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Financial Advisory

# Ministry of Education Effectiveness & Efficiency Review

Phase 2 Review
Sudbury Student Services Consortium

May 2008

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*Please note the English version is the official version of this report. In the situation where there are differences between the English and French versions of this report, the English version prevails.*

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This report details the findings and recommendations of an Effectiveness and Efficiency review (E&E Review) of Sudbury Student Services Consortium ("Sudbury" or the "Consortium") conducted by a review team selected by the Ministry of Education. This review is the result of government initiatives to develop an equitable approach to reforming student transportation across the province and minimize the administrative burden for Boards in providing safe, reliable, effective, cost efficient transportation services. This section of the report is designed to provide an overall assessment of the Consortium and detail the findings and recommendations that were particularly noteworthy. These major findings and recommendations are enhanced and supplemented by the specific findings and recommendations detailed in each section of the body of the report.

The E&E Review evaluated the Consortium's performance in four specific areas of operation including consortium management; policies and practices; routing and technology use; and contracting practices. The purpose of reviewing each of these areas was to evaluate current practices to determine if they are reasonable and appropriate; identify whether the Consortium has implemented any best practices; and provide recommendations on opportunities for improvement in each of the specific areas of operation. The evaluation of each area was then utilized to determine an overall rating for the Consortium that will be used by the Ministry to determine any in-year funding adjustments that may be provided.

## Effectiveness and Efficiency Review Summary

Sudbury is a Consortium providing transportation for approximately 23,200 students utilizing 436 bus routes travelling over 46,000 kilometres daily across a geographic area covering approximately 15,800 square kilometres.

The Consortium was formed by four Partner Boards: Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario ("CSCNO"), Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario ("CSPGNO"), Rainbow District School Board ("Rainbow"), and Sudbury Catholic District School Board ("SCDSB"). Sudbury Student Services Consortium also sells transportation services to Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board ("Huron") and area First Nations.

Sudbury has been operating as a Consortium since 2001, and is a partnership recognized as a legal entity that exhibits a high degree of autonomy from the Partner

Boards. Since formation in 2001, Sudbury has continued to quickly and functionally organize resources to effectively and efficiently deliver student transportation services. Sudbury has accomplished many of the key steps necessary in order to fulfil its mandate as a student transportation Consortium. Notable achievements include:

- The Consortium was formed as a Partnership by the four Partner Boards to ensure equal representation from each Board. The Governance Policies Agreement stipulates the policy on the selection of Board members, voting mechanism and roles and responsibilities. The clear delineation between the governance body and the Consortium management reflects best practices in organizational design.

- The consortium monitors Key Performance Indicators (KPI) including specific monitoring of statistics on service delivery to demonstrate that equitable service is provided to the Partner Boards. This is important because it demonstrates that through consortium development and associated planning strategies, service levels are monitored to remain consistent and the Consortium thus has controls in place to not put any member Board at a disadvantage due to distance or size.

- As early as 2002, a competitive procurement process (RFP) was designed and implemented to select regular, special needs, taxi and summer school transportation Operators. Contracts are awarded to Operators based on a competitive Request for Proposals (“RFP”) procurement process. This is considered a notable achievement as it is a fundamental step in ensuring that bus operator services are contracted at competitive market rates.

- Sudbury and its Partner Boards have developed, documented, and enforced a full array of harmonized policies and operational practices to ensure that transportation is delivered safely and equitably to all users. These policies and practices establish the level of transportation services that will be provided, and the basis on which the Consortium’s management supports and communicates its daily operational and long term planning decisions.

- The Consortium has fully implemented an array of technological tools that result in a high level of routing efficiency and effectiveness, and provide for an exceptional level of information availability to all users of the transportation system and those responsible for its administration and management. These are complimented by a range of performance statistics that are calculated and shared with the Partner Boards on a regular basis, providing for a high degree of transparency and trust in the operation of the consortium.

Based on the findings from the E&E review, the primary opportunity for improvements relate to:

- ***Examine the establishment of a separate legal entity through incorporation*** – Partnerships have several inherent risks which make them less than optimal entity structures for coordinating student transportation for School Boards. Through incorporation, a Consortium is recognized as a legal entity separate from the school boards as owners. The primary benefit of incorporation is an effective safeguard against a third party establishing any liability on the part of a member School Board. Incorporation has secondary qualitative benefits which include enhancements to the credibility of the Consortium by requiring additional public accountability. There are more formal reporting requirements and well established incorporation by-laws that govern organizational behaviors and decision making. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of governance provides a robust accountability framework for all key parties involved including school boards, the consortium, and Operators or other service providers under contracts. In addition, incorporation provides assurance of continuous existence and gives the consortium greater stability in the long run.

- ***Documentation of Policies and Practices*** – Significant effort has been devoted to the development of policies and procedures. While the majority of policies and operational practices are well documented, a review of existing documentation should be conducted. The purpose of this review should be to develop a consolidated, organized policy and procedure manual that includes all policies and established practices. The goal should be to eliminate gaps in the documentation, such as the policy regarding walk distances to a stop, and to present the information in a streamlined manual that provides for easy reference and monitoring.

**Funding Adjustment**

As a result of this review of current performance, Sudbury has been rated as a **Moderate-High** Consortium. Based on this evaluation, the Ministry will provide additional transportation funding that will narrow the 2007-08 transportation funding gap for Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario while the transportation allocation for Rainbow District School Board, Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario, Sudbury Catholic District School Board, and Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board will remain unchanged in the 2007-2008 school year.

The funding adjustments to be received are detailed below[1]:

| | |
|---|---|
| Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario | $175,815 |
| Rainbow District School Board | Nil |
| Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario | Nil |
| Sudbury Catholic District School Board | Nil |
| Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board | Nil |

[1] Refer to Section 7 for the calculation of funding adjustments.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

### 1.1.1 Funding for Student Transportation in Ontario

The Ministry provides funding to Ontario's 72 school boards for student transportation. Under Section 190 of the *Education Act* (Act), school boards "may" provide transportation for pupils. If a school board decides to provide transportation for pupils, the Ministry will provide funding to enable the school boards to deliver the service. Although the Act does not require school boards to provide transportation service, all school boards in Ontario provide service to eligible elementary students and most provide service to eligible secondary students. It is a school board's responsibility to develop and maintain its own transportation policies, including safety provisions.

In 1998-1999, a new education funding model was introduced in the Province of Ontario outlining a comprehensive approach to funding school boards. From 1998-1999 to 2007-2008, an increase of over $195 million in funding has been provided to address increasing costs for student transportation, such as fuel price increases, despite the fact that there has been a general decline in student enrolment in recent years.

### 1.1.2 Transportation Reform

In 2006-07, the government began implementing reforms for student transportation. The objectives of the reforms are to build capacity to deliver safe, effective and efficient student transportation services, achieve an equitable approach to funding and reduce the administrative burden of delivering transportation, thus allowing school boards to focus on student learning and achievement.

The reforms include a requirement for Consortium delivery of student transportation services, effectiveness and efficiency reviews of transportation Consortium, and a study of the benchmark cost for a school bus incorporating standards for safe vehicles and trained drivers.

### 1.1.3 The Formation of School Transportation Consortium

Ontario's 72 school boards operate within four independent systems:

- English public;
- English separate;

- French public; and
- French separate.

As a result, a geographic area of the province can have as many as four coterminous school boards (i.e. boards that have overlapping geographic areas) operating schools and their respective transportation systems. Opportunities exist for coterminous school boards to form Consortium and therefore deliver transportation for two or more coterminous school boards in a given region. The Ministry believes in the benefits of Consortium as a viable business model to realize efficiencies. This belief has been endorsed by the Education Improvement Commission in 2000 and proven by some established Consortium sites in the province. Currently, the majority of school boards cooperate to some degree in delivering transportation services. Cooperation between boards occurs in various ways, including:

- One school board purchasing transportation service from another in all or part of its jurisdiction;
- Two or more coterminous school boards sharing transportation services on some or all of their routes; and
- Creation of a Consortium to plan and deliver transportation service to students of all partner school boards.

Approximately 99% of student transportation service in Ontario is provided through contracts between school boards or transportation Consortium and private transportation Operators. The remaining 1% of service is provided using board-owned vehicles used to complement services acquired through contracted private Operators.

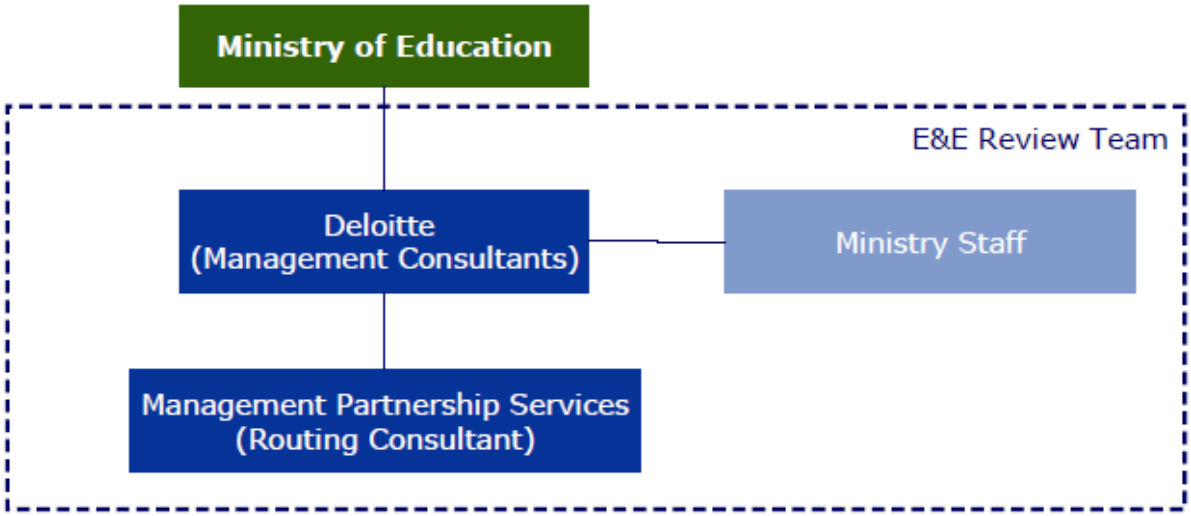
### 1.1.4 Effectiveness and Efficiency Review

According to the Ministry Consortium guidelines, once a Consortium has met the requirements outlined in memorandum SB:13, dated July 11, 2006, it will be eligible for an E&E review. This review will be conducted by the E&E Review Team who will assist the Ministry in evaluating Consortium management, policies and practices, routing and technology, and contracts. These reviews will identify best practices and opportunities for improvement, and provide valuable information that can be used to inform future funding decisions. The Ministry has established a multi-phase approach to review the performance of Consortium (collectively the “E&E Reviews”) across the province. Phase 1 of the E&E Reviews was completed in March 2007 and included reviews of 4 Consortium sites. As a result, a total of $7.6M in additional funding was provided to the reviewed boards.

### 1.1.5 The E&E Review Team

To ensure that these reviews are conducted in an objective manner, the Ministry has formed a review team (the "E&E Review Team" as defined in Figure 1) to perform the E&E Reviews. The E&E Review Team was designed to leverage the expertise of industry professionals and consulting firms to evaluate specific aspects of each Consortium site. Management consultants were engaged to complete assessments on Consortium management, and contracts. Routing consultants were engaged to focus specifically on the acquisition, implementation, and use of routing software and related technologies and on policies and practices.

**Figure 1: E&E Review Team**




## 1.2 Scope of Deloitte Engagement

Deloitte was engaged to lead the Team and serve as the Management Consultants of the E&E Review Team. Deloitte's overall role is as follows:

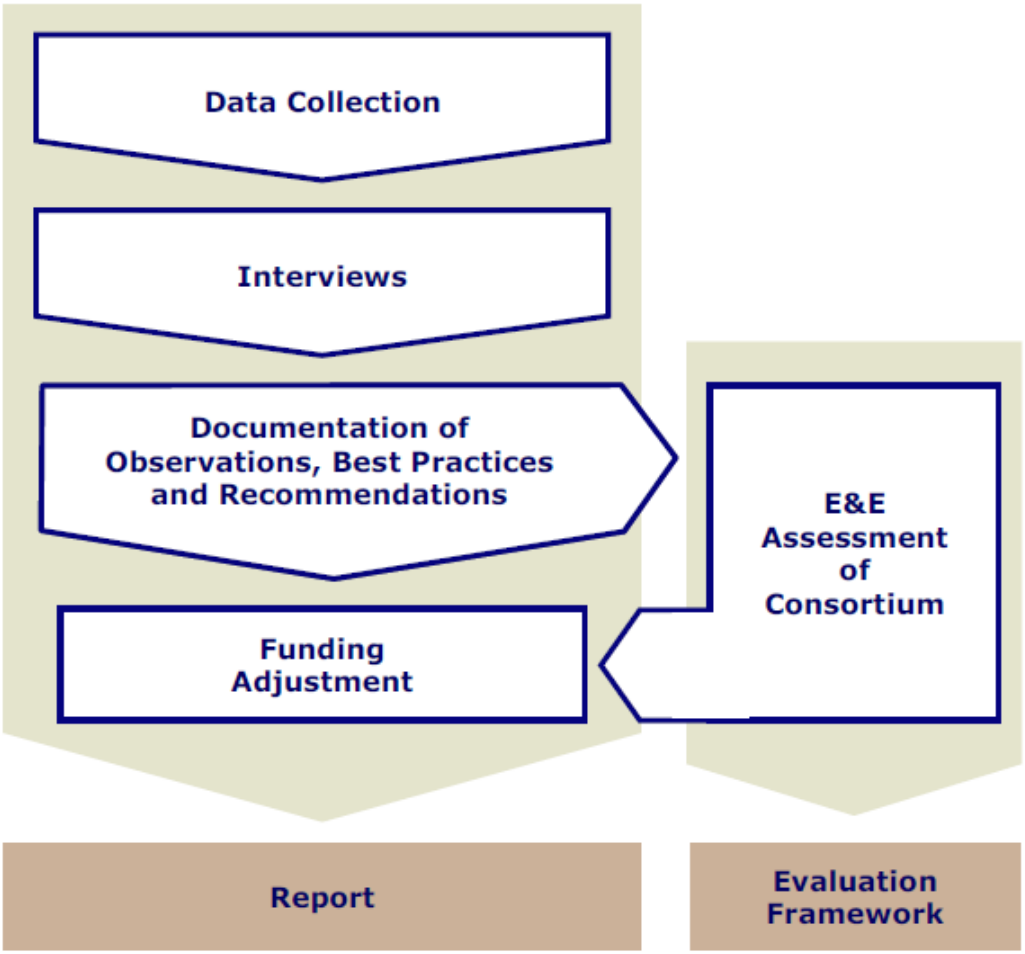
- Lead the E&E Review for each of the first five (5) transportation Consortium to be reviewed in Phase Two (refer to Section 1.1.4);
- At the beginning of each E&E Review, convene and moderate planning meetings to determine data required and availability prior to the review;
- Lead the execution of each E&E Review. The Ministry facilitated the process by providing the Consortium with information required in advance so that preparation and collection of information would be done prior to the on-site review;

- Review Consortium arrangement and governance structures, and contracting procedures;
- Incorporate the results of the routing and technology review in addition to the policies and practices review to be completed by MPS; and
- Prepare a report for each Consortium which has undergone an E&E Review in Phase Two. The target audience for the report will be the Ministry, the Consortium and its Partner Boards. Once finalized, each report will be released to the Consortium and its Partner Boards.

