

Ministry of Education

School Board Business Support
Branch
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Ministère de l'Éducation

Direction du soutien aux activités des
conseils scolaires
315, rue Front Ouest
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Toronto (Ontario) M7A 0B

2024: SB02

Date: January 17, 2024
Memorandum to: Senior Business Officials
Transportation Consortia Managers
From: Mehul Mehta
Director
School Board Business Support Branch
Subject: **Updates to 2023-24 Student Transportation Grant**

I am writing to provide you with details regarding additional funding being allocated for the 2023-24 Student Transportation Grant for the following costs:

- Recruitment and Retention Bonus (R&R Bonus) for Contracted Special Purpose Vehicles
- Non-refundable Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) related to R&R Bonus
- School Bus Rider Safety Training Rate

Recruitment and Retention Bonus for Contracted Special Purpose Vehicles

The R&R Bonus (previously known as the School Bus Driver Retention Pilot Program - DRP) is intended to support the retention and recruitment of school bus drivers across the province. The eligibility criteria for R&R bonus in 2023-24 school year remains similar to the DRP that was in place for 2022-23 school year.

As stated in memorandum [2023: SB07](#), the Spare Driver Category includes provision for the R&R Bonus for an additional 5% of school bus routes, which may be used to pay for the R&R Bonus for contracted special purpose vehicle drivers.

For school boards where the number of contracted special purpose vehicle routes exceed 5% of school bus routes, additional funding is allocated to ensure that the boards can cover the cost of providing R&R bonus to contracted special purpose vehicles.

$$\text{Funding for R\&R Bonus for Contracted Special Purpose Vehicles} = \left(\text{Number of Contracted Special Purpose Vehicle Routes} - 5\% \text{ of the Number of School Bus Routes} \right) \times \$2,363$$

Based on routing statistics used in the 2023-24 Student Transportation Grant, this approach is projected to provide additional funding of \$4,259,880. Funding amount for each school board is presented in Table 1 of this memorandum.

As noted in memorandum [2023:SB07](#), school boards and consortia are not expected to administer or issue the payments to drivers; rather, they are expected to flow the funds to operators who are in the best position to administer these payments as they employ drivers of school buses and contracted special purpose vehicles used for student transportation.

School bus operators will flow the \$2,000 R&R Bonus to eligible drivers based on the criteria used in the previous DRP – such as holding an eligible drivers’ license, having primary responsibility of employment as a driver for student transportation, and having a minimum attendance of 95% during the term.

Consistent with enhanced reporting, school boards or consortia and school bus operators will report the actual expenditures on the R&R Bonus for contracted special purpose vehicle routes along with school bus routes in the templates referenced in memorandum [2023:SB07](#).

The year-end report from school bus operators for 2023-24 school year is to be submitted to the respective consortium by October 31, 2024. School boards and consortia are required to submit the 2023-24 school year reports on consortium and school bus operator expenditures to the ministry for their respective organization by November 30, 2024.

Non-refundable Harmonized Sales Tax related to R&R Bonus

School boards and the student transportation consortia are subject to 13% HST on the R&R Bonus paid to bus operators, of which 10.84% is covered from a federal rebate for non-profit organizations. To offset the cost associated with remaining portion of HST (2.16%) that is non-refundable, the ministry is providing \$942,883 (based on applying 2.16% to \$2,363 which is equal to \$51 per eligible route) starting with the 2023-24 school year. Funding amount for each school board is presented in Table 1 of this memorandum.

The R&R funding for 2023-24 Student Transportation Grant is now projected to be \$43M and includes \$32M as noted in memorandum [2023: B06](#), \$6M to reflect the operator related payroll costs announced in [2023:SB07](#), \$4M for R&R Bonus of contracted special purpose vehicles and \$0.9M to the reflect the non-refundable HST for R&R Bonus.

School Bus Rider Safety Training Rate

The School Bus Safety Training Allocation provides funding for school boards that access standardized school bus rider safety training through a contract established by the Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM).

Effective June 2022, OECM's contracted rate with Intertrain (vendor) has increased for on-site training from \$370 to \$420 per session, while the rate of online training remains unchanged.

The ministry is increasing the reimbursement rate from \$370 to \$420 per on-site session for the 2023-24 school year to align with the revised contract rate, so that school boards who plan to fully utilize the training funding would not incur pressures.

