



REPORT TO

CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC
PLANNING AND PROPERTY
COMMITTEERESPONSE TO SEAC STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
RECOMMENDATIONS

We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth. 3 John 1:8

Drafted

May 28, 2025

Barbara Leporati, Head, Planning Services

Michael Loberto, Superintendent, Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date

June 11, 2025

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision: *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in
Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

Mission: *Nurturing the faith development and academic
excellence of our Catholic learning community through the
love of God, neighbour, and self.*



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2025

IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 30, 2025, the Board approved the referral of recommendations made by the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) regarding professional development for bus drivers and additional support on buses to the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) and staff.

The attached TSTG report (*Appendix 'A'*) provides a response to the SEAC recommendations, and details measures taken by the consortium and school bus operators to support the transportation of students with special needs, including professional development and the current presence of additional staff on buses.

In addition, a request to provide additional funding for staff on buses to support the transportation of students with special needs was submitted to the Minister of Education on May 23, 2025.

B. BACKGROUND

1. ***At the January 30, 2025, Board meeting, recommendations from SEAC regarding student transportation services were brought forward for consideration.*** Arising from these recommendations, the Board approved the following.

“That the following SEAC recommendations be referred to Staff for a report:

- 1. Mandatory professional development for bus drivers that transport students with special needs and provide ongoing support for bus driving staff should they be experiencing challenges with special needs students.*
- 2. That the Minister of Education consider funding for special needs staff on school buses to assist with special needs students; and*
- 3. That items 1 and 2 above be sent to the Transportation Consortium and Minister of Education”.*

2. ***The SEAC recommendations were received at the February 14, 2025, meeting of the TSTG Governance Committee, who approved the following recommended action.***

“1. To communicate with the TCDSB committee to advise on actions taken as a result of the report recommendations.”

C. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. ***The TSTG report (Appendix 'A') provides a response to the SEAC recommendations. It details the measures taken by both the consortium and school bus companies on professional development for operators transporting students with special education needs, as well as the practice of support staff on buses.***
2. ***As part of the contract with school bus operators, TSTG requires companies to provide mandatory training on several topics including assisting students with special education needs.*** TSTG has worked with both the TCDSB and TDSB Special Services teams to develop a training guide, which is included as an appendix to the TSTG report, for school bus operators. TSTG continues to work with both school boards to ensure the resource reflects current needs.

In addition to initial training sessions, the operators work with expert organizations such as Holland-Bloorview to create materials to support driver education. There are also professional development resources available to all operators through the transportation subcommittee of the Ontario Association of School Business Officials.

3. ***School bus operators also take part in TSTG safety officer led sessions that includes training on various special needs equipment and procedures to ensure that students are safely transported.*** The hiring of a second safety officer allows TSTG to conduct additional spot audits to ensure carriers are following protocols and provide support for parents and school staff as required.
4. ***In some circumstances, TSTG has been able, through collaboration with schools and the Special Services teams, to secure aides to accompany students with unique transportation challenges.*** Currently the consortium is transporting sixty-eight (68) aides on routes for both school boards, including eight (8) TCDSB routes.
5. ***TSTG is supportive of the presence of additional staff on buses as it assists with the safe transportation of students.*** An aide on the bus allows the driver to focus on vehicle operation while providing support to students with special needs who may require assistance during transportation.

It is important to note that previous requests to the provincial government to supply support staff on all buses have not resulted in associated funding.

6. ***A request to provide funding for support staff on buses transporting students with special needs was received and approved by the TSTG Governance Committee at its meeting on May 9, 2025. A communication was sent to the office of the Minister of Education on May 23, 2025.*** The letter is included as an appendix to the TSTG report.

D. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the information of the Board of Trustees.