## 1.3 Methodology Used to Complete E&E Review

The methodology for the E&E Review is based on a 5 step approach, as summarized in the following sections.

**Figure 2: E&E Review Methodology**



A site review Report which documents the observations, assessments and recommendations is produced at the end of a site review. The Evaluation Framework, which provides the details on how the Assessment Guide was applied to reach an Overall Rating of each review site, has been developed to provide consistency.

### 1.3.1 Step 1 – Data Collection

Each Consortium under review was provided with the E&E Guide from the Ministry of Education. This guide provides details on the information and data needs that the E&E review team would require, and the E&E Guide will become the basis for the data collection.

Data is collected in four main areas:

1. Consortium Management;
2. Policies and Practices;
3. Routing and Technology; and
4. Contracts.

### 1.3.2 Step 2 – Interviews

The E&E Review Team identified key Consortium staff, outside stakeholders and key policy makers with whom interviews would be conducted to further understand the operations and key issues impacting delivery of effective and efficient student transportation services.

### 1.3.3 Step 3 – Documentation of Observations, Best Practices and Recommendations

Based on data collected and interviews conducted, the E&E Review Team documented their findings under three key areas:

- Observations which involved fact based findings of the review, including current practices and policies;
- Best Practices used by the Consortium under each area; and
- Recommendations for improvements based on the Assessment Guide. The key criteria used in the Assessment Guide to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of each Consortium are given below.

## Effectiveness

### *Consortium Management*

- Distinct entity focused on providing student transportation services for the partner boards
- Well defined governance and organizational structure with clear roles and responsibilities
- Oversight body exists with the mandate to provide strategic directions to the consortium management on the provision of safe, effective and efficient transportation service to support student learning
- Management has communicated clear goals and objectives of the Consortium and these are reflected in the operational plan
- Well established accountability framework reflected in the set up and operation of the consortium including documentation of terms in a Consortium Agreement
- documentation of terms in a Consortium Agreement
- Operations are monitored for its performance and continuous improvement
- Financial processes ensure accountability and equality to Partner Boards
- A budgeting process is in place which ensures timely preparation and monitoring of expenses
- Key business relationships are defined in contracts

### *Policies and Practices*

- Development of policies is based on well-defined parameters as set by strategic and operational plans to provide safe, effective and efficient transportation service to students of the school boards; and
    - Policy decisions are made with due considerations to financial and service impacts to partner boards
    - Communication between the consortium and partner boards facilitates informed decision making on issues directly affecting student transportation
    - Consortium’s policies and practices are adequate and in

- compliance with all relevant safety regulation and standards
- Practices on the ground follow policies

***Routing and Technology***

- Advanced use of transportation management software to store student data, and create a routing solution.
- Disaster recovery plans and back up procedures are in place and operating properly
- Responsibility and accountability for student data management is clearly identified
- Routing is reviewed regularly
- Reporting tools are used effectively
- Special needs routing is integrated with regular needs where reasonable

***Contracts***

- Competitive contracting practice is used
- Contract negotiations are transparent, fair, and timely
- Contracts are structured to ensure accountability and transparency between contracted parties
- Contracts exist for all service providers
- Ongoing compliance checks for safety, legal and service requirements are performed by the consortium

**Efficiency**

***Consortium Management***

- Oversight committee focuses only on high level decisions
- Organizational structure is efficient in utilization of staff
- Streamlined financial and business processes

- Cost sharing mechanism are well defined and implemented

***Policies and Practices***

- Harmonized transportation policies between partner boards enable efficient planning
- Proper level of authority delegated to consortium to enable the realization of potential efficiencies e.g. bell times setting
- Best practices in planning are adopted e.g. utilize tiered runs and combination runs to maximize the use of available capacity
- Public transit usage is optimized where available and efficient
- Service levels are reasonable and comparable to common practices

***Routing and Technology***

- System can be restored quickly if database fails
- Student data is accurate, requires little post processing verification
- System functionalities are used to identify efficiencies

***Contracts***

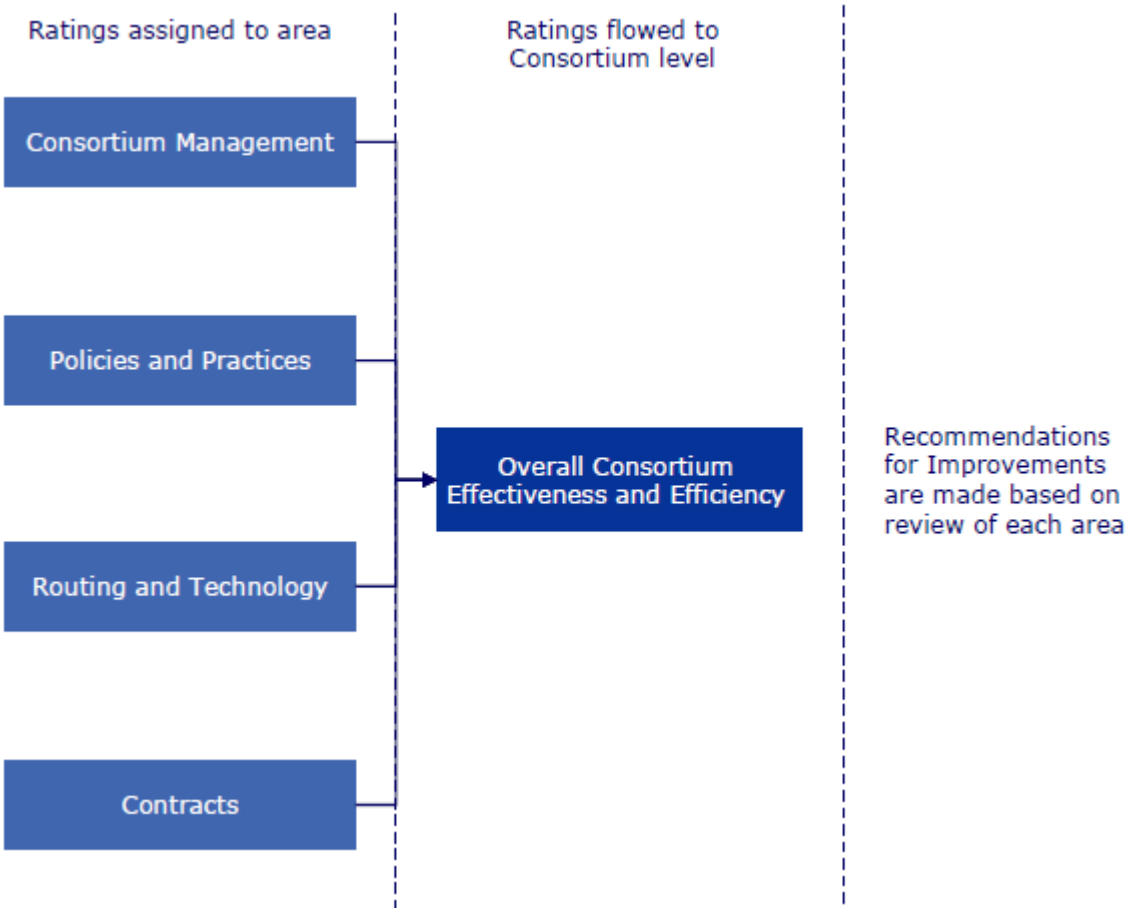
- Contracts awarded are based on market prices and best value for money
- Fair payment terms are included in contracts and implemented with clarity to both parties

The observations, best practices, and recommendations in the report were vetted through a peer reviewer, who was not on-site during the review, to ensure consistency in terms of providing valuable sector perspective in the process.

## 1.4 Step 4 and 5 – E&E Assessment of Consortium and Site Report

The Assessment Guide was developed to enable the E&E Review Team to provide each Consortium that undergoes an E&E Review with a consistent, fair and transparent method of assessment. The Assessment Guide is broken down between the four main components of review (i.e. Consortium Management, Policies and Practices, Routing and Technology, and Contracts) and, for each, illustrates what would constitute a specific level of E&E (refer to Figure 3 for diagram of process).

**Figure 3: Assessment of Consortium – Diagram Flow**




The Evaluation Framework provides details on how the Assessment Guide was applied, including the use of the Evaluation Work Sheets, to arrive at the final Overall Rating. The E&E Review Team then compiled all findings and recommendations into an E&E Review Report (i.e. this document).

### 1.4.1 Funding Adjustment

The Ministry will use the results of the E&E reviews to inform any future funding adjustments. Only Boards that have undergone E&E Reviews are eligible for a funding adjustment. Table 1 illustrates how the Overall Rating will affect a Board's transportation expenditure-allocation gap.

**Table 1: Funding Adjustment Formula**

| Overall Rating | Effect on deficit boards[2] | Effect on surplus boards[1] |
|---|---|---|
| High | Reduce the gap by 100% (i.e. eliminate the gap) | No in-year funding impact; out-year changes are to be determined |
| Moderate-High | Reduce the gap by 90% | Same as above |
| Moderate | Reduce the gap by 60% | Same as above |
| Moderate-Low | Reduce the gap by 30% | Same as above |
| Low | Reduce the gap in the range of 0% to 30% | Same as above |

### 1.4.2 Purpose of Report

This Report serves as the deliverable for the E&E Review conducted on Sudbury Student Services Consortium by the E&E Review Team during the week of November 12, 2007.

### 1.4.3 Material Relied Upon

Refer to Appendix 3 for a list of documents that the E&E review team relied upon for their review. These documents were used in conjunction with interviews with key Consortium staff, outside stakeholders, and key policy makers.

### 1.4.4 Limitations on Use of This Report

The purpose of this Report is to document the results of the E&E Review of Sudbury Student Services Consortium. The E&E Review is not of the nature or scope so as to constitute an audit made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Therefore, as part of this E&E Review, Deloitte has not expressed an opinion on any financial statements, elements or accounts to be referred to when reporting any findings to the Ministry. Additionally, procedures used by the E&E Review Team are not intended to disclose defalcations, system deficiencies or other irregularities.

[2] This refers to boards that have a deficit/surplus on student transportation (see Section 7 – Funding Adjustments)

# 2 Overview of Consortium

## 2.1 Introduction to Sudbury Student Services Consortium

Sudbury Student Services Consortium ("Sudbury" or the "Consortium") provides student transportation to approximately 23,200 students daily on 436 bus routes. The geographic area which Sudbury serves is approximately 15,800 square kilometres.

The mission of the Consortium is to "provide a single transportation system with emphasis on safety and efficiency".

The Consortium was formed by four Partner Boards: Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario ("CSCNO"), Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario ("CSPGNO"), Rainbow District School Board ("Rainbow"), and Sudbury Catholic District School Board ("SCDSB"). Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board ("Huron") is a purchaser of services from the Consortium.

Table 2 below provides a summary of key statistics of each Board:

**Table 2: 2005-06 Transportation Survey Data**

| Student Transported | CSCNO | CSPGNO | Rainbow | SCDSB | Huron |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of schools served | 25 | 15 | 49 | 25 | 2 |
| Total general transported students | 4,597 | 1,724 | 6,798 | 3,793 | 220 |
| Total special needs[3] transported students | 60 | 18 | 347 | 185 | 3 |
| Total riders requiring wheelchair accessible transportation | 18 | 1 | 27 | 13 | - |
| Total specialized program transportation[4] | - | - | 3,436 | 1,477 | - |
| Total courtesy riders[5] | 34 | 5 | 57 | 40 | 1 |

[3] Includes students requiring special transportation such as congregated and integrated special education students who require dedicated routes and/or vehicles; students who must ride alone; students who require an attendant on the vehicle.
[4] Includes students transported to French Immersion, magnet and gifted programs. Students with special needs who are transported to specialized programs are captured as special needs transported students.
[5] The Consortium does not use this category to provide statistics for students transported who do not qualify under distance criteria. The Consortium uses this coding in three situations: (i) when a student whose pathway in the winter is not maintained and therefore would require transportation because of

| Student Transported | CSCNO | CSPGNO | Rainbow | SCDSB | Huron |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total hazard riders | 56 | 30 | 285 | 22 | - |
| Total students transported daily | 4,765 | 1,778 | 10,950 | 5,530 | 224 |
| Total contracted full- and mid-sized buses[6] | 69 | 27 | 176 | 74 | 4 |
| Total contracted mini-buses | 6 | 4 | 32 | 6 | 1 |
| Total contracted school purpose vehicles[7] | 1 | 1 | 6 | 1 | - |
| Total contracted physically disabled passenger vehicles (PDPV) | 6 | 0 | 7 | 5 | - |
| Total contracted taxis | 12 | 6 | 20 | 4 | - |
| Total number of contracted vehicles | 94 | 39 | 242 | 90 | 5 |

**Table 3: 2006-07 Financial Data[8][8]**

| Item | CSCNO | CSPGNO | Rainbow | SCDSB | Huron |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2006/2007 Transportation Allocation | 5,741,839 | 1,467,536 | 10,776,096 | 5,264,785 | 3,358,976 |
| 2006/2007 Transportation Expenditure | 4,948,919 | 1,692,421 | 10,764,632 | 4,296,204 | 3,187,201 |
| 2006/2007 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | 792,920 | (224,885) | 11,464 | 968,581 | 171,775 |
| Percentage of transportation expenditure attributed to Sudbury | 80.56% | 86.67% | 100% | 100% | 5.88% |

winter hazard; (ii) when there superintendent approval for academic purposes which would therefore make the student temporarily eligible for transportation; or (iii) students who are grandfathered due to boundary changes.

[6] Includes full-sized buses, mid-sized buses, full-sized buses adapted for wheelchair use and mid-sized buses adapted for wheelchair use; all vehicle counts are rounded to the nearest whole number

[7] Includes school-purpose vans, mini-vans and sedans

[8] Based on Ministry Data – see Appendix 2.

| Item | CSCNO | CSPGNO | Rainbow | SCDSB | Huron |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student Services Consortium | | | | | |

The establishment of the Consortium is the result of a long history of cooperation and collaboration between the CSCNO, CSPGNO, Rainbow and SCDSB. The Consortium was originally established in January 2001 to provide services to the catchment area of the Greater Sudbury District, Espanola and Manitoulin Island area. Sudbury is a partnership of four school boards operating as a legal entity that operates with a high degree of autonomy from the member boards. By resolution in June 2002, the Board of Directors ("BOD") passed a motion to provide business and ancillary services to the Strict Discipline Program ("SDP"). However, the main business of the Consortium remained as the provision of student transportation services to the Partner Boards and Service Purchasing Boards.

