



REPORT TO

## CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

### TRANSPORTATION ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

*Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.*

*Romans 13:1*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
February 27, 2018	March 8, 2018	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>

J. Volek, Acting Comptroller, Planning and Development Services

### INFORMATION REPORT

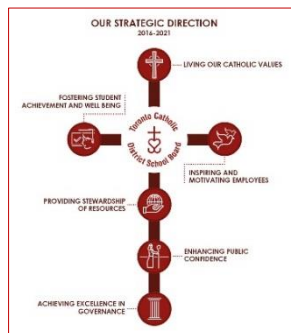
**Vision:**

*At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.*

**Mission:**

*The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.*

*We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.*



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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an overview of the major activities and issues faced by the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) during the 2016-17 school year. The attached TSTG annual report (*Appendix 'A'*) provides a summary of pertinent data, Key Performance indicators (KPI), challenges and successes over that same period.

Transportation Policy S.T. 01, Evaluation and Metrics, stipulates that staff provide an annual report on transportation statistics ranging from operational performance to policy adherence, and to include pertinent Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 15 hours*

## **B. PURPOSE**

1. To provide the Board of Trustees with a summary of data, Key Performance Indicators (KPI), activities, challenges, and successes of the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) during the 2016-17 school year.
2. Transportation Policy S.T. 01, Evaluation and Metrics, stipulates:  
*“The effectiveness of the policy will be determined by measuring the following:*
  1. *Transportation statistics ranging from operational performance to policy adherence will be included in the Toronto Student Transportation Group’s ‘Annual Report’.*
  2. *Key performance indicators are collected on a monthly basis and provided to the TSTG Operations Committee for review.”*

## C. BACKGROUND

1. At the February 16, 2018 Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) Governance Committee meeting, the *2016-17 Toronto Student Transportation Group Annual Report* was approved.

### Transportation Budget Deficit

2. **September 2016**—a new Request for Proposal was issued for a six (6) year bus operator contract with the potential of two subsequent one-year extensions. The new bus operator contract award added an additional \$9M to the overall transportation consortium annual operating costs with no corresponding increase to the transportation Grant.
3. Based on **2017-18 projections**—both Toronto Boards are expected to spend **\$23M** more on transportation combined than they receive in funding from the Ministry of Education (TDSB approximately \$12.3M, and TCDSB approximately \$10.7M).

### Cost of Fuel

4. One of the most volatile and unpredictable elements to funding transportation services is the cost of fuel. Both gas and diesel-type vehicles using various engines of differing fuel economy, travelling varying distances, generate costs to the consortium. The fuel prices from **January of 2016** trended significantly higher after a steady decrease the previous two (2) years.

### Technology and Delays

5. **May 2017**—GeoRef Systems was awarded a contract to provide technology to replace the older transportation management software used by TSTG. The new software is designed with more efficient planning tools, which will equate to the potential for greater route optimization and other operational efficiencies.
6. Due to the transportation deficit, there has been a delay in the deployment of new technologies such as live GPS tracking of all Toronto buses (for parents) and interior/exterior vehicle safety cameras. As a result, Toronto students and families are deprived of tools designed to improve communications and

safety. Both Toronto Boards believe that GPS on all school buses should be mandated and fully funded by the Ministry of Education. Such technology would allow for the development of critical apps for handheld devices (e.g. “Where’s my bus?” app) and would provide parents with live information on the location of their children’s bus(es). **Note:** cameras are currently installed on 2% of the TSTG fleet and would cost approximately \$8.75M to have them installed on the entire fleet.

## **Ombudsman Recommendations**

7. **September 2016**—a serious school bus driver shortage significantly impacted families in the City of Toronto and throughout the province of Ontario. As a result of parental complaints, the Ombudsman’s Office launched a formal investigation into the issue. A report was generated in the summer of 2017 that highlighted 42 key recommendations—**all of which were accepted by both boards and the consortium.**
8. A 6-month progress report was recently completed by the TSTG and submitted to the Ombudsman. All recommendations speak to the need for greater operating and routing efficiencies, improved communications, deployment of new technologies and overall accountability to stakeholders and the province.

## **Traffic Congestion and School Travel Planning**

9. Toronto traffic congestion is one of the most significant factors in the delivery of students in this city. Traffic related delays accounted for **31%** of all reported delays in 2016-17. It is worth noting that traffic delays accounted for **42%** of all reported delays in 2017-18!
10. Traffic poses serious safety concerns for both Toronto Boards. Both Boards have had great success with School Travel Planning (STP) initiatives, **particularly when organized and promoted by professional Facilitators**—people trained to inspire parents, students, and whole communities.
11. Over the course of the 2016-17 school year, staff have received increased requests for the development of customized STP solutions specific to the varied and unique needs of individual TCDSB school communities—partly as a result of the great efforts made by professional Facilitators at other STP schools.

12. Staff believe that further promotion and financial support by the Ministry of Education for active and safe modes of travel (STP) is critical to improving the overall safety of our school sites, reducing vehicular traffic congestion in and around our school sites, and promoting the health and well-being of our students.

## **D. EVIDENCE, RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS**

13. Bell time changes are one of the main operational parameters that allow the Toronto Student Transportation Group to reduce costs by staggering these windows. The cost-benefit associated with bell time changes, however, was previously assessed by staff and it was determined that potential transportation cost savings can be outweighed by organizational costs to the Board. Bell times for Special Education students and programs can further drive transportation costs when not synchronized with surrounding schools and programs.
14. Another Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of significance includes the widening of the gap between transportation expenditure and Ministry grants. Furthermore, the transportation deficit doubled with the introduction of the new operator contract in the 2016-17 school year.
15. The number of open routes (school bus routes without a dedicated permanent driver) averaged at around 2% while the spare pool of drivers averaged around 7%. The book-off rate (drivers absent on any given day due to sickness or personal appointments) averaged around 2.5%.
16. The number of accidents has started to trend higher after three (3) years of downward movement. This may be due, in part, to new operators and new drivers coming into the marketplace because of the new operator contract.
17. Driver turn-over continues to be an issue as the number of new applicants do not always keep pace with the number of drivers leaving the bus companies.

**Please refer to the 2016-17 Toronto Student Transportation Group's Annual Report found in Appendix 'A' for more details on Key Performance Indicators and other related information.**

## **E. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.