vehicle or when having direct contact with students in emergency situations or cleaning up spills.**
- The Health Unit has provided the following information around the use of face shields and gowns for drivers such as wheelchair and van drivers who are quite often in close contact with students when loading and unloading the vehicle.
 - A face shield is not a substitute for wearing a face mask as it does not filter respiratory droplets. A face shield may provide additional protection for the wearer against droplets expelled from another person; however, these droplets may still be inhaled around the shield. Respiratory droplets expelled by the wearer may escape around the sides of the face shield, which therefore provides less protection to others.
 - A face shield should be worn in addition to a properly fitted procedural mask. A face shield is not considered an equal substitute for a face mask as it does not provide filtering capacity. A face shield at a minimum should extend below the chin and cover the sides of the face.
 - According to infection control best practice prescription eyeglasses are not acceptable by themselves as eye protection; they may be worn underneath face shields and some types of protective eyewear.
 - Face shields can be worn over prescription eyewear, but the eyewear does not eliminate the need for extra eye protection (i.e. a shield or goggles).
 - Due to Ministry of Transportation regulations, face shields must not be worn when the school vehicle is in motion.
 - It is up to each individual Operator to monitor the correct wearing, storage and maintenance of masks, face shields, goggles, and other PPE.

Wheelchair Vehicles – Additional Considerations

- **Drivers of wheelchair buses will be required to wear additional PPE to reduce the risk of germ spread. Drivers will wear a mask, a face shield or goggles, and a paper gown when securing individual students' wheelchairs.** This is due to the proximity between the driver and the student during loading/unloading.
 - If there are no bodily fluid/secretion considerations with wheelchair students, the same gown can be used for the entire AM or PM shift. A gown must be changed between shifts. Any time wheelchair drivers are assisting students with bodily fluid/secretion considerations, the gown must be changed between students.
- The driver will use hand-sanitizer before and after assisting each student or wear disposable gloves.

Sanitization of Vehicles

- Products used for disinfection of vehicles must have a DIN number assigned by Health Canada. The Health Unit has provided fact sheet links for your reference.
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

VEHICLE CLEANING PROTOCOLS

- **A hard-surface disinfectant for use against COVID-19 as authorized by Health Canada will be utilized on high touch areas including handrails and seats in between each school run.**
- **Enhanced cleaning/disinfection to handrails, seats, seat belts, windows, walls below windows, steering wheel, driver controls and other parts that are commonly used and that may have been touched will also occur twice per day following the completion of each shift.**

Cleaning High-Touch Surfaces in the School Bus

- Make sure school bus interior surfaces are cleaned with disinfectant.
- The following equipment should be available for cleaning:

- Personal Protective Equipment (as required by the operator's health and safety protocol)
- Disposable cloths or paper towels and absorbent materials
- Waste disposal bags and tape; and
- Cleaning agents/disinfectants.
- Cleaning is a critical first step for disinfecting affected surfaces. In general, when cleaning school bus interiors, drivers should be instructed to:
 - Put on disposable, water-proof gloves. Avoid hand contact with the face, especially the nose and eyes. Direct contact with contaminated areas should be avoided.
 - For routine cleaning and disinfection, and for areas potentially contaminated with COVID-19, a hard-surface disinfectant for use against coronavirus (COVID-19) as authorized by Health Canada is recommended.
 - **It is important that high touch areas such as handrails and seats be cleaned in between each school run.**
 - **Enhanced cleaning (e.g., handrails, seats, seat belts, windows, walls below windows, steering wheel, driver controls) and other parts that are commonly used and that may have been touched must be cleaned and disinfected twice per day following the completion of each shift.**
 - Dispose of soiled disinfection cloths, disposable gloves, and any other items in contact with potentially contaminated surfaces in a waste disposal bag. Seal the waste disposal bag and discard as designated by the bus company. Clothing worn during cleaning as well as any reusable cloths used should be stored in a sealed disposable bag until they can be laundered.
 - Wash hands when finished using proper hand washing techniques.
 - It is recommended that operators endeavour to reduce the number of drivers per vehicle and ensure that the same drivers use the same vehicle and keep the same work schedules to limit contacts as much as possible.

Use of Foggers (Electrostatic Spray Systems) for Disinfecting Vehicles

- STEO has consulted the local Health Unit on the use of foggers (Electrostatic Disinfecting Spray Systems). They have provided the following information:
 - Disinfectant products are approved by Health Canada and assigned a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Health Canada provides a list of disinfectants specifically approved for COVID-19.

- All items/surfaces to be disinfected are to be cleaned with soap/detergent and water before disinfectant application.
- There are some disinfectants specifically for use in electrostatic spray disinfection systems that have been approved by Health Canada for COVID-19. The manufacturers of these disinfectants would have to provide evidence of disinfection efficacy while using the electrostatic spraying system to obtain approval.
- Electrostatic sprayer systems should be used with disinfectant solutions that have been approved by Health Canada for COVID-19 and that are intended to be used with a specific electrostatic sprayer model.