Conclusion

Please note that some of the elements and proposals set out in this memorandum will take effect when the applicable regulations are made by the Minister of Education or Lieutenant Governor in Council under the *Education Act*, or other legislation as required.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Student Transportation Unit at student.transportation@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Mehul Mehta
Director
School Board Business Support Branch

c: School Bus Ontario

TABLE 1: PROJECTED 2023-24 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GRANT AMOUNTS (Revised Jan 2024)

DSB No	DSB Name	2023-24 Student Transportation Grant (B06 2023) A	Total Additional R&R Bonus Funding (SB07 2023) B	R&R Bonus for Contracted Special Purpose Vehicles C	Non-refundable HST related to R&R Bonus D	School Bus Rider Safety Training Rate Increase E	2023-24 Projected Student Transportation Grant (Revised Dec 2023) F=A+B+C+D+E
1	District School Board Ontario North East	\$9,862,473	\$52,393		\$7,067	\$1,200	\$9,923,133
2	Algoma District School Board	\$10,776,193	\$57,504		\$7,842	\$1,600	\$10,843,139
3	Rainbow District School Board	\$16,084,485	\$73,751		\$10,156	\$1,800	\$16,170,193
4	Near North District School Board	\$13,348,404	\$72,396	\$79,373	\$11,894	\$1,600	\$13,513,667
5.1	Keewatin-Patricia District School Board	\$5,611,951	\$21,831		\$2,974	\$850	\$5,637,607
5.2	Rainy River District School Board	\$3,408,557	\$11,737		\$1,620	\$550	\$3,422,465
6.1	Lakehead District School Board	\$7,626,957	\$29,236		\$4,003	\$1,250	\$7,661,446
6.2	Superior-Greenstone District School Board	\$1,929,000	\$7,875		\$1,055	\$500	\$1,938,429
7	Bluewater District School Board	\$17,318,538	\$91,388		\$12,590	\$2,250	\$17,424,766
8	Avon Maitland District School Board	\$14,740,844	\$89,191		\$12,250	\$1,950	\$14,844,235
9	Greater Essex County District School Board	\$16,170,044	\$93,931		\$12,578	\$3,750	\$16,280,304
10	Lambton Kent District School Board	\$15,343,136	\$74,200		\$10,145	\$2,800	\$15,430,281
11	Thames Valley District School Board	\$53,374,897	\$255,907	\$306,582	\$42,605	\$9,050	\$53,989,040
12	Toronto District School Board	\$78,176,880	\$410,922	\$337,022	\$65,059	\$26,600	\$79,016,483
13	Durham District School Board	\$28,057,288	\$171,010		\$23,479	\$8,100	\$28,259,877
14	Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board	\$25,678,781	\$140,086	\$6,815	\$19,845	\$4,450	\$25,849,977
15	Trillium Lakelands District School Board	\$17,983,521	\$102,885		\$13,902	\$2,100	\$18,102,408
16	York Region District School Board	\$46,207,069	\$226,810	\$260,116	\$37,510	\$12,900	\$46,744,404
17	Simcoe County District School Board	\$24,580,042	\$131,170	\$181,733	\$22,369	\$6,200	\$24,921,514
18	Upper Grand District School Board	\$25,033,266	\$165,221		\$22,914	\$4,150	\$25,225,551
19	Peel District School Board	\$55,775,475	\$380,772	\$39,971	\$54,403	\$15,400	\$56,266,022
20	Halton District School Board	\$19,295,286	\$115,878	\$18,887	\$16,701	\$6,750	\$19,453,502
21	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	\$20,313,430	\$115,176		\$15,526	\$5,550	\$20,449,681
22	District School Board of Niagara	\$23,392,518	\$128,594		\$17,944	\$4,550	\$23,543,606
23	Grand Erie District School Board	\$16,590,918	\$102,997	\$47,018	\$15,498	\$3,200	\$16,759,631