Huron and the area First Nations purchase student transportation services from the Consortium through service purchasing contracts that are automatically renewed each year unless notification is sent by either party, four months in advance of the automatic renewal. Representatives from Huron Board or area First Nations schools do not participate in the Consortium Board meetings or in the management or oversight of daily operations.

The Consortium also provides student from CSCNO and CSPGNO with safety training[9], pamphlets, the Buster the Bus Program, SOAR (Safety, Order and individual Rights presentation) and Survivor Safety Programs through a third party service provider. Fees are charged to each Board based on the real cost or the amount of time the Consortium staff spend on the projects.

Sudbury has been one of the first movers in terms of establishing appropriate management autonomous from its four boards, policies and practices, routing and contracting procedures in order to operate an effective and efficient student transportation Consortium. Over the years, this Consortium has reduced administrative burden and increased appropriate oversight in all areas of the business. Additionally, they have implemented a highly effective contracting practice including the utilization of competitive procurement in an area that has both urban and rural geography. Sudbury has provided significant support to other consortia in the province through the provision

[9] Additional safety training is for CSCNO and CSPGNO students who are outside of the Consortium's jurisdiction in the areas where these two boards buy transportation services from Huron Superior CDSB, Algoma DSB and Superior Greenstone DSB.

of copies their policies and practices, contract templates, and other documents which support an effective and efficient consortium.

# 3 Consortium Management

## 3.1 Introduction

Consortium Management encompasses the management of the entire organization providing student transportation services. The analysis stems from a review of the four key components of Consortium Management:

- Governance;
- Organizational Structure;
- Consortium Management; and
- Financial Management.

Each component has been analysed based on information provided by the Sudbury Consortium, and from information collected during interviews. The analysis is comprised of an assessment of best practices leading to a set of recommendations. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component, which is then summarized to determine an E&E assessment of Consortium Management as shown below:

**Consortium Management – E&E Rating: Moderate-High**

## 3.2 Governance

Governance refers to the way in which an organization is directed and controlled. Establishing administrative structures and processes which facilitate and monitor effective business management are primary responsibilities of a governance structure. Three key principles for an effective governance structure are: accountability; transparency; and the recognition of stakeholders. In order to respect these three principles, it is important that the governance body be independent of the management of day-to-day operations.

### 3.2.1 Observations

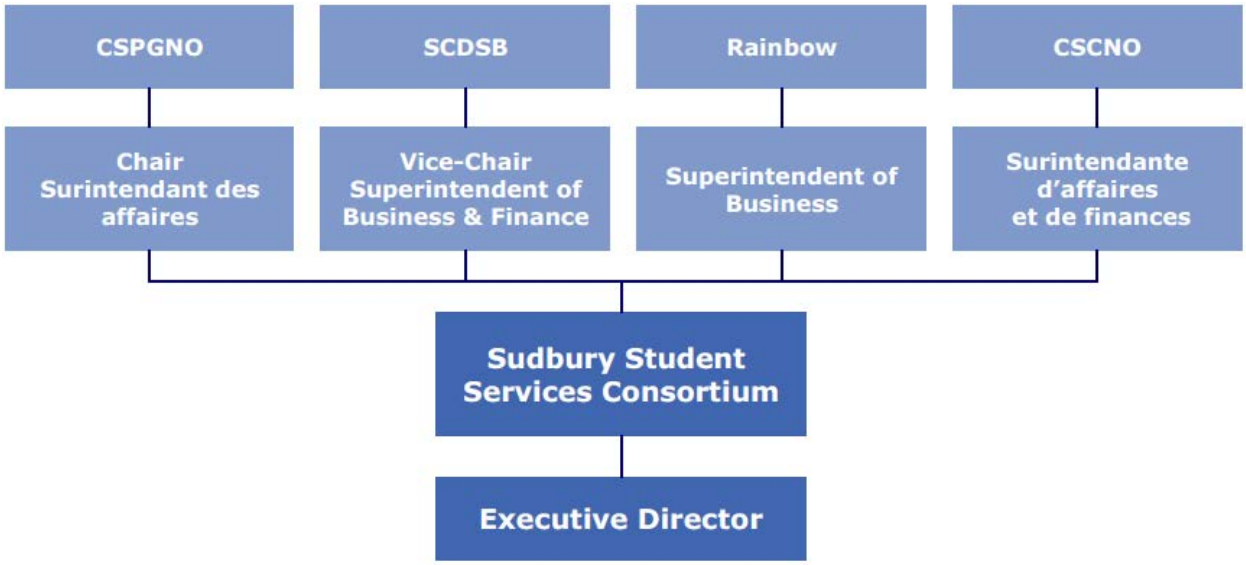
*Governance Structure*

Governance structures, which comprise of governance committees and other substructures, exist to provide oversight and set direction for the daily operation of a business. It will be deemed effective if appropriate documentation exists around the roles and responsibilities of its members allowing the structure to be maintained

indefinitely and it will be deemed efficient if the level of responsibility is such that the oversight role is not interfering with the daily operation of the business.

Each of the four Partner Boards elects one representative, usually the Chief Financial Officer of the School Board, to serve on the Board of Directors ("BOD") of the Consortium. Each Director has one voting right. Directors use voting rights to approve policies/regulations, strategic decision, financial budgeting, hiring and capital procurement. The BOD also deals with disputes that cannot be resolved at the Consortium's management level. The chair of the Board is selected by the BOD, and serves a two year term. The BOD meets monthly with the Executive Director of the Consortium. The BOD is an important communication conduit back to the Partner Boards and as such the members of the BOD are responsible for relaying information on the activities of the Consortium back to the Partner Boards. Refer to Figure 4 for the governance organization chart

**Figure 4: Governance Organizational Chart**




The Executive Director has been delegated full authority to run the day to day operations of the Consortium. The BOD is not involved in decision making of daily issues. While the Executive Director seeks their input on issues which are identified as relevant, the scope of the BOD's activities is largely focussed on long term strategy and policy setting. This provides an effective delineation of responsibility and decision making between the Board and the Consortium.

*Board Level Dispute Policy*

A Board level dispute policy is integrated within the Consortium Agreement to resolve disagreements between Partner Boards. In the event of a disagreement among Boards or when two of the boards request it, the issue will be referred to Arbitration. With approval from the majority of the BOD, the Executive Director can select a single Arbitrator. In the event of a failure to reach an agreement, an Arbitration Board will be selected. The Arbitration Board shall be composed of five Arbitrators, one of whom shall be chosen by each Board. The fifth member of the arbitration Board is selected by the other four arbitration Board members and this person shall act as the chair of the Arbitration Board. The Chairperson has a single voting right. The decision of the sole Arbitrator (or of the five-person Arbitration Board) shall be final and binding upon all the Boards.

*BOD/Trustee Orientation & Communication*

The Consortium routinely invites trustees, BOD, school principals and other stakeholders to tour the Consortium's facilities. The purpose of the tour is to familiarize decision makers with the intricacies associated with the provision of student transportation, including the considerations and processes involved with route changes and route optimization. The Executive Director also gives introductory Consortium presentations yearly to new Principals and Vice-Principals. Yearly refresher courses on the Consortium web products, policies and data issues are provided by the Assistant Manager to all school secretaries.

In addition, the Consortium holds orientation sessions for new BOD members or Trustees to review its Safety Programs, Web Site and school web products, general transportation issues, financial data, projects etc with the BOD/Trustee.

### 3.2.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The Board of Directors that oversee the Consortium has equal representation from each Partner Board which promotes fairness and equal participation in decision making and ensures the rights of the stakeholders are considered equally. There is a clear delineation (demonstrated both in formally documented terms and as observed operationally) between the roles executed by those in a governance capacity versus those considered management of the Consortium. This is a key element in effective governance and management;

- The chair of the Board is elected for a two year term by the BOD, which allows for the continuity of the Board. It also ensures that all Board members' interests and benefits are well represented when making policy and strategic decisions for the Consortium;

- A Board level dispute policy is in place as an addendum to the Consortium Agreement to resolve disputes between Boards. The policy is an effective mechanism that protects the equal rights of all Partner Boards, and ensures that their voices are heard. It also ensures that the decisions made at the Board meetings are not in favour of any particular Board(s), but instead, represent the best interests of the organization as a whole reflecting the organization's goals and objectives; and

- The orientation session held for Trustees and the BOD helps them understand the business operation of the Consortium, allowing them to develop reasonable expectations of the services the Consortium provides. It is the starting point for building a healthy and co-operative relationship between the Consortium and its major stakeholders.

## 3.3 Organizational Structure

An organizational structure can have the power to provide for effective communication and coordination which will enable operations to run efficiently. The roles and responsibilities within the organization should be well defined. This will lead to operational efficiencies by ensuring tasks are not being duplicated and issues raised can be addressed effectively by managing up the chain of command. Ideally, the organization is divided functionally (by department and/or area) and all core business functions are identified.

### 3.3.1 Observations

*Entity Status*

The Consortium is a partnership that operates with a high degree of autonomy with its own management and governance structure. It was agreed by all Partner Boards that the Consortium be formed as a Partnership so that all Boards have equal rights regardless of the size of their respective student population. This is important as it ensures fairness in decision making and ensures that the rights of the stakeholders are considered equally.

The Consortium signs its own contracts with the Operators as a legal entity that has a high degree of autonomy from the member school boards. SCDSB pays the Operators

on behalf of the Consortium and receives advances from each Board on a monthly basis acting as a clearing house for these transactions. The amount and method of payment is determined and authorized by the consortium. The Consortium has its own Revenue Canada business number and OMERS ("Ontario Municipal Employee Retirement Savings") number.

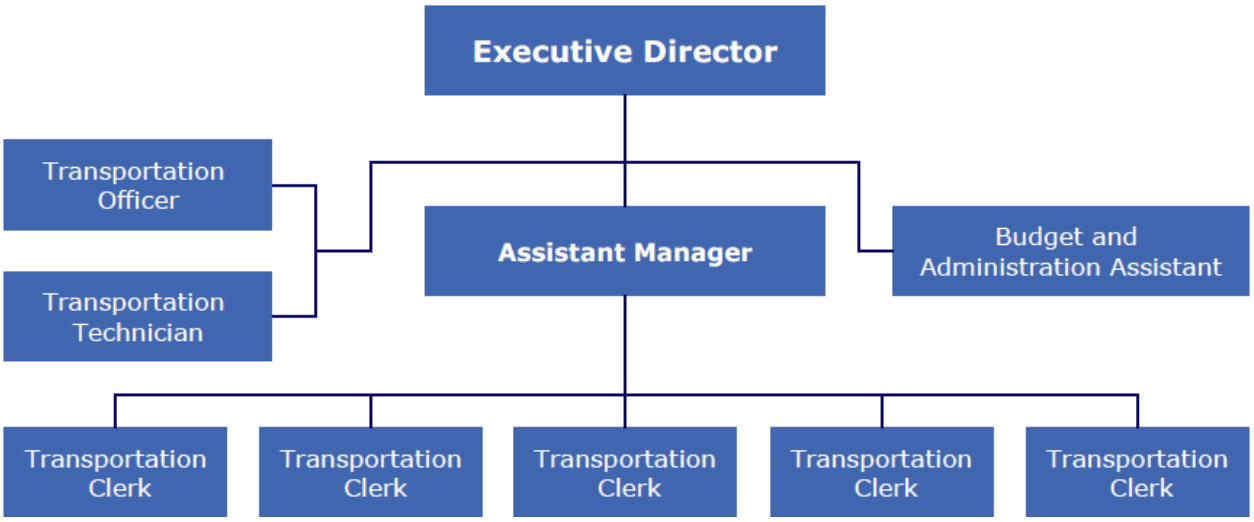
The Consortium's office, located in Sudbury, is a self-contained office which is physically independent from its Partner Boards. The Consortium's office is located in a facility leased from a third party.

*Organization of Entity*

Sudbury's organizational structure reflects clear reporting relationships within the organization. The structure is managed by the Executive Director. The Executive Director has been delegated full authority by the BOD to run the day to day operations of the Consortium. The Assistant Manager, the Transportation Officer, the Transportation Technician and the Budget and Administration Assistant report directly to the CEO. All Transportation Clerks report directly to the Assistant Manager. Job descriptions clearly establish the areas of responsibility for all staff members and delineate responsibility for management and oversight of specific functional activities performed including routing, systems management, IT maintenance and support, contract oversight and management. Defining roles within the organization is important in ensuring that staff understand the knowledge, skills and abilities required of their position; the purpose of their position within the organization; the scope of their authority and responsibility; and the chain of command that must be followed.

The organizational chart shown in Figure 5 shows the structure of the organization.

**Figure 5: Sudbury Organizational Chart**



### 3.3.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The Consortium is a legal entity that is physically located in a different building from the Partner Boards and is highly autonomous in its operations. Independence of this type from the Partner Boards is an effective way of ensuring that the structure and mandate of the Consortium remain consistent despite the potential changes at Partner Board levels (i.e. changes in trustees, Board members, etc.); and

- Job descriptions are clearly defined for all positions within the Consortium ensuring that staff can efficiently execute on their daily duties.

### 3.3.3 Recommendations

*Establishment of a Separate Legal Entity*

Generally speaking, all partners of a partnership are jointly liable for all debts and liabilities of that partnership. Similarly, any one partner can bind all other partners to matters involving the partnership. As a result, partnerships have several inherent risks which make them less than optimal entity structures for coordinating student transportation:

- The risk that the actions of one Partner Board may be leaving the other Partner Boards open to liability;

- The risk that Partner Boards can be involved in litigation for issues involving students that are not part of their school board; and

- The risk that liability, brought about through the partnership, may exceed the existing insurable limits. The consortium should investigate with the assistance of their insurance carrier their coverage related to, but not limited to, punitive damages, human rights complaints, and wrongful dismissal lawsuits.

Based on these risks the Partner Boards should explore the establishment of the Consortium as a Separate Legal Entity through incorporation to further formalize its entity status. The creation of a Separate Legal Entity effectively limits risk to the Partner Boards for activities related to the provision of student transportation. Thus, when an incorporated entity takes responsibility for student transportation services, this incorporated entity status is an effective safeguard against any third party establishing liability on the part of a member School Boards. Over the long term, changing political

environments and potential disputes amongst the Partner Boards could cause the current structure to destabilize. The formalization of the Consortium as an incorporated entity would provide benefits from an organizational perspective in terms of corporate continuity, staff planning, liability, contracting and management.

## 3.4 Consortium Management

Consortium Management focuses on the operational aspects of the organization. This includes ensuring accountability of staff, focusing on continual improvement through operational planning and monitoring as well as ensuring risks are managed by having appropriate contracts and agreements in place to clearly define business relationships.