Guidance from our Local Health Units around Use of Masks on the School Vehicles

- As students may be in close contact with others for prolonged periods of time, **we highly recommend that students in grades JK to 3 wear non-medical face coverings/masks while traveling on school vehicles. Students in grades 4 and up are required to wear face coverings on school vehicles, as per the provincial school reopening guidelines.**
- Exemptions can be made for students with breathing or cognitive difficulties, or for those who are unable to apply or remove a mask without assistance. The exemption process will be managed by the school boards.
- A non-medical face covering/mask can be the disposable type or made of cloth. Bandanas, scarves, and gaiter masks are also acceptable face coverings.
- While a face shield is not a substitute for a mask, it may be worn by a student who has a mask exemption.
- Parents/guardians have been encouraged to speak to their children about the importance of proper mask wearing and keeping their masks on for the full duration of the bus ride.
- Bus operators may choose to have a supply of non-medical, disposable masks available on the school vehicle for students who have forgotten theirs. The health unit recommends that in the case of a child who usually wears a mask but is not, the driver would first ask the child if they have their mask with them but forgot to put it on. If they forgot their mask, a disposable one may be offered.

Misconduct Reporting

- Drivers should do their best to keep the school informed through Misconduct Reporting as relates to students who are required to but do not keep their masks on during the trip to and from school. Misconduct reports should also be issued for other unsafe behaviours including switching seats, consumption of food and drink on the school vehicle, sharing of belongings, etc.
- Drivers should provide Misconduct Reports through their dispatch offices via the Electronic Misconduct Reporting Process, as opposed to providing them physically at the school to reduce contact. Discipline remains the responsibility of the school Principal.

Capacity

- Per provincial guidance, vehicle loading capacity may be at or close to normal. Students may be seated 1, 2 or 3 per bench. **This is subject to change under direction of the Ministry of Education and Public Health.**
- STEO will make efforts to balance and distribute loads as evenly as possible to reduce vehicle loads where it can be done.
- The seat directly behind the driver will be left vacant, to the extent possible.



Seating Assignments

- Operators must number seats for easy identification and to support consistent use of the same seats by students for contact tracing purposes. STEO will provide interior numbers to operators who require them.
- Students must stay in their assigned seats during every ride. This reduces germ spread and facilitates contact tracing.
- **Students who live in the same household are expected to sit together, while single riders will be grouped with classmates, to the extent possible. Kinder students will sit at the front of the school vehicle with their siblings.**
- In situations where siblings are unable to sit together for disciplinary concerns, they may sit in separate seats which are within a 2-metre radius of each other. The reasoning for this is if one of the students has been exposed, it is possible that the other could become infected and both would have to quarantine. This would also keep the spread within the 2-metre radius on the bus.
- Students in grades 1 through 12 (except Kinder siblings) will be directed by the driver to load the vehicle from back to front and to sit in the same seat for both morning and afternoon trips until an official seating plan can be established in collaboration with the school boards/schools.
- **Bus companies will complete the fillable Seating Assignment Form as provided by STEO (example below) for contact tracing purposes. Forms must be kept up-to-date and on file with the bus company. Any changes must be communicated to the bus company immediately.**
- The Health Unit has advised that the most important consideration in terms of contact tracing is that there is a system in place to identify who is on the bus and which students would be considered at high or low risk of exposure (based on the seating chart) so that they can contain the virus quickly.
- Seat assignments may change due to newly registered students; however, every attempt will be made to limit changes to seat assignments.

STEO SEATING ASSIGNMENT FORM:



School : _____ Date : _____
 Bus Company : _____ Route #: _____

Front of the Bus			
	 Bus Driver	 Load back to front. Siblings must sit together.	Stairs
Seat n°1	The seat behind the driver must remain free to respect physical distancing.	Row n° 1	Seat n° 2
3		Row n° 2	4
5		Row n° 3	6
7		Row n° 4	8
9		Row n° 5	10
11		Row n° 6	12
13		Row n° 7	14
15		Row n° 8	16
17		Row n° 9	18
19		Row n° 10	20
21		Row n° 11	22
23	***ONLY 2 PER BENCH***	Row n° 12	24
Back of the Bus			

Students Riding in Vans

- Parents and school staff will wear a mask when securing students within the van.
- Parents may choose to use a non-scented, disinfectant wipe to clean any plastic or metal surfaces where their child will be sitting. Sprays will not be permitted.
- To support physical distancing, no students will be permitted to sit in the front seat of a van.
- Assigned seating in vans will be arranged by family or classroom cohorts, to the extent possible, to a maximum of 5 student passengers. **This is subject to change under the direction of The Ministry of Education and Public Health.**

Loading and Unloading at the School

- Upon arriving at the school, students will unload from the front to the back, one seat at a time, while maintaining physical distance to the extent possible.
- Students are recommended to use their personal hand-sanitizer after they get off the bus.
- Schools will direct students to make their way to the appropriate location for their classroom cohorts.
- At dismissal time, schools will do their best to maintain classroom cohorts until it is time to load school vehicles. Classroom cohorts may be separated into family cohorts upon loading, based on seat assignments.
- Students are reminded to return to their assigned seat and remain there for the entire trip. To reduce the risk of spreading germs and for contact tracing purposes, students are not permitted to change seats during the run to or from school.

