

2016-17 Student Transportation Information:

Route information will be available to parents as of **August 19, 2016** via the online Parent Portal. Schools may have access to some routes prior to this date, through the school web portal <https://ostabusplanner.ottawaschoolbus.ca/> or via OSTA's website link to the Parent Portal Log In.

Student Transportation Information can also be found using the "**Stop Finder**" located on the main page of our website, which will link to the "**BusPlanner - Parent Portal**". The parent must enter the student's last name, birthdate, school and grade in order to access route and stop information.

The "**Stop Finder**" feature returns bus stop and route information for eligible students who are assigned to regular yellow school bus or small school purpose vehicle service, or for eligible grade 7 and 8 students who are assigned to OC Transpo Service.

Small School Purpose Vehicles

The driver responsible for the route will contact each family directly prior to the first day of school.

Students with Special Needs – Requests for Accessible Transportation

Each student requiring special accommodation for transportation should have a "*Request for Accessible Transportation*" form completed by their parents, signed by the Principal and forwarded to the Spec Ed department. The Spec Ed department will then send the form to OSTA with any appropriate comments that would help us meet the student's individual needs.

Any requests for short- or long-term accommodation for medical conditions also require the "*Request for Accessible Transportation Form*" signed by the parents and the principal, and then forwarded to the Superintendent for approval. A medical note or certificate indicating what needs are being accommodated is required. Please note that accommodation of needs for transportation should also be reflected at the school. For example, if a student cannot walk x number of meters to school, then should the student be running around in gym, at recess, or during extra-curricular activities?

Transportation for students in a joint custody arrangement and having two homes

OSTA has developed a new policy & procedure to deliver transportation services to students in a joint custody arrangement and having two homes. An application process and other requirements need to be met for parents to receive this service, and the homes or daycares in question must meet all other eligibility requirements. The deadline for September start up transportation was June 1. **Renewals** of current schedule calendars are due **June 30**. All other applications will be reviewed after September 15, and prior to October 1.

More information can be found on our website: <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies-procedures/variable-transportation-for-students-in-a-joint-custody-arrangement-and-having-two-homes-copy/>

Kindergarten Staggered Entry and ID

School bus routes are planned according to the number of registered students in the data system from May to July 2016. We continue to make changes in transportation throughout school start up. Routes are driven as planned as of the first day of school September 2016 and drivers will stop at each stop, regardless of whether KG students are beginning that day or whether they are beginning later on in the week.

Please remind parents of new and returning KG students that they **MUST** meet the students at their stop in the afternoon. Failure to do so could result in termination of transportation services and/or their child being dropped off at the nearest police station.

OSTA will be providing bright yellow plastic tags that should be attached to any KG student's back pack (preferably on the lower left side). These will assist the drivers in making sure a responsible person designated by the parent, or the parent, is at the stop to collect the student at their drop off point, per policy. We kindly request that teachers remove the plastic tags from any students NOT in kindergarten.

School Bus Safety Awareness Day (First Time Rider Program)

This year's School Bus Safety Awareness Day is scheduled for **Sunday, August 28, 2016** and will run at six sites across the city in 45 minute sessions from 09:00am to 1:00pm. This important safety program is geared primarily for parents and children new to school bus transportation and for all elementary school- aged children who ride a school bus. Families and students can register to attend at one of the following sites:

| School | Address | Contact for Registration |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Holy Trinity H.S. | 180 Katimavik Rd., Kanata | 613-836-0502 |
| **École élémentaire catholique Saint-Joseph d'Orléans | 6664 rue Carriere, Orléans | 613-488-2237 |
| Sir Wilfrid Laurier S.S. | 1515 Tenth Line, Orléans | 613-835-2488 |
| St. Mark H.S. | 1040 Dozois Rd., Ottawa | 613-721-5500 |
| ** École élémentaire publique Charlotte Lemieux | 2093 prom. Belair, Ottawa | 613-721-5500 |
| Woodroffe H.S. | 2410 Georgina Dr., Ottawa | 613-821-1414 |

** French presentation sites

School Bus Safety Awareness Day on our website at <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/helpful-resources/school-bus-pedestrian-safety-day/>. A flyer is attached for your convenience.

Applications for Seat Availability

Students who had been approved to access service under the Seat Availability provision for 2015/16 will need to re-apply for service for the next school year. The **NEW "Application for Access to Empty Seats on School Bus Vehicles"** form is available on the OSTA website <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies-procedures/empty-seat-seat-availability-provision-2/>

It remains the responsibility of the school principal to administer the empty seat provision at her/his school. School principals are authorized to assign empty seats to students not eligible for busing on school bus vehicles serving their schools after October 1. Please note that the number of available seats will be decreasing year over year as OSTA continues to optimize routes for more efficient and effective transportation service.

Transportation Information During the Summer Months

Please note that the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority will be open during the summer months from 8:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday. OCDSB parents should contact OSTA directly during the summer months if they have questions about transportation or changes to their children's address or caregiver information.

Transportation Information During the Fall

Parents should be advising schools directly of any changes to student home or caregiver address. Please remind parents that OSTA will require a minimum of three business days to implement a change to transportation services, longer for transportation to two homes in a joint custody situation. During the month of September, we ask for your assistance in advising parents of new transportation information, due to the volume of changes processed through OSTA at the busy start-up period. You may also direct them to the online Parent Portal www.ostabusplanner.ottawaschoolbus.ca.