### 3.4.1 Observations

*Consortium Agreement*

The Consortium was formed as a partnership in 2001 under a Consortium Agreement. The Consortium Agreement covers all the major terms expected in the agreement notably the withdrawal policies, documentation of the voting mechanism and roles and responsibilities of the Partner Boards. The original agreement was updated in January 2007 to incorporate amendments to the Agreement as the Partner Boards and the Executive Director saw fit.

*Insurance*

Generally in a partnership, the partners retain liability for the actions of the partnership as if those actions had been conducted by the partners themselves. Sudbury has attempted to mitigate this risk through terms of the Consortium agreement which define and proportionately share any such liability.

In addition, the Consortium carries insurance to provide protection against potential liabilities arising from the services they provide to the Partner Boards and the service purchasing entities. The purpose of the insurance is to limit the liabilities that the Partner Boards may face in unforeseen situations. It also has insurance in place to cover the transfer sites from liabilities associated with having a large number of students on private property for the purposes of transferring between buses. This demonstrates the Consortium’s thoroughness to ensure that they are adequately covered in the case of an incident.

*Staff Performance Evaluation, Training, and Management*

Consortium staff are evaluated every two years by their direct supervisor. Mandatory Consortium internal staff training (new-hire orientation) and job related technical training

is provided to staff on a regular basis. The Consortium documents mandatory training at all levels in the organization. The training provides staff members with knowledge and skills to perform well in their positions. The result of annual employee evaluations also flags future training needs.

*Monitoring of Consortium Operations*

The Consortium documents short and long term goals through a log book. The goals and objectives log is a live document that is updated by all staff members to show their work-in-progress and it also serves as a resource allocation map. In the Consortium goal and objective log, each goal has a plan of action, expected outcome, resources available, timeline, responsibilities and current status. The log is a basis for strategic planning at the management level and a communication tool to the BOD. The goals and objectives log is reviewed by the Assistant Manager monthly. The Executive Director reviews the log every three months. This process is reported to the BOD through the Executive Director's Quarterly Activity Report. This is an effective tool for the Consortium to monitor its progress and allow for reporting back to its key stakeholders.

In addition to documenting the goals and objectives, the Consortium monitors its service level to the Partner Boards through key performance indicators (KPI's). The KPI's monitored include:

- Statistics on service delivery to demonstrate that equitable service is provided to the Partner Boards;
- Monitoring of Driver punctuality in terms of adhering to bus schedule; and
- Monitoring of Driver/Operator performance in terms of tracking parent/school complaints.

These KPI's are reviewed each year and provides the Consortium with a means of monitoring its service to the Partner Boards and Operator performance. This is discussed further in the contracting section.

*Support Services*

The Consortium purchases support services from the Partner Boards under separate contracts. For example, Account Receivable/Account Payable services are purchased from SCDSB; payroll services are purchased from CSCNO; IT services are purchased from Rainbow; and negotiation and HR services are purchased from CSPGNO. All purchasing contracts are under one year terms, and the Consortium pays the school boards once every year for these services. The contracts include appropriate clauses and contain detail on the schedule of fee payment. Being able to purchase supporting

services from Partner Boards allows the Consortium to concentrate its resources on managing relationships with the bus Operators and providing better transportation services to the students.

*Eligibility Appeal Process*

The Consortium does not accept courtesy riders (for students who do not qualify under the Board distance criteria) due to fairness, safety and route planning considerations. In the case of a courtesy rider dispute, the appeal goes to the Executive Director, and later escalates to the BOD. In the Routing and Technology statistics section (table 2) the courtesy rider count presented is used by the Consortium when a student whose pathway in the winter is not maintained and therefore would require transportation because of winter hazards, or when there is superintendent approval for academic purposes which would therefore make the student temporarily eligible for transportation, or students who are grandfathered due to boundary changes. See section 4.2.1 for discussion of courtesy riders in terms of Policies and Practices.

*Confidentiality Agreements*

Confidentiality Agreements are signed by Consortium staff, Operators' staff and drivers to protect the private information of students. The terms of the agreements specify that any information related to students including, but not limited to, names, addresses, phone numbers, cannot be used for any purpose other than those directly related to the transportation of students. The specific use of this information shall be used for route planning and student health and safety in an emergency situation. Those with access to student information acknowledge that personal information will only be used for the above purposes and will otherwise comply with applicable privacy legislation. The agreements note that upon contractual agreements ending with the Consortia, personal information must be returned or destroyed as soon as reasonably possible. This is an effective means of keeping sensitive information secure. The IT department of Rainbow DSB who may have access to other Board data is also required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

*Cost Sharing*

Cost sharing with the member boards is based on the documents "Cost Sharing for Home to School Transportation" and "Cost Sharing Process for Administration". The direct transportation cost is shared based on a weighted per student kilometre basis. The weighted per student kilometre charge is a means of ensuring that both the grade

and weight of the student and the distance travelled is appropriately captured and reflected in their total charge[10].

The administrative expenses are first calculated based on the proportion of each Boards' or First Nations' Transportation Budget Expenses then adjusted to reflect the actual total of their Transportation Expenses.

### 3.4.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The Consortium ensures that their insurance provides appropriate coverage for all transfer sites including those which are not on School Board owned property.

- The cost sharing methodology employed by the consortium to allocate costs to the boards is based on a weighted per student kilometre basis. This practice is considered to be a more representative reflection of transportation cost for each Board compared to other methods such as weighted kilometres or simple student count.

- Staff performance evaluations are conducted on a regular basis with a clear, easily understood framework that is specific to the Consortia and its needs. The metrics which are used are supportive of the goals and objectives of the consortia. Likewise staff training is provided on a regular basis and is tracked internally; training goals are aligned with overall consortium strategy and objectives which is important to ensure alignment between efforts and goals.

- The Support Services Agreement that is in place between Partner Boards and the Consortium evidences the appropriate arm's length relationship in their contractual arrangements. The amount and the level of services expected to be received by the Consortium are clearly defined and protected by the Agreement. On the other hand, the Agreements ensure that the Partner Boards are properly compensated for the services they provide.

- Departmental Procedures and Administrative Policies are in place as guidelines for Consortium employees and their daily operations/communication with Operators and other stakeholders. Departmental Procedures and Administrative

[10] JK to grade 6 is counted as 1 student and grades 7 to 12 and special education are 1.5 student equivalents.

Policies help maintain the standard level of services the stakeholders can expect from the Consortium staff.

## 3.5 Financial Management

A sound financial management process ensures the integrity and accuracy of financial information. This includes the internal controls that exist within the accounting function and ensures that a robust budgeting process is in place which provides for accountability in decision making. This section reviews financial performance of the Consortium over the past three years to gain an understanding of any major variances year over year. The purpose of this review is to understand what decisions the Consortium has made which have either increased or decreased transportation expenditures.

Financial management policies capture roles and responsibilities, authorization levels, and reporting requirements. A planning calendar refers to key dates for compliance, monitoring policies, or specifics to ensure proper segregation of duties. The policies infer that a proper financial internal control system is in place for the Consortium.

### 3.5.1 Observations

*Accounting Practices*

The Budget and Administration Assistant analyzes and consolidates all expenses, and based on the cost sharing mechanism (per weighted student kilometres), codes the expenses with the appropriate account numbers, and splits costs between all school boards according to the agreed upon cost sharing basis. The expenses for each School Board are then forwarded to the Executive Director for approval.

The Consortium has “view only” rights to their financial GL data stored as a “separate company” set up within the financial system of the SCDSB from whom the Consortium sources accounting services including GL, financial reporting, account payable, and account receivable. Invoices from Operators and other costs incurred in the provision of student transportation are paid after the Executive Director approves and forwards to SCDSB on a weekly basis or as required for payment.

In essence, SCDSB pays the Operator on behalf of the Consortium and receives an advance from each Board on a monthly basis acting as a clearing house for these transactions. Any interest accumulated in the account is retained by the SCDSB in exchange for them bearing the account administrative costs and late fees and any costs resulting from timing differences between the cash flows from the Partner Boards and the invoices from the Operators. The cash flows from each Board are synchronized to

payments so that there is little to no interest which accumulates to SCDSB and this is monitored by the Consortia.

Reconciliations are prepared by the Consortium's Budget and Administration Assistant to verify the accuracy of the account receivable/account payable inputted by the SCDSB's Accounting Clerk against the RQS (Consortium's internal accounting system). Reconciling items are generally the result of timing differences rather than errors. An item by item verification check is performed when new expenses are updated or payments from Partner Boards have been received by the SCDSB. If discrepancies occur, the Consortium's Budget and Administration Assistant will issue any adjustments/journals and will forward to SCDSB for correction once approved by the Executive Director. The chart of accounts is split out by type of transportation and administrative expense, i.e., taxi, special needs, operating expenses etc.

Financial Statements of the Consortium were/are not audited separately by a third party independent auditor. The individual Partner Boards were/are audited and thus the transportation line item which represents the activities of the Consortium were/are indirectly subject to audit.

*Financial Management and Approvals*

The allocation of roles and responsibilities within the Consortium demonstrates very clear segregation of duties. Only the Executive Director and the Budget and Administrative Assistant within the Consortium are involved in the financial planning and recording process. These individuals are the only Consortium staff with the viewing rights to the GL system.

The Executive Director of the Consortium verifies, approves and signs all payables. The Chair of the BOD approves and signs the Executive Director's expenses.

Financial information is communicated to the BOD monthly through Expenditure Statements which are given to the BOD at regular Board meetings. Reconciliations between the Expenditure Statements and the annual budget are performed twice a year.

*Budget Planning and Monitoring*

Preliminary budget – The planning process begins each year in April. The preliminary budget is based on prior year data and historical patterns with projected increase for all transportation related and administrative expenses.

The Executive Director confirms bell time, school closure, new programs, boundary changes, and effects on routing. These inputs are projected in terms of their financial impacts, and in turn the Executive Director sets goals and objectives for capital

expenses (e.g. telephone system, software and hardware upgrades, office equipment etc.). Based on the Partner Boards funding allocation for the upcoming year and projected expenses, the advances for the upcoming year will be calculated. The Partner Boards must transfer the predetermined monthly cash advances which are reconciled by the Consortium twice per year. The BOD reviews and approves the preliminary budget in April.

Final Budget - In October, when year-end expenditures for the previous school year are closed, the Budget and Administration Assistant calculates the final contract adjustments, final fuel adjustment based on storm days and final services, reapportions final transportation and administrative costs, reconciles Boards and Consortium expenditures to the internal book keeping system and calculates final invoices or refund to Boards against advances. The Consortium is responsible for preparing the Final Budget reports to Partner Boards and all other Service Purchasing Boards and First Nations. The Executive Director presents the final budget to the BOD for approval.

Revised Budget – In November following the snapshot date (October 31st), a revised budget is calculated based on prior year's actual expenses with projected increase for all transportation and administrative expenses as well as accurate contract expenses. The Executive Director provides this budget to the BOD for approval.

Actual expenses are tracked monthly against budget by the Budget and Administration Assistant. Variance analysis is performed and internally reviewed on a monthly basis. The variance analysis is also provided by the Executive Director to the BOD on a quarterly basis for trend analysis and variance approval when necessary.

### 3.5.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- Appropriate controls over accounting practices at Sudbury ensure assets are safeguarded and only valid expenses are paid. The reconciliation conducted by the Consortium's Budget and Administration Assistant between the expenditures receipts and SCDSB inputs eliminates any mistakes that may occur during manual input;

- The documented controls related to the financial management system support the Consortium by providing accurate and reliable financial information. Reliable financial information supports the high degree of autonomy shown by the Consortium in terms of informed decision making and management of operations;

- Financial management policies are complete in that they fully capture the Consortium's guidelines for roles and responsibilities, authorization levels, and reporting requirements; and

- A sophisticated budgeting process is in place at Sudbury. The budget procedures are well documented for internal references. It ensures timely completion and appropriate approval of budgets. During the budgeting process, both historical data and current school year data are utilized. The proper use of data enhances the projection ability of the budget, allowing smaller variances between the budgets and real expenses. The precision of the budget limits the "surprises" for the Partner Boards' transportation expenses.

## 3.6 Results of E&E Review

Consortium management has been assessed as **Moderate-High** in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. The Consortium has not only demonstrated a strong desire to improve their services and meet the interests of all stakeholders, but in fact has executed by providing excellent services. The governance structure, the Consortium management strategy, the financial management policy and the budgeting process all reflect years of experiments and continuous improvements.

# 4 Policies and Practices

## 4.1 Introduction

Policies and practices include the development of guiding policies, operational procedures, and the daily practices that determine transportation standards of service. The analysis for this area focused on the following three key areas:

- General Transportation Policies & Practices;
- Special Needs and Specialized Programs; and
- Safety and Training Programs.

The basis for this analysis included interviews with Consortium staff and review of supplied documents. Best practices, as established by the E&E process, provided the source of comparison for each of these key areas resulting in the following observations, comments, and recommendations.

These results were used to develop an E&E assessment for each of the key components, and to determine the overall effectiveness of the Consortium's Policies and Practices as shown below:

**Policies and Practices – E&E Rating: Moderate-High**

## 4.2 Transportation Policies & Practices

The development of clear policies and enforceable practices are vital components of an effective and efficient transportation operation. Policies establish the parameters that define the *level of service* that ultimately will be provided by the Consortium. Equally important are well defined and documented procedures, operational practices, protocols, and the actual application by staff that determine *how* services are delivered. Policy harmonization between the Partner Boards and the equal application of practices helps to ensure that service is delivered safely and equitably to the Partner and Service Purchasing Boards. This section will evaluate the established policies and practices and their impact on the effective and efficient operation of the Consortium.

### 4.2.1 Observations

*General Policy Development*

The Consortium provides services across a large geographical area with the added complexity of serving multiple English and French speaking Partner and Service

Purchasing Boards. A full range of policies and regulations are required to fully address the many operational aspects that are necessary to serve the needs of students across a service area that includes both urban and rural attributes. Examples of these include general transportation eligibility criteria; allowable walking distances to a stop or school; stop placement criteria; allowable student ride times; courtesy transportation eligibility; appeal processes, identification of hazards and related transportation eligibility; the management of school bell times to improve service efficiency; the use of transfers and other specialty transportation to improve service efficiency; student behaviour management; and weather related events and closings.

Two subjects that require separate attention due to their large impact on operations are special needs transportation and safety programs and training. Special needs transportation requires specific policies, practices, and regulations to clearly determine the parameters under which the Consortium will operate. Furthermore, such policies ensure that the system will provide services within established guidelines and the delivery of effective service that meet the unique and individual needs of special needs students in the most cost efficient method possible. Specific safety policies and training programs, working in conjunction with the overall policy statements, helps to ensure that the ultimate goal of safe transportation is achieved for all students served by the Consortium.