Vehicle Breakdown

- In the event of a vehicle breakdown, an alternate vehicle must be sanitized prior to servicing the students on board and the remaining portion of the run.

Ventilation on Buses

- Whenever feasible, bus windows will be open/partially open to increase vehicle ventilation. This practice will be weather dependent and implemented under the direction of the bus driver.

Sleeping or Distressed Child

- If a child cannot be awakened or soothed, the driver will contact dispatch for direction. If a parent/school staff or childcare provider must access the vehicle to assist a child, they must be masked to enter the vehicle and use hand-sanitizer as provided by the bus driver. The driver must report the details of the event to dispatch for contact tracing purposes if required.

School Visitors

- In the upcoming school year, schools are asked to significantly limit or even prohibit visitors, including parents. Bus drivers should anticipate that they may be prohibited from entry into schools.
- Where drivers must enter the premises in order to access the washroom, they will be required to follow all safety protocols as required at the school, which will include masking, washing/sanitizing hands, showing of ID and completion of a COVID-19 screening questionnaire upon entry. Drivers will not be able to enter the school in groups and should not linger within the school. The school will inform the driver which washroom to access.

Alternative and Active Transportation – Opting Out of Transportation

- Parents/guardians are being encouraged to explore active travel opportunities (e.g. walking or cycling to school) or private transportation, where safe and feasible, to ease transportation demand, which may bolster's STEO's ability to reduce capacity on school vehicle to support physical distancing.
- It is recommended that students who can, use active transportation to get to school. Walking and rolling the whole way, or even part of the way (e.g. walk a block), can help to reduce traffic around the school. Parents are encouraged to park away from the school and have their children walk the last block or two.

Additional STEO Resources

[STEO COVID-19 Transportation Response Plan](#)

[STEO Safety Video: Spread Kindness Not Germs](#)



Public Health Resources

Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit: <https://healthunit.org/healthinformation/covid-19/>

Eastern Ontario Health Unit: <https://eohu.ca/en/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

Putting on Mask & Eye Protection: <https://youtu.be/1YiLjpLXvg4>

Taking off Gloves: <https://youtu.be/WDIOZj573Js>

How to Remove PPE: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/p/2018/poster-ipac-pss-removing-ppe.pdf?la=en>

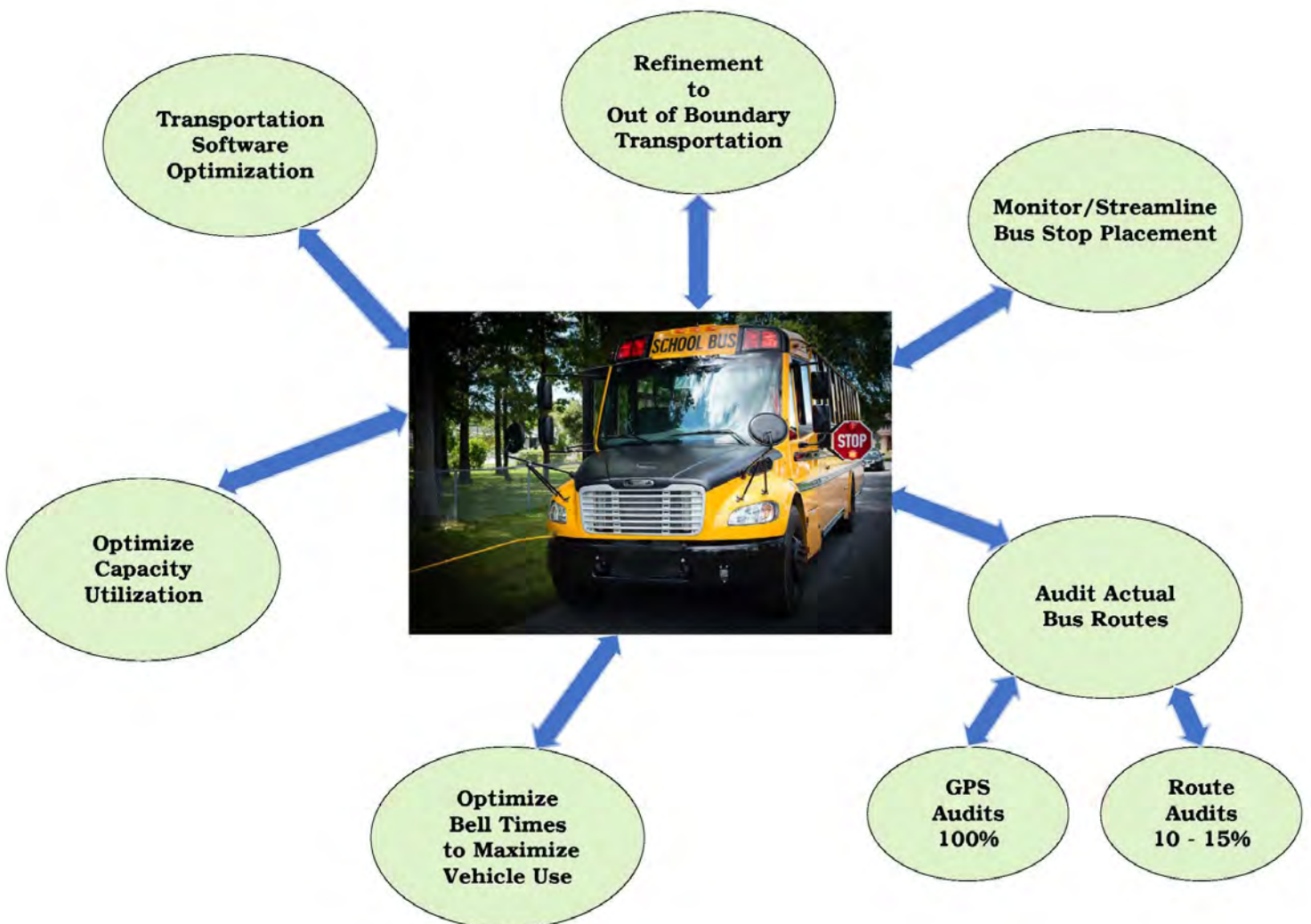
Recommended Steps for Putting on and Taking off PPE: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps.pdf?la=en>

