

TO: TSTG GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 14TH, 2020

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER

SUBJECT: **STOCK WEST DRIVER SHORTAGE UPDATE**

Origin:

TCDSB Committee of the Board

Executive Summary

The start to the 2019-2020 school year has been negatively impacted by the shortage of school bus drivers. Although several companies had relatively small issues, Stock Transportation was significantly impacted. Stock Transportation is under new senior management in Ontario and have been working to address these shortcomings so that every student they service can receive timely and consistent service.

Comment(s):

1. This report is a follow up to the report issued in November regarding school start up issues. In that report, a number of issues and concerns were highlighted in regards to the driver shortage impacting families and schools here in Toronto.
2. Stock Transportation and specifically their West division have been suffering from a driver shortage since the start of the school year. During the summer, Stock reported a surplus of drivers. However, after their final driver signup in late August they were faced with an issue of several drivers who no longer reported to the division for route selection. This is not a new issue for school bus operators but the scale of the shortage was significantly more than a normal year over year average.
3. Stock and TSTG staff have been working on ways to first minimize the impact of the shortage on families and schools and secondly building means to fix the problem permanently. The company has utilized all their spare drivers to cover open routes, cancelled charters and used charter drivers to cover routes, and secured staff and drivers from other divisions to assist in supporting the division. A company that specializes in school bus charters was also subcontracted by Stock to help fill open routes. The TSTG has started to move open routes to other carriers that are reporting surplus drivers available. Unfortunately, we were unable to do this sooner as no companies had drivers available to take on the new work. Several school bus operators who currently do not have contracts with Toronto were also approached but they indicated they did not have the capacity to take on new work at this time in Toronto.
4. Currently there are 12 open routes at the three Stock locations. Where spares are available at the East and North divisions, and not needed at those locations, they are dispatched to assist coverage on west routes. Stock also re-tasked their York Division to take over some routes in the northern part of the city to further minimize disruption. Depending on the

number of driver book offs each day will impact how many of those 12 routes are forced to be altered from their normal schedule. Stock is also cycling drivers on a weekly basis to ensure that a late bus due to driver shortage does not continually impact the same school and set of students.

5. There is new senior management at Stock now and they have committed to addressing this issue and ensuring that contract commitments are kept going forward. A letter from Stock Transportation is attached as *Appendix A* that outlines the issues and corrective measures they are taking. The TSTG will continue to remove routes as new drivers come on line and a reduction to the number of routes operated by Stock will also take place come next September.

Conclusion:

1. That report is for information of the Committee

K. Hodgkinson
General Manager