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24	Waterloo Region District School Board	\$20,145,933	\$103,968	\$47,362	\$15,642	\$6,900	\$20,319,805
25	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	\$47,059,872	\$123,368	\$1,165,902	\$42,530	\$8,100	\$48,399,772
26	Upper Canada District School Board	\$36,842,599	\$112,819	\$156,372	\$19,241	\$3,600	\$37,134,631
27	Limestone District School Board	\$18,358,665	\$96,707		\$13,318	\$2,700	\$18,471,391
28	Renfrew County District School Board	\$9,942,434	\$41,196	\$76,542	\$7,446	\$1,200	\$10,068,817
29	Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board	\$17,061,299	\$82,530		\$11,086	\$2,000	\$17,156,915
30.1	Northeastern Catholic District School Board	\$3,771,217	\$16,733		\$2,241	\$550	\$3,790,741
30.2	Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board	\$4,193,546	\$19,091	\$27,100	\$3,270	\$550	\$4,243,557
31	Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board	\$4,965,437	\$23,111		\$3,108	\$750	\$4,992,405
32	Sudbury Catholic District School Board	\$7,209,796	\$33,242		\$4,653	\$750	\$7,248,441
33.1	Northwest Catholic District School Board	\$1,678,286	\$6,140		\$825	\$250	\$1,685,500
33.2	Kenora Catholic District School Board	\$1,498,612	\$5,778		\$774	\$200	\$1,505,364
34.1	Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board	\$6,035,075	\$27,107		\$3,644	\$950	\$6,066,776
34.2	Superior North Catholic District School Board	\$961,885	\$3,562		\$477	\$350	\$966,275
35	Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board	\$6,587,176	\$29,437		\$3,947	\$600	\$6,621,160
36	Huron Perth Catholic District School Board	\$7,290,506	\$36,970		\$4,951	\$800	\$7,333,227
37	Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board	\$10,447,787	\$52,465		\$7,026	\$2,150	\$10,509,428
38	London District Catholic School Board	\$20,146,826	\$95,515	\$24,001	\$13,949	\$2,600	\$20,282,891
39	St. Clair Catholic District School Board	\$7,916,575	\$34,810		\$4,810	\$1,250	\$7,957,445
40	Toronto Catholic District School Board	\$49,616,224	\$255,722		\$35,646	\$9,850	\$49,917,442
41	Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board	\$13,296,953	\$72,909	\$1,727	\$10,289	\$1,800	\$13,383,677
42	York Catholic District School Board	\$20,522,848	\$107,460	\$21,435	\$15,573	\$4,950	\$20,672,266
43	Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board	\$22,469,172	\$137,557	\$15,570	\$19,678	\$6,800	\$22,648,777
44	Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board	\$14,890,823	\$80,768	\$66,851	\$12,801	\$2,700	\$15,053,942
45	Durham Catholic District School Board	\$10,462,713	\$59,586		\$8,013	\$2,500	\$10,532,813

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46	Halton Catholic District School Board	\$10,386,011	\$59,834		\$8,309	\$3,200	\$10,457,354
47	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board	\$11,658,792	\$67,014		\$8,974	\$2,950	\$11,737,730
48	Wellington Catholic District School Board	\$6,495,776	\$35,039		\$4,848	\$1,000	\$6,536,662
49	Waterloo Catholic District School Board	\$9,157,913	\$48,112		\$6,714	\$2,700	\$9,215,439
50	Niagara Catholic District School Board	\$11,876,528	\$67,318		\$9,363	\$2,650	\$11,955,859
51	Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board	\$8,886,219	\$49,830	\$2,491	\$7,060	\$1,550	\$8,947,150
52	Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario	\$21,106,857	\$71,658	\$88,907	\$11,996	\$1,750	\$21,281,168
53	Ottawa Catholic District School Board	\$28,001,249	\$82,834	\$424,279	\$20,812	\$5,000	\$28,534,174
54	Renfrew County Catholic District School Board	\$6,157,221	\$25,898	\$42,077	\$4,550	\$1,000	\$6,230,747
55	Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board	\$14,429,113	\$74,943		\$10,246	\$1,750	\$14,516,052
56	Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario	\$3,407,220	\$16,447	\$3,002	\$2,377	\$450	\$3,429,497
57	Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario	\$3,771,058	\$16,696	\$3,920	\$2,432	\$700	\$3,794,806
58	Conseil scolaire Viamonde	\$22,056,781	\$138,344	\$72,872	\$21,026	\$2,450	\$22,291,474
59	Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario	\$17,594,093	\$74,899	\$142,459	\$13,609	\$2,100	\$17,827,160
60.1	Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Grandes Rivières	\$8,813,188	\$44,078		\$5,903	\$1,200	\$8,864,368
60.2	Conseil scolaire de district catholique Franco-Nord	\$4,034,052	\$20,600	\$9,007	\$3,091	\$550	\$4,067,300
61	Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel-Ontario	\$7,442,158	\$32,626		\$4,455	\$1,200	\$7,480,440
62	Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales	\$1,326,746	\$5,046		\$676	\$300	\$1,332,768
63	Conseil scolaire catholique Providence	\$11,273,158	\$58,337	\$23,269	\$8,705	\$1,300	\$11,364,770
64	Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir	\$30,972,426	\$182,800	\$95,779	\$27,772	\$2,700	\$31,281,477
65	Conseil scolaire de district catholique de l'Est ontarien	\$12,620,939	\$58,656	\$228,508	\$13,183	\$1,550	\$12,922,836
66	Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario	\$21,712,115	\$104,319	\$242,929	\$19,915	\$3,050	\$22,082,328