[#staysafe#staytuned](#)

During these unprecedented times, feedback and engagement from bus operators is most welcome. Please continue to reach out to us with your questions and feedback.

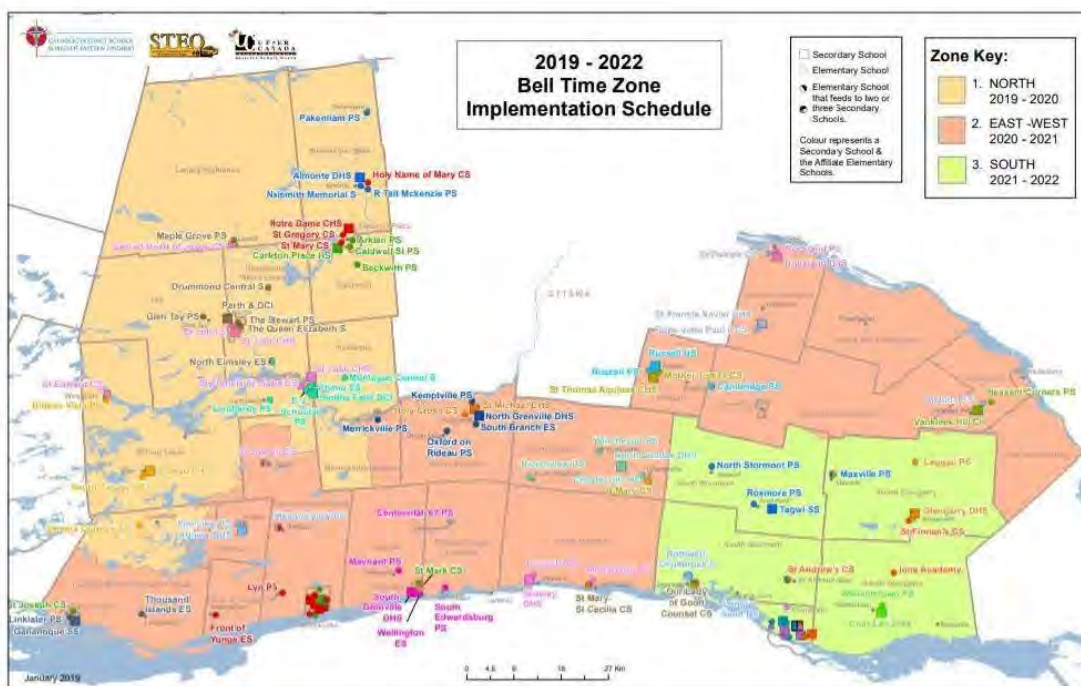
Routing Efficiencies

STEO continues to become more dynamic and flexible each year. We have enhanced our operation to better meet the needs of our communities. Effective route planning ensures that services are delivered within established parameters and helps to predict and control operational costs. We continue to reduce the number of stops and to optimize pick up and drop off times, while striving to reduce mileage and student ride times.





Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario, in partnership with the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB), began implementing unified bell times in September 2020, to facilitate a standard length of the school day. Bell time alignment will occur over a three-year implementation schedule.



Elementary school bell times will occur between 9:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., while all secondary school bell times will occur at 8:00 a.m.

Bell time alignment supports consistent planning for families, the implementation of district wide learning opportunities for both CDSBEO and UCDSB and results in significant transportation related savings, without loss of transportation services to families.

Expanded learning opportunities within CDSBEO and UCDSB resulting from common bell times could ensure that high school students have a wider range of access to curriculum options offered by the boards regardless of their location.