*Policy Harmonization and Implementation*

The Consortium has established an extensive array of fully harmonized policies and practices to address the service needs of both regular and special education students within clearly defined safety parameters. Policy harmonization is consistent with the expectations of the E&E process and serves to ensure that consistent, safe, and equitable service is delivered to each of the boards across the entire service area. These polices are communicated by a variety of means including a posted FAQ on the Consortium's Web site and are applied equitably between the Partner and Service Purchasing Boards. Exit interviews with senior representatives of each of the boards and a Board of Education trustee all indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the services provided by the Consortium. The majority of Consortium staff are bilingual and all documents are available in both French and English. The Consortium's web site also features a full version for both languages.

Transportation eligibility is clearly established in policy and dictates that transportation *will* be provided for students who live beyond an established walk distance from their school of attendance. This is a definitive statement that limits the Consortium's flexibility to accommodate unique circumstances. Walking distance to a student's school of attendance is also stipulated in transportation policy. However, walk distances to a bus stop is not as clearly defined in these or any other guidelines. While operational practice

sets the maximum distance to a stop at half the distance to a school by grade level and is commonly known among transportation staff, proper documentation of this is not readily available.

After establishing a student's eligibility for services, a great deal of consideration is given to the location of bus stops and decisions made regarding the placement of bus stops are left to the sole discretion of Sudbury transportation staff. Considerations for the placement of bus stops include topography, line of sight, and traffic congestion. Sudbury staff must ensure that the stops are accessible in all conditions, such as snow banks, other adverse weather, and prevailing road conditions. In order to provide needed flexibility within the system, students may be picked up or dropped off at locations other than their home address provided that: a) the locations are within school boundaries; b) a request is received from the parent and approved by the Consortium and; c) The approved pick-up or drop-off locations are consistent every week. There must be a set schedule established and no deviations are allowed. This is a reasonable and appropriate accommodation, particularly given the definitive nature of the policy statement on eligibility.

*Student Ride Times*

Student ride times are an important indicator of the overall service level being provided by a Consortium. However, a sparse population and great distance between students and their school of attendance provide challenges to transportation staff and pose difficulties in meeting established service levels. Policy states that students *shall* ride a school bus to or from school no more than 60 minutes. Analysis of run times indicates that the average *maximum* student ride time is 42 minutes for all regular and special education runs. This is based on the length of the run from first stop to last stop. In the rural areas on the outskirts of the Consortium's boundaries ride times may be considerably longer that the established guideline. Data indicates that 270 bus runs (21 percent of all bus runs) are greater than 60 minutes in length. However, a substantial portion of these (84 runs) have transfers associated with them. The management of transfers is a work-around solution, as discussed in the Routing and Technology section, which overstates the actual length of these runs. A supplementary extract of data provided by the Consortium itemizes actual student ride times, and indicates that 1,353 students have a morning or afternoon ride that exceeds the 60 minute parameter. Regardless of source, the data indicate that a substantial portion of bus runs include student ride times that exceed the established policy. The Consortium reports that it is reviewing bus runs with ride times exceeding 60 minutes and will develop possible solutions.

*Courtesy and Hazardous Transportation*

Transportation policy states that non-eligible riders are not permitted to ride any vehicle. However, the Consortium may arrange courtesy transportation for temporary, emergency situations. The actual impact of this on the efficiency and effectiveness of the route structure is discussed further in the Routing and Technology section.

The policies regarding hazardous transportation are somewhat conflicting. The FAQ section of Transportation Policy includes a question that implies the Consortium does not recognize hazards. It reads “Has the Consortium compromised students’ safety by not recognizing hazards?” The answer provided to this question does not provide sufficient clarification even though the Health and Safety Policy states that the Consortium will provide special transportation to students for warranted health and safety concerns on the basis of hazardous conditions, and a specific “Safety Hazard Guidelines” document does exist. The Consortium is responsible for the sole determination of hazardous conditions in accordance with these guidelines and based on local conditions including traffic volume and speed limits, sidewalk network, age of students, and the availability of crossing guards. Analysis of the data indicates that a small percentage (0.25%) of all current riders is transported for reasons of courtesy or hazard.

*Operating Practices*

Operating practices and procedures further define how service is actually delivered. Notable examples of operating practices in use by the Consortium include:

- *Transportation Appeal Process* – A formal appeal process is established which defines the role of each member of the Consortium’s staff and the escalation process. Appeals must be submitted in writing and may ultimately be referred to the BOD for final determination. No appeal will be heard by any individual Partner or Service Purchasing Board.

- *Student Behaviour Management*- Student behaviour expectations are clearly defined in published guidelines. These guidelines establish the responsibilities of the parents, principals, students, Operators and Drivers. School bus discipline policy guidelines further define the responsibilities of the students and consequences for each level of offence. Parents and guardians are requested to review these policies with their students as documented by their signature.

- *Weather Related Events and Closings* – Written statements provide a clear, detailed description of operating procedures should a bus route or transportation services be cancelled. The designated Operators will report to the Executive Director of the Consortium or to the Assistant Manager, Transportation Services.

The Executive Director will contact the Directors of Education, and will inform the media of the school cancellation. Emergency closings due to inclement weather will be made in consultation with the Directors of Education. Should buses leave early, the schools are responsible for contacting parents, and the Executive Director is responsible for all media contacts.

- *Use of Transfers* – Undocumented routing strategies include the use of transfers for students in outlying rural areas or for students attending schools with specific programs. Approximately seven (7) percent of the total or 1,589 transported students utilize transfers. The Consortium generally establishes transfer points at schools. A documented procedure clearly states the regulations that ensure student safety for those involved, including: transferring students must go directly from bus to bus, students will never be left unattended, and students must wait on the bus in the event that a delay occurs. The Transportation Clerk determines the need for a transfer taking into consideration the students home address and the program of attendance. While established (undocumented) practice limits the number of transfers to three, parents are given an option to have additional transfers included when the result would be a reduction in student ride time.

- *Bell Time Management* – Bell time requests must be submitted by the principal directly to their appropriate superintendent no later than March 31st. Pending the decision of the superintendent, the Consortium reviews the request considering the following factors:

    - The potential number of schools affected;
    - The potential number of boards and routes impacted;
    - The increase or decrease in the number of buses required; and
    - The financial impact for each Board.

Approved bell time changes must remain in place for a minimum of three years to lessen the impact on students and parents. Any additional costs as the result of a change in bell times will be borne by the requesting Board.

Operating practices and procedures such as these enhance the Consortium's ability to manage and may or may not be approved explicitly by the Partner Boards. Their construction and use is nevertheless vital to good management and support the mission of the Consortium in providing safe, equitable, and efficient service.

*Policy Enforcement*

Establishing policies and practices without strict adherence would result in less than optimal service and the potential for inequitable service between boards. Observations and interviews indicate that a uniform enforcement of Consortium policies and practices is in place throughout the system. One excellent example is a placard that is placed in each bus that clearly states that drivers do not have the authority to change a stop or route. This is further supported by cards that direct all inquiries to the Consortium office.

### 4.2.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The Consortium and its Partner Boards have developed and documented an extensive array of fully harmonized policies and operational practices to ensure that transportation is delivered in an equitable and safe manner to students served by the Consortium. Service levels are clearly established, communicated, and supported by policies, regulations, and practices that guides the daily and long term planning decisions.

- The majority of Consortium staff is bilingual and all documents are available in both French and English. The Consortium's web site also features a full version for both languages.

### 4.2.3 Recommendations

*Policy and Practice Documentation Review*

It is apparent that much effort has been devoted to the development of comprehensive policies and procedures. However, the complexity of the operation, the number of Partner and Service Purchasing Boards, and the need to serve a bilingual population necessitate an ongoing review of both policies and procedures to ensure that service is aligned and appropriately constrained to meet agreed upon levels of service. While the majority of policies and operational practices are well documented, a review of existing documentation should be conducted.

The purpose of this review should be twofold. First, it should be to develop a consolidated, organized policy and procedure manual that includes all policies and established practices. The goal should be to eliminate gaps in the documentation, such as the policy regarding walk distances to a stop, and to present the information in a streamlined manual that provides for easy reference and monitoring.

Given the large number of procedures that have been developed, a methodology for cataloguing by operational area would aid in the retrieval of polices in the event of staff or Board leadership turnover.

Improved organization of transportation policies will also support consistent delivery of service. The evolutionary nature of policy development is such that minor wording issues and inconsistencies among documents developed at different times can have a deleterious impact on the validity of the policies in practice. For example, the use of the word *shall* in defining the 60 minute ride time standard places an unnecessary constraint on the operation, as exceptions must be allowed to facilitate the overall efficiency of the route network. The review should be used to identify items such as this, and to resolve inconsistencies such as exist in its policies on hazards. A simple wording change, for example, to indicate that staff *shall endeavour* to meet the 60 minute ride time standard would improve the overall utility of the Consortium's policy documentation considerably.

## 4.3 Special Needs and Specialized Programs

For a transportation operation to be fully effective, the needs of all students including students with special needs and those attending special programs must be considered. Special education transportation must consider the mobility of the student, behavioural issues, special equipment operation and attachments, medical conditions, administration of medication, and the time and distance tolerance of the student. Specialized transportation, while less complex in the specific requirements for each student, is faced with similar pressures as transportation is often required from remote areas to centralized or distant programs. While both of these programs create service and cost demands on the system, opportunities do exist for the inclusion of these students on regular education routes to utilize the entire fleet to the highest degree possible.

This section examines the policies and practices that determine the approach to special needs and specialized transportation, and how well practice conforms to established policies.

### 4.3.1 Observations

The Consortium has an established policy that allows for the transportation of students with accessibility requirements. The policy states that approval of this transportation is at the discretion of the Director of Education or a designee for each respective Board. The Consortium is advised as to the specific needs of the student in the form of a written document. A yearly meeting is held each spring to determine the individual student and program needs for the following school session. Every effort is made to

deliver service in the most efficient manner, including the use of regular education routes where feasible. The student's specific needs ultimately determine the method of transportation, however, and this may include a special needs operator or a parent contract.

Supporting procedures have also been developed and documented including:

- Operational Procedures for Special Needs Busing;
- Procedures for Car and Booster Seats;
- Temporary Transportation for Seasonal Medical Accommodations; and
- The Administrating of Medication in the form of an EpiPen.

While the overall policy is supported by these procedures, many additional elements that should be included in a comprehensive special needs transportation policy are not well documented. While in some cases these elements are worked into existing policy statements elsewhere, the importance of special needs as a category of transportation demands that these at least be separated into an easy to access, all encompassing special needs manual. Examples of elements that are missing from the documentation or are difficult to discern include:

- Policies specific to the individual conditions of students;
- Wheel Chair Loading and Unloading;
- The use of securing devices;
- Lift operation; and
- Driver training requirements.

A review of the standard operator contract document indicates that many of these items are covered by this form, and thus become part of the contractor service delivery requirement. They are not, however, part of the policy backbone of the Consortium.

### 4.3.2 Recommendations

*Special Education Policy and Procedure Refinement*

The development of written policies and procedures to govern every aspect of special needs transportation should be a foundation element in the broader policy documentation of the Consortium. The importance and high cost of this category of

transportation demands that a clear set of service standards be published as a reference and a constraint that controls the manner of service delivery for this high-demand population. Delegating much of this responsibility to operators via the contract document cannot relieve the management organization of this responsibility. Incorporating this development into the broader review of documentation recommended previously will ensure that a high level of service is delivered regardless of the Operator or in the event of a change in Consortium management.

## 4.4 Safety Policy

The safe transportation of students is the overriding goal in any school transportation system. With the complexity of a Consortium model serving multiple boards and utilizing a variety of operators, having a clear and concise set of safety policies, related practices, and a regular training program will serve to promote a culture of safety within the operation and local communities.

### 4.4.1 Observations

The Consortium fully supports and participates in a variety of safety and training programs which collectively demonstrate its commitment to the safe transportation of students. Examples of these include:

- The First Rider Program, co-sponsored by McDonalds. The Operators present a one hour program to all JK students and first time riders.
- Safe Rider/Buster the Bus program supports the continuing training to JK to grade three students.
- School Bus Survivor targets students in grades 4 to 8.
- Safety, Order, and individual Rights (SOAR) reinforces the importance of proper student behaviour promoting safety and contributing to a quality transportation experience.
- The School Bus Patroller program assists the Drivers with the safe loading and unloading of the bus.
- The Executive Director is actively involved with local agencies including the planning commission, crossing guard officials, police and traffic departments, and planners for new developments and subdivisions.

A comprehensive Bus Safety Manual details the contractual safety training requirements of all Operators. Examples of these requirements include:

- Sensitivity training for special needs students;
- Ethno-cultural awareness;
- First aid and EpiPen use;
- Accident procedures;
- Student management; and
- Defensive driving.

Each operator must provide safety orientation and evacuation drills for all drivers a minimum of once annually. The Operator must provide the Consortium with the date and agenda for any such orientation or drills for potential observation by the Consortium.

### 4.4.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The Consortium has demonstrated its commitment to safety and training by providing direct training to students and clearly defining the responsibility of the Operators and Drivers. The conduct expected of students and the responsibility of parents is clearly defined, as are the consequences for infractions; and
- The active involvement of the Executive Director with local planning and municipal safety departments serve to educate and promote the role of the entire community in the safe transportation of students.

### 4.4.3 Recommendations

*Defining Responsibility*

While the Consortium has demonstrated a commitment to the development and support of ongoing safety training and awareness programs, the responsibility for oversight is divided among several members of the administrative staff. Consolidating all programs under the responsibility of one management team member would provide both the

Operators and the community with a single point of contact. The ultimate oversight responsibility, however, should remain with the Executive Director.

## 4.5 Results of E&E Review

Policies and Procedures development and implementation has been rated as **Moderate-High**. The Consortium has developed an extensive array of policies and procedures which have been fully harmonized and are effectively implemented in practice. A high degree of respect and cooperation between the Partner Boards and the Consortium management is clearly in evidence, and helps to ensure that policies are enforced and continue to maintain their relevance. The thought and detail evident in policy development, and the Consortium's extensive safety programs are both examples for other Consortia to follow. Nevertheless, there are steps that should be taken by the Consortium to consolidate and perpetuate this success. Current policies and practices are the result of an evolutionary process. During the years of development, certain key practices have escaped documentation entirely, some are inconsistent or open to interpretation, others (such as safety) have diffuse supervision, and the remainder suffer from a lack of organization that inhibits easy reference. An effort to consolidate, simplify, and (in some areas) expand the reach of documented policies and procedures would serve to reinforce this critical foundation and help to ensure that the existing levels of respect and cooperation outlive the service of existing management and staff in both the Consortium and its Partner Boards.

# 5 Routing and Technology

## 5.1 Introduction

Routing and Technology encompasses the management, administration, and use of technology for the purpose of student transportation management. The following analysis stems from a review of the four key components of:

- Software and Technology Setup and Use;
- Digital Map and Student Database Management;
- System Reporting; and
- Regular and Special Needs Transportation Planning and Routing.

