

Summary of Audit Findings / Recommendations and Staff Response for Items Pertinent to the Board and the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG)

Audit Finding /Recommendations	Amalgamated Response	TSTG Response
<p>Recommendation 1: The Transportation Consortia in conjunction with School Boards should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Develop and conduct consistent and effective oversight processes for school bus operators to confirm their compliance with contract and legal requirements for driver competence and vehicle condition; and •Track the rate of bus driver turnover, along with accidents and incidents such as dropping students at the wrong stop, to help determine if there is a link between driver turnover and safety risks, and if action is needed. 	<p>With respect to recommendations 1 and 12 (below) which are specific to consortia activity, the consortia suggests that successful implementation would best be achieved through forwarding these to the OABSO Transportation Committee. This will allow for input and discussion, by all consortia, and enable development of a uniform process across the province specific to tracking the relationship between bus driver turnover and accidents, incidents and consistency with respect to route planning methodologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TSTG currently performs random route audits and annual contract compliance audits with our school bus operators. TSTG staff will be looking to expand the scope of these audits moving forward to ensure that a good cross section of vehicle and driver abstracts are reviewed and that more regular route audits are performed to ensure compliance with schedules. All 7 Transportation Supervisors have been assigned school bus carrier locations to audit on at least one occasion prior to the annual compliance audits in April and they will each be conducting 8 route audits annually. The TSTG has already started this process by starting random route audits and performing more site visits to follow up on issues previously identified in previous site visits. • As part of a weekly process the TSTG collects Key Performance Indicators (KPI) from our transportation providers as a means to help monitor service levels. Based on the report the TSTG will be expanding those KPI's to ensure that all relevant performance related criteria are included and reviewed.

		<p>KPI's include #'s of open routes, book offs, accidents, #'s of lost students</p> <p>We included in the new RFP \$2000 fine for dropping off a student without being met who had a purple tag. We also increased the qualitative scoring in the RFP from 33-44.5% which including more marks assessed for better accident investigation, re-training, safe driving award programs, maintenance programs and facilities, driver training programs.</p>
<p>Recommendation 12:</p> <p>In order to increase the efficiency of school transportation services and in turn decrease costs, transportation consortia should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • track and monitor utilization by using the most relevant and accurate information available in planning student transportation services; including actual ridership; • evaluate the benefits of parents of students who are eligible to use school board provided transportation services being required to opt in or out of using transportation services; 	<p>With respect to recommendations 1 and 12 which are specific to consortia activity, we suggest that successful implementation would best be achieved through forwarding these to the OABSO Transportation Committee. This will allow for input and discussion, by all consortia, and enable development of a uniform process across the province specific to tracking the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TSTG uses computer software to identify eligible riders but actual ridership numbers are more difficult to collect. The TSTG currently collects this data from our school bus operators who provide self-reporting audits so that we can confirm numbers and the accuracy of our computer generated scheduled bus stop times. The TSTG will investigate further options to identify actual riders.

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bus one road (all students in an area going to a school in the same geographical area are all picked up on the same bus), and a hybrid between the two. The French Boards that service Toronto no longer participate in the coterminous delivery of student transportation services. The staggering of bell times will provide an opportunity to reduce transportation costs as buses can be more effectively utilized. The TSTG will be bringing a report back to Consortium Governance in February with a recommendation on bell times that will be brought back to the Boards for consideration.