Operational Metrics





Quick Reference Guide*

*Information summarized from STEO's 2020-2021 Annual Report available at www.steo.ca



Coterminous Boards	Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB)
Number of School Sites Serviced	Over 150 schools and program sites
Number of Bus Companies	23 bus companies
Service Area	Over 12,000 square kilometers, including the Counties of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Prescott-Russell
Number of School Vehicles	643 vehicles total, including 20, 54 and 72 passenger buses, as well as accessible vehicles and vans
Vehicle Capacity Utilization	20 Passenger = 79% 54 Passenger = 63% 72 Passenger = 72% <i>Full capacity utilization may be limited by timing constraints and/or operational requirements</i>
Total Enrolment	39,015 students from K – 12
Number of Students Transported	23,129 students from K – 12* 59% of all enrolled students are transported
Number of Shared Routes	152
Average Student Ride Time	Overall Average = 21.6 minutes CDSBEO = 22.8 minutes UCDSB = 20.9 minutes
% Students Riding over 60 minutes	Overall = 1.8% CDSBEO = 2.8% UCDSB = 1.4%
Kilometres Traveled	102,994 daily kilometers
Inclement Weather Day Cancellations	2

* Number of students transported impacted by COVID-19 related to opt-outs.

Life is a journey. Enjoy the ride.

19,422 Followers

7988 Followers

7781 Views

NO BUS DELAYS OR CANCELLATIONS
FEBRUARY 13, 2021 - 2:43 PM

STAYING CONNECTED

Website Engagement
Users: 186,523
Pageviews: 1,046,675

Parent Portal
Subscribers:
11,904

BusPlanner App
Subscribers
9302

2020 - 2021

emails:
Total: 251,962



INCLEMENT WEATHER


During the winter season, there are times when the weather or road conditions will disrupt school bus and special vehicle transportation. STEO, the school boards and local bus companies work together to ensure that our approach to transportation during times of inclement weather is planned, coordinated and communicated with the safety of students and drivers in mind.

STEO receives real-time information regarding regional weather and road conditions from a precision weather advisor. Decisions concerning the cancellation of school bus and special vehicle transportation are made cooperatively based upon this information and on the input of a team of weather captains and road maintenance staff from across the region of service.

Announcements regarding the cancellation of school bus and special vehicle transportation are broadcast by local media outlets, starting no later than 6:15 a.m. Alternatively, parents/guardians and students may verify if buses are cancelled via a variety of STEO resources, including our website, our free Bus Planner App, our Parent Portal, our Facebook and Twitter feeds and our inclement weather hotline.

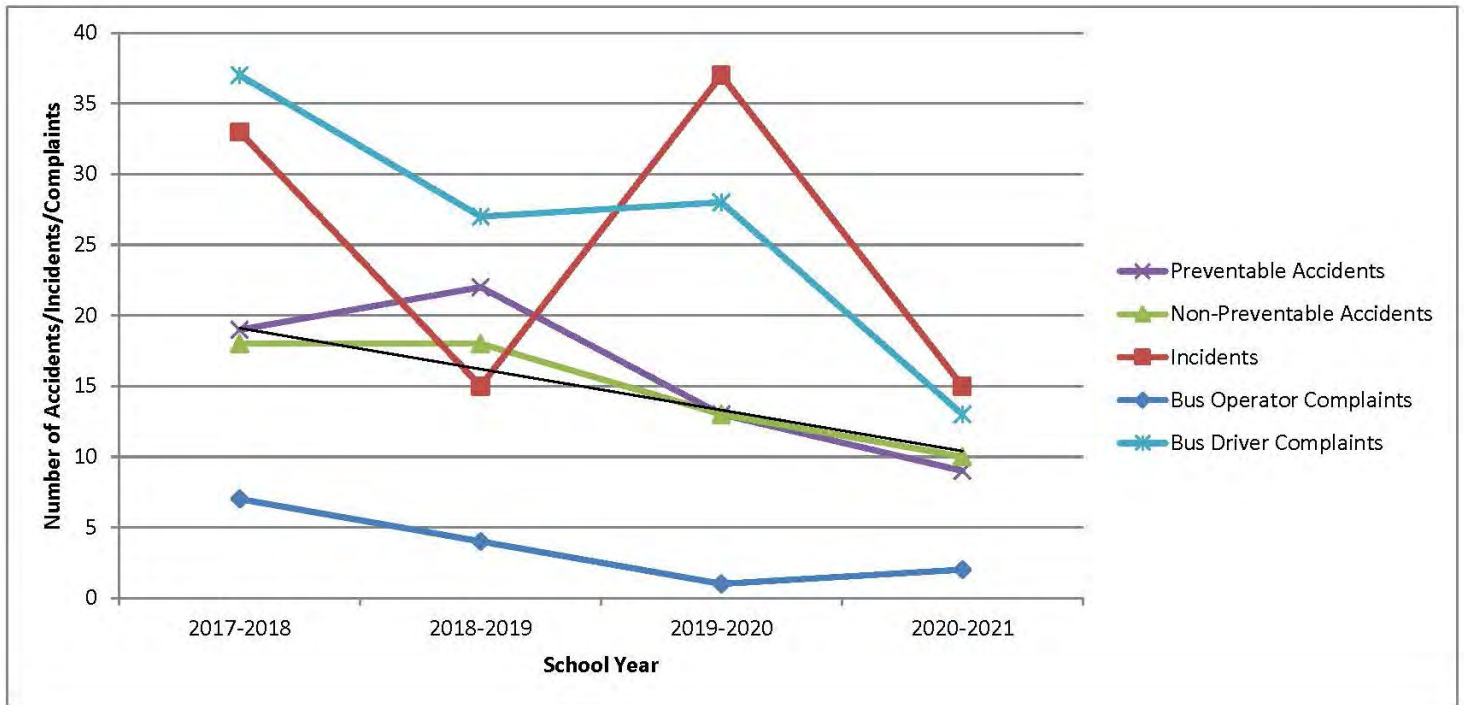
On days of inclement weather and/or questionable road conditions, the school boards we serve, in collaboration with STEO, are tasked with making a challenging decision around running or cancelling buses, with the safety of the entire student body in mind. When you consider the significant number of students and the vast geographic region in question, you can be sure that there will be days when some of our families may disagree with the final decision. On those days, parental discretion and a transportation contingency plan are of utmost importance.