Each component has been analysed based on observations from fact (including interviews) together with an assessment of best practices leading to a set of recommendations. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component, which is then summarized to determine an E&E assessment of Routing and Technical efficiency as shown below:

**Route and Technology – E&E Rating: High**

## 5.2 Software and Technology Setup and Use

Modern student transportation routing systems allow transportation managers to make more effective use of the resources at their disposal. These systems allow for improvements in the management and administration of large volumes of student and route data. However, the systems must be fully implemented with well designed coding structures and effective mechanisms to extract and report data to all stakeholder groups. This section of the evaluation was designed to evaluate the baseline acquisition, setup, installation, and management of transportation related software.

### 5.2.1 Observations

*Routing & Related Software*

The Consortium utilizes routing software from Education Logistics, Inc. "EDULOG". As of this writing, the Consortium has upgraded to version 10.6 of this software. This change was accomplished on November 17, 2007 as per plan. The Consortium is now utilizing the most current version of EDULOG, and has a maintenance contract that will continue to keep the software current via patches and upgrades. The Consortium has

operated with the EDULOG system since its inception. There are no other software products that have been used or are contemplated at this time.

Remote access to EDULOG for Operators is provided via Terminal Services directly to a daily backup version of the Consortium database (see discussion of data backup procedures below). Permissions thus restrict access to EDULOG data only for viewing and reporting. While the operators do have the ability to make daily temporary changes within their version of EDULOG, these are overwritten every night with the most current Consortium data. This approach allows Operators to evaluate the impact of changes to routes such as driver directions and reassignment of stops between routes without impacting the live database utilized by Consortium staff. Each Operator can also see the entire system (i.e., their own and other Operators' routes) and print current route sheets which detail student information.

In addition to the core system utilized by Consortium staff, and the remote access provided to Operators, two online (web-based) tools are available that access the EDULOG database. "Web Query" is utilized to look up student-specific data; and "School Assistant" emulates the EDULOG map window and is used to visualize and print route-specific data. Both of these systems are password protected and are provided only to designated users within each school (generally Board officials and building administrators such as the Principal and/or school secretary).

With School Assistant users can view student-specific data on transportation eligibility, bus route assignments, and school boundary information. School Assistant is used extensively during the first weeks of a new school term, and is a primary means by which individual schools receive updated transportation information. Web Query can also be used by schools and Board officials to view eligibility of students based on their location, on proposed moves, as well as any existing stops in the area of the student location.

The Consortium website provides comprehensive static information on policies and procedures, provides downloadable forms, and is available to the public. In addition, the website provides real- time information on system operations related to alerts regarding late running or cancelled bus service. Its usefulness was also demonstrated, however, as an emergency management tool during a school lockdown situation that occurred during the onsite portion of the E&E Review. Both Consortium staff and Operators have access to the site for the purpose of posting operational information. Consortium practices demand that this information be posted in real-time. The website route delays functionality also has a back end analytical capability that is used for performance evaluation of Operators and for key service indicators, as discussed further below.

In addition to the website posting, the Consortium is nearing implementation of a VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) system that will send broadcast phone messages to parents based on the operational information being posted to the website. Thus, parents will receive an automated message via telephone when their student's bus is delayed or during emergency situations as occurred during the review. Separate from the software, the Consortium operates a voice telephone system that includes a general contact number. Internally, calls are routed to an available Transportation Clerk based on a queuing system. This phone system is currently the primary method of contact for parents during normal operations. The Consortium also has a non published dedicated line for emergencies accessible to Operators, schools, police services and Board administrators. In the weeks leading up to the start of school, the Consortium staffs a call center at an offsite location. This call center is used as the primary means of distributing information to users of the system regarding new and revised bus routes. Finally, the Consortium is in the very early stages of evaluating the EDULOG Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) system for its possible inclusion into the system.

*Maintenance and Service Agreements*

The Consortium operates on a Local Area Network (LAN) that includes a main and backup EDULOG server, a domain and backup server, an internal email server, and all workstations within the Consortium office. This LAN connects via T1 line to the Rainbow network, which serves as the main conduit for access to the internet, and also for a fully mirrored EDULOG server maintained by Rainbow. Remote access to the EDULOG database is provided via this system and the tools as described above.

The Consortium contracts with Rainbow for data recovery and network maintenance services. The Transportation Technician administers the EDULOG software, including installation of software updates and upgrades. Data backup and recovery protocols are comprehensive and appropriate. They include twice per day (noon and midnight) backup of the EDULOG database to the local (Consortium office) backup server, a daily full system mirror on a dedicated, Consortium-owned server at the Rainbow, including the entire local server (domain and file server). A five day rolling archive of EDULOG data is also maintained. Finally, a monthly full backup of the local server is taken on portable media and removed to an offsite location.

Restoration protocols include changing primary server access to the offsite (Rainbow) location. The administrative team (Executive Director, Assistant Manager, Transportation Officer, and Transportation Technician) can then connect to this server from home offices. The transportation clerks would gain access to this server on an emergency basis. The primary contact at Rainbow has a documented procedure statement for making that server the primary, and the Transportation Technician has emergency contact information to ensure that this can be initiated. System maintenance

and backup procedures are clearly documented. Internal procedures for putting the disaster recovery plan into motion are informally documented by the Transportation Technician.

*Training and System Use*

All users of EDULOG, including the Executive Director, Assistant Manager, Transportation Officer, Transportation Technician, and Transportation Clerks received user training from EDULOG on creation of the Consortium. Since then, the Consortium has followed a "train the trainer" approach. The Assistant Manager, Transportation Officer and Transportation Technician receive advanced training from EDULOG staff and attend annual user conferences. These positions then serve as a training resource for the rest of the organization. In addition, the Transportation Technician received comprehensive training from the vendor when this position was turned over to a new person in January, 2007. Technical support on EDULOG is also optimized by establishing a single point of contact through the Transportation Technician. While a regular program of periodic training on system use is not currently in place, all staff are highly competent users of Edulog.

*System Coding Structures*

The effectiveness of the system coding structure will, in large measure, define the effectiveness of the overall software system. Effective coding is vital to the efficient identification and management of specific data records within the system. Effective coding is equally vital to the ongoing analysis of system performance. Easily identifying, for example, a particular group of routes or students demands a comprehensive, hierarchical, and well conceived coding structure. This structure should have a basis in utility; That is, it should be reflective of what information is required by management and Transportation Clerks on a regular basis. It should not be overly complex, but rather should balance the relative need for detailed data with the difficulty and error potential inherent in an overly complex structure.

Sudbury codes student records with a three-digit code for the school of attendance and two transportation eligibility codes from a comprehensive and descriptive list. The school code is significant in that it also identifies the type of school (primary or secondary) and the Board to which the school belongs. This approach is excellent from an analytical perspective as it facilitates evaluation of various factors on a Board and a school type basis, and provides a rapid association of students to routes and routes to schools during day-to-day operations. The eligibility codes identify whether the student is eligible for transportation and the nature of that eligibility. In combination with the school code, this facilitates comprehensive analysis and relatively easy selection and filtering of datasets for both operational and analytical purposes.

Table 4 summarizes all students in the database by “eligibility code” and “user eligibility code”. The “eligibility code” is defined by Edulog, and is limited to the following categories:

0 – Eligible for Transportation

1 – Eligible for Transportation Due to Hazard

12 – Ineligible for Transportation – Outside Attendance Area

13 – Ineligible for Transportation – Within Allowable Walk Distance to School

In addition to these, there are three minor codes that identify certain exceptions that prevent the student from being properly identified in the system. Table 4 identifies all students in the database by the four base codes, and also by the secondary “user eligibility code” as assigned by the Consortium. As can be seen in the table, these secondary codes further refine our understanding of the students’ service profile. Thus, the table shows that of the 23,004 students that are eligible for transportation (eligibility code “0”, 105 use public transportation (user eligibility code “5”).In this hierarchical system, the top-level code is utilized to identify a major category, and the secondary code various subsets of students,. This is an excellent approach that is meeting the reporting and analytical needs of the Consortium. The only caution is that this approach can also sometimes lead to problems if the two codes are not closely coordinated. By means of example, this can be seen in the table where 725 students are coded as eligible due to hazard (eligibility code “1”), yet 10 of these students also carry a user eligibility code of “0”. It is unclear from this combination whether these students are indeed transported due to a hazardous condition. This should not happen, and illustrates how the data can become corrupted if not managed diligently.

**TABLE 4 – TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY CODES[11]**

| **User Eligibility Code** | **User Eligibility Code Description** | **System Eligibility Code** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **0** | **1** | **12** | **13** |
| 0 | Eligible / Regular student that is eligible for transportation | 18554 | 10 | 7 | 9 |

[11] The counts in this table are based on data extracted from the routing software during the onsite portion of the E&E review. They may not match the values used elsewhere in the report which are based on data submitted by the Consortium at a prior date.

| User Eligibility Code | User Eligibility Code Description | System Eligibility Code | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 0 | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| 1 | Eligible because of hazard / Cannot cross highway, or railroad tracks | 5 | 520 | | 9 |
| 2 | Gifted / Student attending enrichment program at Marymount | 44 | 7 | 3 | 19 |
| 3 | Transported because of sitter / Transported because sitter lives inside this student school attendance boundary | 3 | | 477 | 227 |
| 4 | Transported because of Medical Needs / Student is bussed because of a medical need / Doctor slip / | 11 | | | 18 |
| 5 | Student use Public Transit (Municipal transit tickets are paid by consortium) | 105 | | | 3 |
| 6 | Parents are paid to transport | 12 | | 2 | |
| 8 | Winter - Safety - Snow banks, sidewalk not cleaned… | 1 | 2 | | 4 |
| 10 | Special Ed / Special needs / Transported BECAUSE his special education program | 44 | | 244 | 29 |
| 11 | One way / Student need transportation one way only | 1005 | 64 | 5 | 11 |
| 12 | Outside attendance area / Student should not be transported | 4 | | 1121 | |
| 13 | Within walk distance of the school / Student should not be transported | 5 | 1 | 7 | 5287 |
| 14 | Winter bussing - Asthma / Student is transported because of he has Asthma and only in Winter | 3 | | | 17 |
| 15 | Board & Lodging Students / For student that the board are paying for Board Lodging | 4 | | | |
| 16 | Dual Custody / with only 1 set of trips | 20 | | 12 | 17 |
| 17 | Parent is the Driver/ measure distance from home | 36 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 22 | No transportation required / Student do not need transportation | 1455 | 112 | 4 | 4 |
| 23 | Special Ed that does NOT qualify for Transportation | 31 | | 1 | |

| User Eligibility Code | User Eligibility Code Description | System Eligibility Code | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 0 | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| 30 | Grandfathered / Transportation approved by School Boards for actual students until they move to another school | 4 | | 95 | |
| 31 | Year ( Courtesy ) / Internal Consortium approval | 32 | 2 | 22 | 50 |
| 32 | Dual Custody / Because of parents living at different addresses | 293 | 3 | 13 | 6 |
| 33 | Special permission from Superintendant / Transportation aproved by the Superintendant | 25 | 2 | 99 | 27 |
| 34 | Yearly review - Like moving to a corner stop - MUST qualify for bussing | 120 | 1 | | 4 |
| 35 | Students over 21 Yrs old | 1 | | 1 | 5 |
| 36 | Multiple transportation because of after-school sports | 32 | | | 3 |
| 37 | Multiple transportation because of after-school job | 104 | | | 1 |
| 38 | Multiple transportation because of after-school lesson | 8 | | | |
| 39 | Multiple transportation because of Co-op | 25 | | | 4 |
| 40 | | 11 | | 1 | |
| 84 | Native Band - transported by us - Charge back to Band - Wahnapitae Reserve | | | | 2 |
| 85 | Native Band - transported by us - Charge back to Band - M'Chigeeng | | | | 2 |
| 87 | Native Band - transported by us - Charge back to Band - Sheguiandah 1st Nation | 1 | | | 14 |
| 88 | Native Band - transported by us - Charge back to Band - Whitefish Lake 1st Nation | 3 | | 2 | 103 |
| 90 | Exchange students | 11 | | 1 | |
| 94 | Dual Boundaries (overlapping elm / second.) St-David / St-Benedict / St-Charles College | | | 1 | |

| User Eligibility Code | User Eligibility Code Description | System Eligibility Code | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 0 | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| 96 | Student outside Sudbury Area, transported by other Boards like Wawa, Chapleau, Manitouwadge… | 970 | | 37 | 296 |
| 97 | Nipissing students | 8 | | 7 | |
| 98 | Bussing provided by Native band - Write in Bus comment = Trans by 1st Nation | 13 | | 31 | 229 |
| 99 | Default Value - no eligibility code yet | 1 | | 42 | 89 |
| Total | | 23004 | 725 | 2236 | 6490 |

Special needs students are identified using three different codes and flags in the system. First, eligibility code “10” identifies a student as eligible for transportation to a special program or for special needs. Then the Consortium utilizes the special needs flag (checked means “yes”, blank means “no”) in the EDULOG student record to indicate when that student rides on a special needs specific vehicle. In addition to these base indicators, a series of 15 special needs transportation codes identify any specific transportation requirements (e.g., car seat, harness) or exceptionalities (e.g., deaf or blind, gifted) associated with the student. This approach allows for a very specific categorization of particular students and is a further example of how the hierarchical approach works to define both an inclusive and an explicit grouping in order to improve analytical capabilities. The only caution relative to this approach, however, is the error potential in maintaining a complex structure such as this. The Transportation Clerks responsible for maintaining student records must be diligent in ensuring that all possible codes are utilized correctly.

Conceptually, bus runs and routes should be coded in a manner that makes the identification number itself significant. The most utility arises when the run and route number in combination serve to indicate the type of run it is (e.g., dedicated, combination, shuttle), the school being serviced, whether it is a morning or afternoon run, and the bus or operator servicing the run. In practice, capturing all of this information in a single run and route identification number may not be feasible, and the data structure of the system itself may limit this capability.

Overall, the Consortium captures much of this information in its run and route numbering design. Each run is coded with a three digit prefix indicating the school being serviced, followed by a three digit suffix indicating whether it is a morning or afternoon run, and a sequence number for the run. Thus, run “205.020” indicates the twentieth

(final two digits indicate the sequence) run serving school 205 (St. Benedict CSS) in the morning (0 = morning; 1 = afternoon). The route number associated with this run, “V777” indicates the operator responsible for the run.

The structure of the EDULOG database facilitates easy identification of combination runs outside of the run number itself in that the school codes served by such a run are uniquely identified in separate data fields. The treatment of transfers and shuttles, however, is difficult within this system. Each bus run must be associated with a school and student. Thus, it is not possible to establish a feeder run to a transfer point without a school association. The Consortium works around this by linking the feeder run to the bus' next run with a manual "load time" at the transfer stop, effectively a layover period, before the first stop of the next run. Thus a transfer run number looks like any other run. The only identifier is via the stop identification numbers on the run. Transfer stops receive a leading "t" in the coding sequence.