- For the most part, all PD days are coordinated between the two Toronto Boards. However, at the high school level the 'local priorities' allow for schools to select days that may not be consistent with the system days. Also, exam schedules and modified days (i.e. Thursday the students come in at 10:00 instead of 9:00 the rest of the week) significantly impact transportation as additional buses and resources are required to facilitate these services.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current contract model sets a rate for services provided in both the am and pm while additional ‘utilization’ costs are passed to carriers if they perform services over 3 hours. The concern was that some buses are only used for two hours and that they are not fully utilized. This is primarily due to the fact that travel time between schools at times limits connectivity. The change to all times will assist the TSTG to more fully utilize services going forward.
<p>Recommendation 7: The Ministry of Transportation, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, school boards and transportation consortia, should develop a protocol to share information on the results of their inspections and audits of school bus operators and motor vehicle inspection stations, and accident information. This will help facilitate timely action to enforce the safety of school transportation services throughout the Province.</p>	<p>Specific to recommendation 7, the OASBO Transportation Committee is the appropriate agency on behalf of consortia and school boards, to partner with the Ministry of Transportation to enhance information sharing pertaining to bus operator audits, inspection stations and accidents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TSTG looks forward to sharing information with the various agencies to help improve student safety.
<p>Recommendation 8: To improve student transportation safety, The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with school boards and transportation consortia, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop consistent safety policies for the safe transport of students and for dealing with behavioral issues on the bus; • identify or develop mandatory training programs and standard information packages for students on school bus safety, and ensure that training is 	<p>Regarding recommendations 8 and 15, the OASBO Transportation Committee is the appropriate organization to represent all consortia and school boards in partnering with Ministry of Education representatives to develop both consistent safety policies and associated training programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TSTG will be working with Provincial counterparts to discuss the standardization of safety practices were feasible. The TSTG will be petitioning the MOE for consideration of remunerating school boards for the use of school bus monitors to assist with not only the behavior of students on buses but to manage the de-boarding process to help minimize the risk of students being de-boarded without proper

<p>delivered consistently to all students across the Province; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● determine which grades should be met at the bus stop by an adult, and develop a standardized process for this across the Province. 	<p>and standardized evaluation criteria relative to procurement processes.</p>	<p>supervision (motion passed at November, 2015 governance committee to petition MOE).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TSTG has a number of safety programs in place currently (i.e. list 2 or 3) First Rider Program for new Kindergarten students, Annual Evacuation Program and will continue to work with stakeholders to improve the process. ● Currently the TSTG asks our schools to tag all students from JK to grade 3 as part of our ‘purple equals parent’ program. This is not consistent across the Province and may prove difficult to enforce. The TSTG will again work with stakeholders to ensure a policy is in place that best meets the needs of our students here in Toronto.
<p>Recommendation 15: The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the school boards and transportation consortia, should develop standard criteria for evaluating the submission of school bus operators in procuring student transportation services. The criteria should appropriately consider the operators’ ability to safely transport students.</p>	<p>Regarding recommendation 8 and 15, the OASBO Transportation Committee is the appropriate organization to represent all consortia and school boards in partnering with Ministry of Education representatives to develop both consistent safety policies and associated training programs and standardized evaluation criteria relative to procurement processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TSTG will be working with other consortia to investigate the practicality of developing a Province wide system for evaluating carriers as part of the procurement process. In order to ensure a fair, open and competitive bidding process, the Board issued its RFP for providers on November 29, 2015. The RFP is set to close on January 5th, 2016
<p>Recommendation 10,11,13,14</p>	<p>Although consortia were not mentioned in recommendations 10, 11, 13 and 14, we think it is important to note that Consortia could provide assistance and feedback to the Ministry of Education and</p>	

	<p>school boards with these processes, through the use of OASBO Transportation Committee meetings and studies and can provide essential information regarding differing issues affecting all consortia across the province.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with school boards, should set standards on eligibility for transportation services, especially home-to-school walking distances for students, to promote greater consistency in transportation services across school boards within the province.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 11</p> <p>After implementing standardized eligibility criteria, we recommend that the Ministry of Education (Ministry) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revisit its current funding formula. The formula needs to reflect school boards' local transportation needs based on the number of eligible riders and consortia utilization of buses, and taking into consideration factors such as geography, availability of public transit and the number of students needing transportation services (due to distance, special needs, special programs or road hazards); and 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement an updated funding formula ensuring that any targeted funding for specific initiatives is spent for the purposes intended. 		
<p>Recommendation 13 The Ministry of Education should set standards for the optimal utilization of school vehicles for school boards and transportation consortia, and provide guidance to them in calculating utilization rates.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 14 The Ministry of Education should clarify the roles and responsibilities of school boards and consortia in setting eligibility and employing efficiency measures.</p>		

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