Schools typically remain open to receive students even when school transportation is cancelled. Conversely, if buses are operating but a parent feels that weather or road conditions are not conducive to travel, they may ultimately decide to keep their children at home. STEO understands that cancelling buses in bad weather is impactful to families and we know that students are best served in the classroom. There are times though that we simply must cancel busing, with the safety of the entire student body – and our dedicated bus drivers – top of mind.



School Year	Number of Days
2020-2021	2
2019-2020	5
2018-2019	11
2017-2018	10
2016-2017	10

Accident/Incident Statistics



School Year	Preventable Accidents	Non-Preventable Accidents	Incidents	Complaints	
				Bus Operator Complaints	Bus Driver Complaints
2017-2018	19	18	33	7	37
2018-2019	22	18	15	4	27
2019-2020	13	13	37	1	28
2020-2021	9	10	15	2	13

Definitions

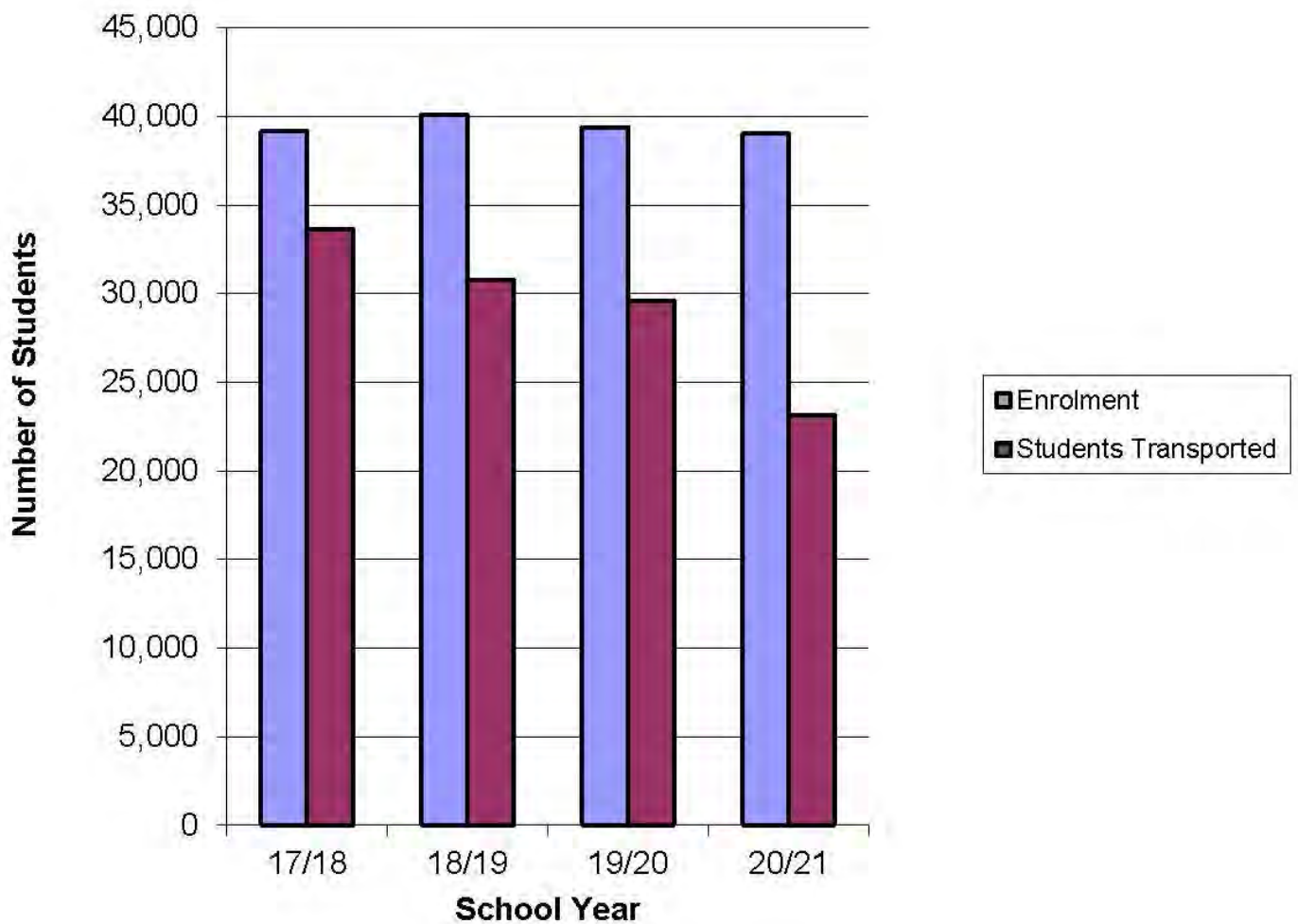
Preventable Accident: If a driver failed to do everything reasonable to avoid the accident, then it is considered a preventable accident.