### 5.2.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

- The use of technology to support operations, and to disseminate information to stakeholders such as Partner Boards, building administrators, and Operators;
- The comprehensive data backup and disaster recovery protocols ensure continuity of operations and maximum staff effectiveness; and
- The detailed approach to system coding that facilitates comprehensive data extraction and reporting of student and route specific transportation information.

## 5.3 Digital Map and Student Database Management

This aspect of the E&E Review was designed to evaluate the processes and procedures in place to update and maintain the student data and map data that forms the foundation of any student transportation routing system.

### 5.3.1 Observations

*Digital Map*

There is a single digital map covering the entire Consortium service area as well as additional geographic areas for which the Consortium management team provides advisory services. The map predates the establishment of the Consortium. Since that time, the map has been manually maintained; that is to say there has been no

comprehensive update or substitution of more current digital map data. Rather, individual street segments have been added or changed and map attributes have been updated as required by circumstances. There have been no additional layers of data added to the base map.

The data indicates zero students in the database that are unmatched to the geocode. However, this does not account for student records that have been provided by the boards but not added to EDULOG due to addressing and other concerns. A review of this list during onsite interviews only revealed a marginal impact (approximately 30 records on the date of the review). Until the upgrade to EDULOG version 10.6, which occurred just prior to this writing, these values were largely established via hard- coded EDULOG system defaults. In the case of road speeds and other similar map attributes, the values are a legacy from the original map. Changes are handled on a case by case basis depending on circumstances. Defaults for loading times at stops and other system-wide defaults were hard coded and overwritten at the student, stop, or run record levels as required. Version 10.6 enables user- defined defaults, which will become a maintenance responsibility of the Transportation Technician.

Map maintenance in general is a manual, reactive process. Changes to the map are the responsibility of the Transportation Technician, although one Transportation Clerk, the Transportation Officer, and the Assistant Manager also have access to MARIS, the map maintenance module of EDULOG, and are trained to provide support in this area. Changes are reactive to safety and other route issues as they become apparent. The primary, proactive map work is related to new housing developments. The Consortium has a good working relationship with representatives from the City of Greater Sudbury whereby the Executive Director receives early notice of new developments and is consulted as to transportation concerns. The Consortium also receives detailed paper maps of new developments which are used to establish the street networks in the EDULOG map.

Until the upgrade to version 10.6, the Consortium did not utilize outside sources of map data to assist in maintaining or validating the EDULOG map. The new version of EDULOG, however, facilitates this process and the Consortium staff have expressed an interest in establishing an ongoing working relationship with other users of digital maps in the area to improve the efficiency of map maintenance processes and the accuracy of the map being utilized for routing. With the implementation of the new version, the Consortium reports that they have already requested an evaluation of a new digital satellite map image overlay from EDULOG, though actual implementation is not likely until 2008.

All school locations have been modified to reflect right side drop off location wherever no school access exists. This has allowed for more accurate route times, kilometres and

proper side drop off at schools. The manual intervention and validation process for student data described below catches and corrects other addressing issues. There are segments designated as "No Travel" throughout the map, which prevents routes from utilizing that segment. With the latest upgrade, staff can now code segments as "No Walk" as well. This will be utilized to note road segments that are too dangerous for student walking, which in turn affect walk boundaries.

*Student Data Management*

The student database within EDULOG is comprehensive in that it contains all student records from all partner and Service Purchasing Boards regardless of transportation eligibility. In general, the Consortium has two complementary processes in place for the periodic transfer of student data from the boards. A comprehensive download is obtained to facilitate the annual planning process; and periodic "add/change/delete" extracts are obtained to keep the student database current over the course of the operating year. Each of these processes are described below.

*Annual process* - While the details associated with the management of the data have changed since the current Transportation Technician joined the Consortium (January 2007), the overall timing and approach is the same. A full download of each participant Board's student database is obtained after early registration of new students is completed in June of each year. These downloads include a "rollover", or grade advancement, for all current students. A template is provided to the boards to define the data fields required, and electronic files are provided to the Consortium. A significant amount of data validation is undertaken. In essence, a series of comparisons are conducted that match the downloaded data with the student records in EDULOG in order to create a master file that is uploaded and that becomes the planning basis for the next school year (see discussion of route planning below). Approximately 1 to 2 weeks before the start of school, another student data file is requested from the boards. This is a comprehensive file of all changes since the first download, including additional new registrants, students not advancing in grade, deleted students, etc. The validation process is repeated and the results become the operational database for the new school year.

*Operational process* - During the school year, each Board provides periodic "add/change/delete" data extracts to the Consortium. These are supposed to be provided on a daily basis, but there is some concern that they are not always provided on this schedule. They are provided in electronic form via email to the Transportation Officer. They are not, however, automatically uploaded to the EDULOG database. Current operational practice has parents calling the Consortium directly in order to make a transportation request or change. As a result, the student address data in EDULOG is often more current than indicated in the daily extracts from the boards. As a result, the

Consortium utilizes a manual intervention and validation process whereby one of the Transportation Clerks is responsible for comparing the data received with that in EDULOG and resolving any conflicts. Changes are therefore all made manually to the EDULOG record.

### 5.3.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following area:

- The use of a single, comprehensive digital map covering all areas within its jurisdiction, and the centralization of map maintenance responsibilities within the organization.

### 5.3.3 Recommendations

*Digital Map Maintenance*

It is recommended that the Consortium design and implement a regular, proactive map auditing protocol to establish and sustain a high level of map attribute accuracy. Along with this, explore alternatives to the current dependence on internal map maintenance procedures. Investigate the existence of other digital map users throughout the region, to the extent feasible, and explore the creation of a cooperative approach to information collection and reporting that would enhance accuracy and reduce the overall level of effort required by all users.

## 5.4 System Reporting

Adequate reporting allows for the early identification of trends that may be detrimental to operations, improves the analytical capacity of the organization, and allows for internal and external stakeholders to be more adequately informed about operations. The purpose of this aspect of the review was to evaluate what reports are typically generated, who receives these reports, and what capabilities exist to develop ad hoc reports.

### 5.4.1 Observations

*Reporting and Data Analysis*

A primary tracking tool for the Consortium is a "screen print" of the student record page. This one page report is utilized to track all issues and changes that are being worked by staff, is marked up to indicate the change, and is filed as a permanent record. In

addition to this, standard route detail reports are used for route auditing purposes as described in the route planning section below. Most other management tasks are performed using data extracted from the system via custom reporting. Data is extracted from the system on a regular basis for all manner of analytical purposes, and there is a large number of custom reports that have been defined and are regularly utilized for various reporting tasks within the Consortium. The administrative team demonstrates a strong capability in generating customized reports and is highly skilled in the use of EDULOG to produce data for analysis. In addition, the boundary planning module of EDULOG is used extensively when boards are requesting information during their accommodation review process. EDULOG has created a specific report which factors in the Consortium student weighting and is used for costing, operator billing, and developing the data for the Ministry survey.

Schools can extract various standard preset reports from the web-based “School Assistant” product described above, and operators can run all standard EDULOG reports via their remote access capabilities. Also, the Consortium calculates and publishes a comprehensive list of performance metrics as described below. While the Consortium does not make extensive use of external reporting for management purposes, it distributes the capability to generate reports to users and customers of the system in an effective way.

*Distributing Data and Performance Measurement*

In addition to the information available to users via the web-based tools described elsewhere, a comprehensive series of performance indicators are calculated and reported by the Consortium to its Partner Boards on a regular basis. These are detailed and include statistics on capacity utilization, asset (bus) utilization, service delays, bell times, and bus trip distances. This approach to performance measurement is commendable, but raises a few questions of accuracy and utility.

First, the calculation of capacity utilization, or “capacity ratios” as they are referred to in the document misrepresents the true utilization of the available capacity on each bus run. A more accurate approach is to measure capacity utilization across each individual bus run, rather than across all morning and afternoon routes as is measured in the Consortium’s statistics. Second, a noticeable absence is a measure of average student ride times. While the statistics include a measure of trip length, which can be a surrogate for ride time, a measure of the average maximum student ride time to be a more intuitive and appropriate measure of performance. Additionally, the absence of a unit-based measure of cost such as cost per student is a critical element in understanding overall performance and, more specifically, in measuring the cost impact of changes made to service delivery. Finally, we note the absence of historical trends. Trend analysis provides important context for the metrics being reported.

### 5.4.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following areas:

- The use of technology to distribute information to users of, and stakeholders in the transportation system; and

- The establishment and use of comprehensive system performance measurement and reporting.

### 5.4.3 Recommendations

*Reporting and Performance Measurement*

The advanced use of performance measurement in the Consortium is a best practice. However, it is possible to improve the overall utility of this program by changing its focus. Focusing on a few key interrelated measures of performance that can be tracked and reported will enable comprehensive trend analysis. Specifically, consideration should be given to the following metrics:

- *Count of Daily Runs per Bus* – Capacity utilization (discussed next) measures how well each individual bus route is being loaded. Daily runs per bus measures how effectively each asset is being utilized over a period of time. The combination of these two measures captures the two key elements in establishing an efficient system – filling the bus, and re-using the bus. As with all measures, it should be calculated on a regular basis and tracked over time to reveal trends in performance. As with capacity utilization, it should be calculated for key subsets such as large and small buses, and for each operator.

- *Capacity Utilization* – Along with daily runs per bus this is a key measure that defines how effectively the Consortium is utilizing its transportation assets. It should be regularly calculated for key subsets of the system (primary and secondary schools, regular and special needs buses, etc.). Tracking this measure over time will serve the dual purpose of enlightening management as to the effect of routing decisions, and illuminating the causes behind changes in per student costs (discussed below).

- *Average Ride Time* – Filling and reusing the bus has a negative impact on service. As a rule, striving for higher levels of capacity utilization, for example, requires that each bus route be longer. Measuring ride times serves to illuminate these tradeoffs and provides further explanation for the causes behind trends in overall performance.

- *Cost per Student* – The end result of changes to the route structure should be its impact on overall cost. Higher capacity utilization and more daily routes per bus should, all else being equal, increase average ride times but lower the cost per student. Thus, a unit-based measure of cost is a critical addition to the package of measures that should be routinely calculated and tracked over time.

- *Daily Cost per Bus* – This final measure compliments the understanding of cost impacts by establishing a second unit of measure, one that may move in the opposite direction to cost per student and that lends additional clarity to the overall understanding of system performance.

Many of these measures of performance are discussed in context in the Transportation Planning and Routing section below.

## 5.5 Regular and Special Needs Transportation Planning and Routing

Transportation route planning is the key activity undertaken by the Consortium. Special education in particular presents unique challenges that often require operational strategies well outside the normal practices of any organization. This portion of the review was designed to evaluate the strategies, tactics, and processes used to provide transportation to regular and special education students and the approaches used to minimize the cost and operational disruption associated with both types of transportation.

### 5.5.1 Observations

*Strategic Analysis*

The Consortium operates on a comprehensive annual planning calendar. The annual planning cycle begins on or about April 1st of each year at which point a new simulation database is created. High level strategic analyses are conducted from April through June of each year. In general, these include the evaluation of bell time change requests from boards as well as re-evaluation of routing efficiency in designated parts of the Consortium service area. These are conducted at both the request of a Board and as part of a regular program of route review. The Consortium does not attempt to re-evaluate the entire service each year, but rather focuses on "hot spots" identified by Consortium management. The strategic analyses are conducted by the Executive Director, Assistant Manager, or Transportation Officer, with data analysis support from the Transportation Technician.

Once a workable strategic framework for a particular area or school grouping is developed, the Transportation Clerk is tasked with developing specific bus runs and

routes within this framework. Buses are assigned to routes on the basis of efficiency. Impacts on particular Operators are not considered as part of this analysis, but rather as a separate variable after the runs have been developed and linked into routes.

*Management of Regular Bus Routes*

The Consortium has a fairly unique approach to operations in that the team of Transportation Clerks are not assigned specific geographic areas of responsibility. Rather, on a project as well as operational basis, work in all areas. The exceptions to this include special needs (planned by one Clerk) and for bus runs on Manitoulin Island. While this approach is unusual, it appears to work well for this Consortium. It appears that this is primarily due to the long tenure and close working relationship among the current cadre of Transportation Clerks.

Route maintenance and modification is undertaken on an as-needed basis by whichever Transportation Clerk is tasked with an issue, either by management or by taking a customer call. In addition, ongoing operational responsibilities, such as keeping student data up to date, or updating routes based on input from operators, is handled collectively. Route change requests are handled on an as needed basis. They generally result from changes in the student data (e.g., a new or deleted student) or due to customer calls from parents, building administrators, etc. The Transportation Clerk taking the call is tasked with responsibility for the item and will follow it through to completion, inclusive of notifying the requesting parent/administrator and forwarding updated route information to the Operators.

Operators are required to submit route audits twice annually: once after school start in October, and once in March. These are submitted as pen and ink changes to standard EDULOG route reports, and are reviewed for validity and changed in the system utilizing the collective process described above.

*Special Education Route Planning*

The specific special needs requirements of a student are determined by the individual Board's Director, Coordinator, or Superintendent of Special Educations Services. These needs are relayed to the Consortium and are documented in writing or by way of email. Depending on the requirements of the student, every effort is made to place the student on a regular route when possible. In the event that a special needs bus is required, the route coordinator works with EDULOG to locate the best service available and will coordinate with the operator to identify alternatives. Several documents detail the procedures that the schools and Consortium will follow including in fulfilling a special needs transportation request. In addition, an annual meeting is held at the Consortium in the spring of each year to discuss the needs of special education programs and students for the upcoming school year.

All programmatic decisions are made with input from the Consortium. The comprehensive planning calendar includes this review of special education students in June of each year.

*Analysis of System Effectiveness*

The Consortium manages a transportation system that provides services over a wide geographic area ranging from urban to rural, and to a wide range of students and programs. It accomplishes its mission using a fleet of approximately 480 vehicles, from vans to large school buses. These vehicles serve regular and special needs programs with start times generally ranging from 8:05 AM to 9:05 AM. Approximately 23,200 students are provided transportation on a daily basis. Roughly 80% of the fleet services between two and three daily routes (1-2 morning plus 1-2 afternoon). The vast majority of vehicles in the fleet are buses with capacities of between 20 and 72 passengers. Approximately 90% of all bus runs in the system are serviced by these vehicles.

The average simple capacity utilization across the fleet is 61%. This is measured by taking an average of utilization on all runs, with each run calculated by dividing the rated capacity of the bus, as recorded in EDULOG, and dividing this by the maximum student load on the run. It is expected that capacity utilization on the basis of rated capacity of the bus (no factor for student weighting) will be lower than for planned capacity. Typically, secondary school students will receive weights that lower the effective capacity of a bus by allowing fewer than the rated capacity of three students per seat.

This has an inverse impact on utilization by lowering the numerator of the equation. Thus, an overall result of 61% is within the expected range, and is impressive for the low density service area covered by the Consortium. This is particularly true considering that the average includes special needs routes which typically achieve a much lower capacity utilization rating.