Non-Preventable Accident: If a driver did everything reasonable they could do to prevent an accident, then it is considered a non-preventable accident.

Incident: Any extraordinary occurrence on or involving the school purpose vehicle which impacts on the regular operation of the vehicle or route (e.g. medical,



Statistics—Enrolment vs Students Transported



	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Enrolment	39,133	40,075	39,375	39,015
Students Transported	33,613	30,731	29,589	23,129
% of Students Transported	86%	77%	75%	59%

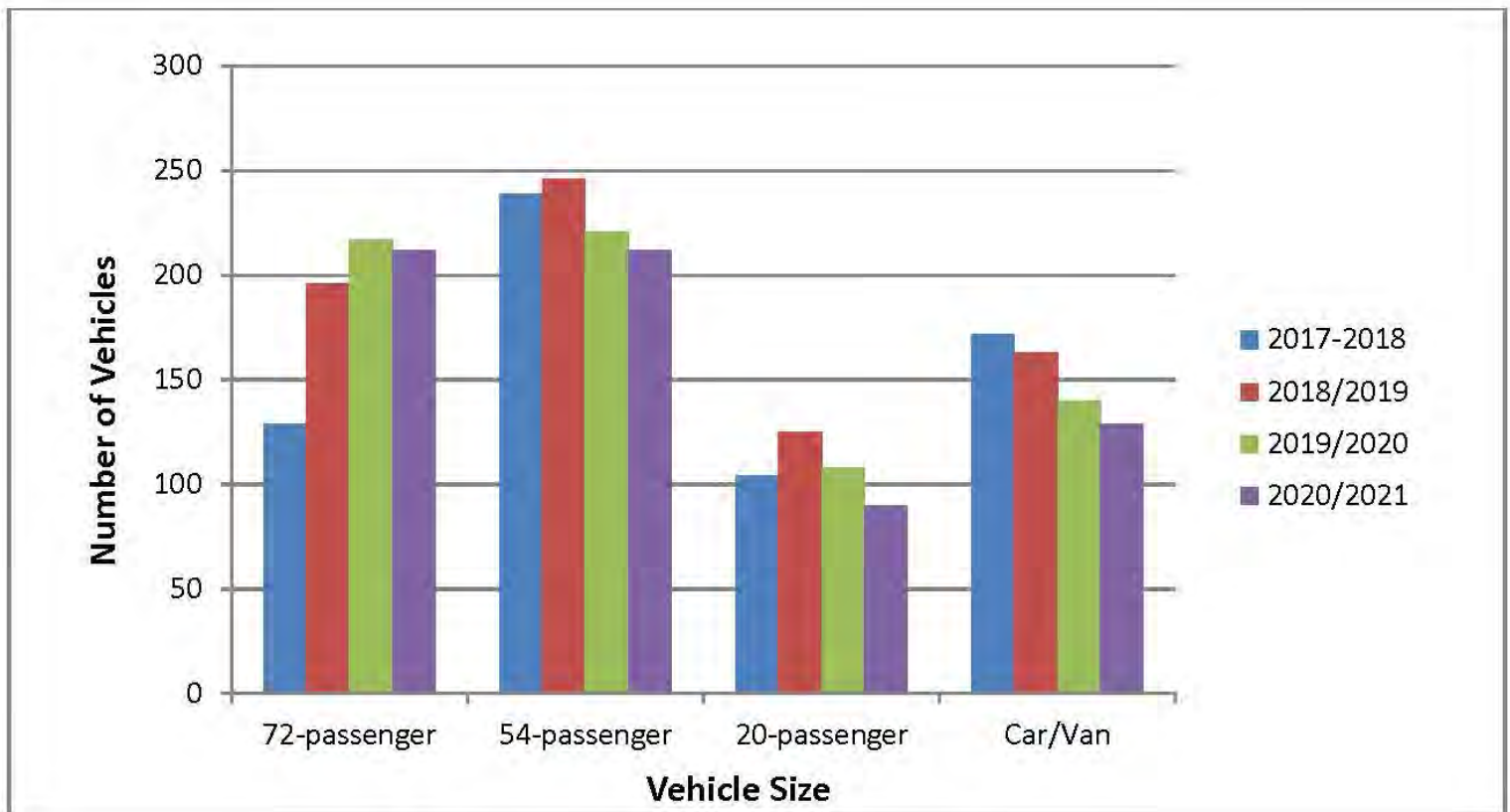
Did you know, a child is 16 times safer riding to school in a school bus than in a family vehicle.

Average Vehicle Capacity Utilization By Route

Average Vehicle Capacity Utilization (2020-2021)	
Bus Size	Average Capacity by Route
20-passenger	79%
54-passenger	63% *
72-passenger	72%

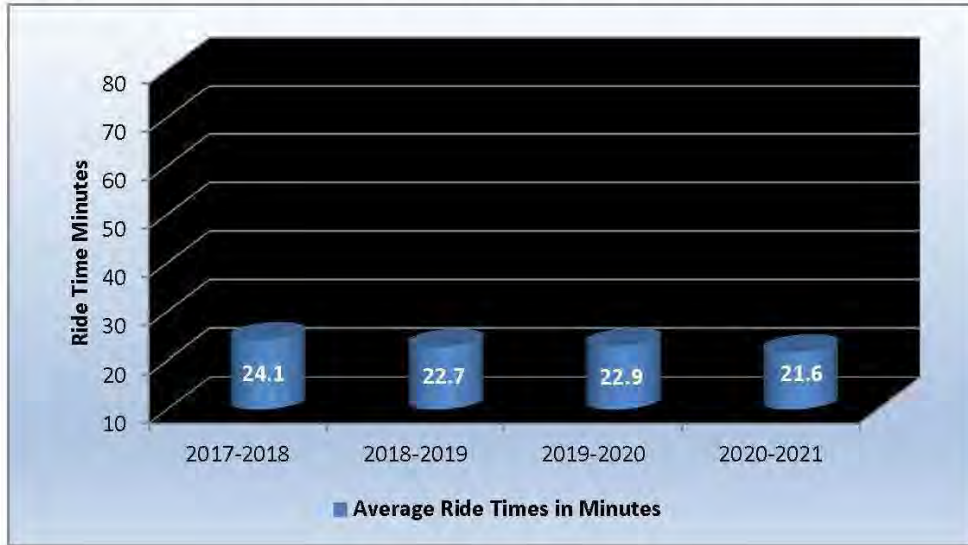
* The 54-passenger vehicle category includes vehicle capacities between 22-passenger and 54-passenger. Vehicles may be filled to greater capacity depending on their size.

Total Number of Vehicles by Vehicle Type



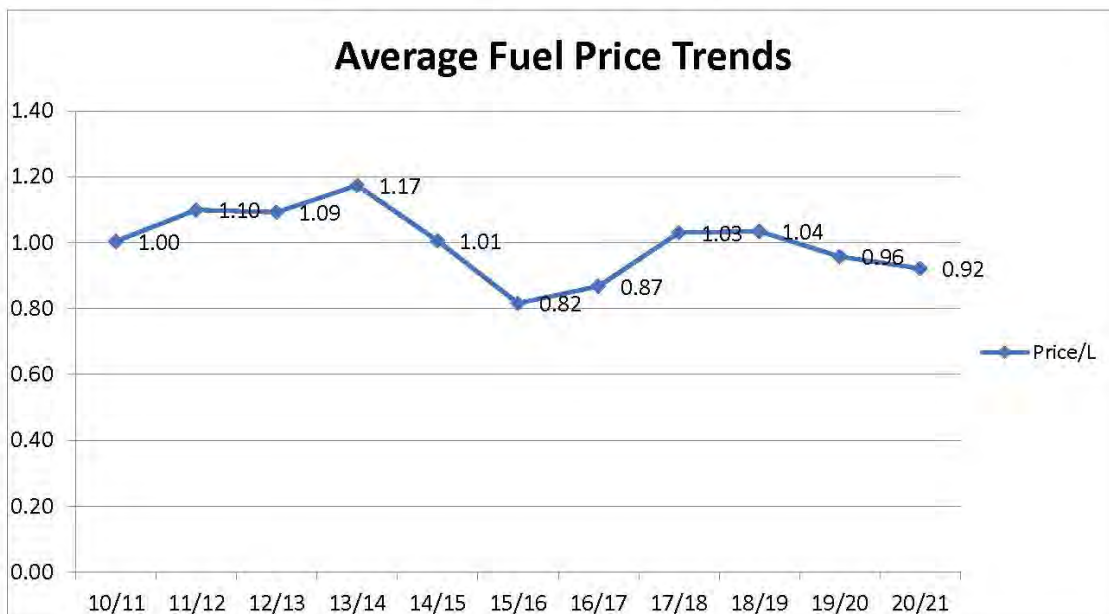
Average Ride Times

Where feasible, STEO plans student one-way travel time to be 60 minutes or less. This timeframe is dependent on such factors as program location, home location, speed limits and weather/road conditions.



Cost of Fuel

Fuel costs represent a significant portion of STEO's annual *Home to School Transportation* expenditures. Fuel costs currently represent approximately 10 - 11% of STEO's transportation costs. Fuel prices are influenced by international, political, economic, and environmental considerations. Higher fuel prices have a significant impact on STEO's operational budget. A one-cent change in the price of fuel will cost STEO approximately \$60,000 over the course of a full school year. A ten-cent price change equates to approximately \$600,000 in additional costs over the full school year.



*Above fuel prices represent the price per litre and exclude HST and a 2-cent per litre volume discount



THANKS FOR STOPPING BY!



If you have any feedback or questions about this report, we do hope that you will reach out.

transportation@steo.ca

855-925-0022



Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario
Telephone: 1-855-925-0022 or 613-925-0022
FAX: 613-925-0024
Email: transportation@steo.ca
www.steo.ca




*working together
to stay safe*