The average *maximum* student ride time is 42 minutes across all runs in the system. This is measured by taking the sum of route length in minutes for all routes, from first stop to last stop, and dividing by the number of routes. This excludes deadhead time where a bus is running empty. This is an impressive result given the relative low student density service area covered by the Consortium.

The combination of relatively high capacity utilization and reasonable average ride times for students is indicative of a system that is providing an appropriate balance between the qualities of service delivery and routing efficiency. The primary enabling factor behind these results is, we believe, an aggressive use of routing techniques such as combination runs wherever appropriate. The effectiveness of these techniques become apparent in a closer examination of the key performance metrics.

Table 5 breaks down average capacity utilization and maximum ride times by the number of programs served by the bus run. Thus, the average capacity utilization for all 1,320 bus runs in the system is 61% and the maximum average ride time is 42 minutes, as discussed above. What this table clearly displays is that capacity utilization improves steadily with the number of programs served. These "combination runs" that place students from more than one school or program on the same bus allows the Consortium staff to fill the bus closer to its design capacity. However, it is equally clear that a service trade-off exists in that the maximum student ride time also increases with the number of programs served. The variability apparent as the number of programs served increases beyond five appears to be due to the small population of runs in these categories.

**Table 5: Capacity Utilization & Ride Times by Programs Served[12]**

| Number of Schools/Programs Served | Count of Bus Runs | Average of Capacity Utilization | Average of Ride Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 189 | 45% | 0:31 |
| 2 | 352 | 58% | 0:34 |
| 3 | 292 | 63% | 0:38 |
| 4 | 162 | 63% | 0:44 |
| 5 | 79 | 67% | 0:53 |
| 6 | 77 | 71% | 0:56 |
| 7 | 54 | 67% | 1:00 |
| 8 | 32 | 71% | 1:02 |
| 9 | 27 | 72% | 1:06 |
| 10 | 24 | 68% | 1:17 |
| 11 | 9 | 83% | 1:27 |
| 12 | 11 | 75% | 1:16 |
| 13 | 7 | 83% | 1:01 |
| 14 | 2 | 80% | 1:28 |
| 15 | 2 | 84% | 1:17 |

[12] The counts in this table are based on data extracted from the routing software during the onsite portion of the E&E review. They may not match the values used elsewhere in the report which are based on data submitted by the Consortium at a prior date.

| Number of Schools/Programs Served | Count of Bus Runs | Average of Capacity Utilization | Average of Ride Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | 1 | 144% | 1:01 |
| **Grand Total** | **1320** | **61%** | **0:42** |

Approximately 15% of all bus runs in the system also incorporate transfers. The Consortium utilizes this as a routing efficiency technique as well to improve overall system effectiveness. Table 6 illustrates how capacity utilization improves on transfer runs in much the same way as it does for combination runs. A corresponding increase in average ride times for these runs is again apparent. However, this must be tempered by an understanding of certain EDULOG system limitations whereby certain transfer runs must be coupled with subsequent runs serving specific schools. The Consortium manages this by building in "load time" at transfer points to account for actual layover time prior to beginning the next run. This shows up in the data as additional ride time.

**Table 6: Capacity Utilization & Ride Times for Transfer Runs[12]**

| Run Type | Average of Capacity Utilization | Average of Ride Time |
|---|---|---|
| No Transfer | 60% | 0:39 |
| Transfer | 69% | 0:59 |
| Grand Total | 61% | 0:42 |

On a smaller scale, the Consortium increases the effectiveness of the overall system by aggressively utilizing all available assets and by not making hard distinction between regular and special needs transportation. While there are 417 students transported on special needs designated vehicles (as indicated by the data), just 177 of these carry a special needs eligibility code. Conversely, there are 305 students in the data that carry the special needs eligibility code ("10"), and 128 of these do not ride on special needs vehicles. This is an indication that the Consortium utilizes mainstreaming wherever possible, and utilizes special needs buses to transport regular students where feasible.

Similarly, the Consortium appears to manage courtesy riders effectively. Several eligibility codes are utilized to identify student riders that are transported to locations, such as a sitter, or multiple purposes, such as after school programs, but only two codes ("31" and "33") that are clearly courtesy related. Combined, there are just 237 riders, or 0.7% of the total riders attributable to these codes.

### 5.5.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following area:

- The use of routing techniques such as combination and transfer routes combines to greatly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall system. The Consortium's aggressive approach to seeking routing solutions such as this is a key component to the success of the system.

## 5.6 Results of E&E Review

Routing and Technology use has been rated as **High**. The Consortium overall has done an excellent job of implementing an appropriate variety of technology tools and applications that, coupled with experience and effective operational practices, enhance the effectiveness of the route system and the information available to the users of this system. The organization and policy structure of the Consortium is well suited to take advantage of the technology available to ensure an effective and efficient transportation system. Ultimately, the best evidence of this is the overall performance of the route system itself which, based on a series of relevant performance metrics, is excellent. Various opportunities exist to continue enhancing and, more importantly, to ensure the continued success of this program as inevitable staff turnover occurs. These are, however, relatively minor improvements that do not take away from the overall high level of efficiency and effectiveness evident in the current system.

# 6 Contracts

## 6.1 Introduction

The Contracts section refers to the processes and practices by which the Consortium enters into and manages its transportation service contracts. The analysis stems from a review of the following three key components of Contracting Practices:

- Contract Structure;
- Contract Negotiations; and
- Contract Management.

Each component has been analysed based on observations from information provided by the Consortium, including interviews with Consortium management and select Operators. The analysis is comprised of an assessment of best practices leading to a set of recommendations. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component, which is then summarized to determine an E&E assessment of Contracting Practices as shown below:

**Contracts – E&E Rating: High**

## 6.2 Contract Structure

An effective transportation contract establishes a clear point of reference that defines the roles, requirements, and expectations of each party involved and details the compensation for providing the designated service. Effective contracts also provide penalties for failure to meet established service parameters and may provide incentives for exceeding service requirements. Contract analysis includes a review of the clauses contained in the contract, ensuring that the terms are clearly articulated and a review of the fee structure is conducted to enable comparison of its components to best practice.

### 6.2.1 Observations

*Bus Operator Contract Clauses*

The Bus Operator Contracts contain clauses related to terms of service, operator requirements, contract default, insurance, routing, vehicles, drivers, administration, consideration and accounting, accidents, and notifications. Appendices to the contracts include requirements for driver qualifications and responsibilities, basic first aid training, CPR training, general safety, and other specific training. The appendices also cover directives regarding the care of the students with special needs. The contract is

comprehensive and captures all appropriate terms and requirements providing for an effective tool for managing performance.

*Bus Operator Contract Management*

Currently, nine Operators have contracts with the Consortium to provide student transportation services. All contracts are up to date. However, some of the contracts during the first year of the RFP were signed after the school year started. The contract renewals for 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007- 2008 have since been signed prior to the start of the school year.

*Parent Paid Driver Contracts*

Parent Agreements for Transportation are signed between parents who provide transportation to their own students to and from school and the Executive Director of the Consortium. The contract defines the safety and insurance requirements and the rate paid by the Consortium. However, the service timeline is not noted in the contract, but rather in a cover letter that accompanies the contract.

*Cost Inflation*

For the first three years of the RFP, the rates charged by the operators were defined in the RFP submission and are carried through to the final contracts. However, the contracts include provisions that allow for annual discussions between the Consortium, BODs and Operators to consider fluctuations in costs, such as fuel prices and new provincial/federal regulation fleet requirements. This RFP did not make specific reference as to how regulatory changes which impact cost would be treated as potential cost inflators.

### 6.2.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following area:

- All contracts clearly state the terms and clauses both parties need to standby. This eliminates the potential disputes or liabilities. The inflation factor built into the contracts reflects the flexible nature of the contracts. It demonstrates that the Consortium has already taken the price fluctuation into consideration and built the potential risks into its business operations.

### 6.2.3 Recommendations

*Parent contract*

It was noted that the term of the parent agreements are found in the cover letter accompanying the contract. Rather than issuing a separate letter indicating the timeline, the Consortium should amend their current parent contract to include a timeline to avoid any possible confusion and/or the risk that the cover letter and contract somehow get separated.

*Contract Clauses*

There needs to be flexibility in the contract for funding alignments to any new federal and provincial regulatory requirements (seat belts, new integrated seats etc.) beyond those specifically detailed as potential cost inflations factors such as fuel. A new clause should also be introduced in the contract that if a driver is fired by the Operator due to concerns of the Consortium, that driver cannot be hired by another Operator to serve the Consortium.

## 6.3 Contract Negotiations

Contract negotiations are intended to provide an avenue by which the Consortium, as a purchaser of services, can ultimately obtain the best value for money. The goal of the Consortium is to obtain high quality service at efficient market prices.

### 6.3.1 Observations

*RFP Process*

<u>Key Terms in the RFP</u>

Since its inception in 2002, the Consortium has used a competitive procurement process (RFP) to select student transportation service providers. The Executive Director and BOD are involved in the RFP draft and the evaluation process. Operators submit proposals for the services as independent entities. The following terms and clauses were included in the RFP:

- The Consortium reserves the right not to proceed with the contract and to reject all or any of the proposals;
- Operators submit proposals in reply to the RFP which include their pricing and other headings which describe the key features of the services they are offering;

- The Consortium reserves the right to disqualify proposals that are not submitted in strict accordance with the requirements of the RFP;

- The proposal submission with the lowest quoted price will not necessarily be selected. While the price is an important element in the selection process, there are number of criteria that the Consortium will consider in examining proposals which are listed in this section under the subheading Evaluation Criteria; and

- The Consortium reserves the right to award the project to one respondent alone or, if it deems appropriate, the project maybe divided and awarded to more than one respondent.

Operator Compensation

Operator compensation is based on the price submitted in the successful proposal. Operator completed price submission sheets, which accompany the proposals, line up to the terms within the resulting contracts. The operator compensation is outlined by the following categories:

- Price per kilometre for buses having a capacity of 60-72 passengers;

- Price per kilometre for buses having a capacity of 30-48 passengers;

- Price per kilometre for buses having a capacity of 10-24 passengers;

- Price per kilometre for wheelchair buses;

- Price per kilometre for mini-vans (capacity of less than 10 passengers);

- Price per kilometre for automobiles; and

- Price per hour for time not included in the original route scheduling, to be paid in quarter hour fractions rounded to the nearest quarter hour.

In addition, the Consortium has agreed to periodically review and benchmark the price of fuel and provide additional compensation if required. The contract clauses fully articulate the financial ramifications in place when bus service does not occur due to: inclement weather either by decision of the Consortium or by the Operator; labour dispute resulting in work stoppage; or mechanical problems.

Evaluation Criteria

Operator’s company background, vehicle fleet and facilities and prices were the three main categories under evaluation for each of the submitted proposals. The RFP defines

the minimum score for the company background category to essentially define a preliminary screen of qualifications necessary for providing services to the Consortium. Other criteria used in the evaluation of proposals included:

- Satisfactory client references from past assignments;
- Satisfactory client references from past assignments with Partner Boards of the Consortia;
- Other relevant details of the respondent including facilities, equipment, and fleet capacity;
- Financial stability of the respondent;
- Ability to perform the requested services;
- Ability to meet the terms of the contract;
- Age, condition, and maintenance of bus fleet;
- Acceptable level of insurance; and
- Absence of any existing or potential conflict of interest.

Bus Operators are required to provide a copy of their employee manual /safety program to the Consortium for review. The documents should stipulate all mandatory qualification and training requirements for school bus drivers.

Route Assignment

The highest ranked proposal submission will be assigned a number of routes by the Consortium by the Executive Director. The next highest ranked proposal will then be assigned routes until all of the available routes have been assigned. The number of routes assigned will be determined by the Consortium and will be based on the perceived capacity and capability of the Operator in the sole opinion of the Consortium designate taking into consideration the existing fleet and management structure of the respondent as well as the minimum and maximum number of routes outlined in the price submission.

In a situation where the selected proponent (current operator) cannot meet the contract requirements to provide student transportation services (e.g. not being able to provide student transportation services due to a union strike), the service will be contracted out by the Consortium to the Operator that has the second highest score of the RFP submission. The number of routes to each operator is assigned on the basis of the

perceived capacity and capability of the Operator in the sole opinion of the Executive Director, while taking into consideration the existing fleet (age and vehicle size) and management structure of the respondent as well as the minimum and maximum number of routes outlined in the price submission. The Executive Director assigns routes in common geographic areas to achieve higher efficiencies of operation where possible.

*RFP Practices*

Regular school bus, summer school bus, special education bus and taxi transportation services were competitively procured separately by the Consortium.

Regular Bus and Special Education Bus

The regular bus RFP and special education bus RFP were both advertised in the newspapers and via MERX in May 2002. Both RFPs cover the introduction of the competitive procurement process, terms and conditions and evaluation criteria. It has been noted that a fuel escalator clause has been considered in the RFPs, the Consortium has the option to reset the daily rates and offset any unexpected cost. The RFP defines the minimum score for the company background category to essentially define a preliminary screen of qualifications necessary for providing services to the Consortia. The contracts effective 2002-2003 have 3 year terms with 2 subsequent yearly renewals. There is an additional one year renewal for the September 2007 school year which acknowledges revised contract terms and conditions of the services to be provided during the current 2007/2008 school year. The regular and special needs bus contracts are signed by Executive Director and Chair of the Board of Directors.

Taxi

Every July, an RFP for taxis to provide transportation services is advertised locally. The RFP document includes introduction of the competitive procurement process, terms and conditions and evaluation criteria. Operators' company background, vehicle fleet and facilities and prices were the three main categories under evaluation for each of the submitted proposals. The RFP defines the minimum score for the company background category to essentially define a preliminary screen of qualifications necessary for providing services to the Consortia. The deadline for the RFP submissions was mid-August. Taxi service providers sign contracts annually with the Consortium represented by the Executive Director and Chair of the Board of Directors. As of 2007, a 2-year contract was endorsed which covers the terms and conditions for the current 2007-2008 school year and 2008-2009 school year.

Summer School Bus

The RFP to procure summer school bus services specified acceptance of replies from local operators only. The RFP is usually issued in June and closes by the end of the month. The term of the contract(s) is for a period of approximately one month in summer as dates vary by Board. The RFP document includes introduction of the competitive procurement process, terms and conditions and evaluation criteria. Operators' company background, vehicle fleet and facilities and prices were the three main categories of criteria used to evaluate the proposals. The RFP defines the minimum score for the company background category to essentially define a preliminary screen of qualifications necessary for providing services to the Consortia. Effective 2002-2003, yearly contracts include full services for routes, planning and parent contact. Summer school contract is approved by Executive Director only.

*Process for Upcoming RFPs*

The Consortium has begun preparing RFPs for the transportation services for the 2008-2009 school year. The Consortium is awaiting an expected RFP template for the industry which is scheduled to be released in early 2008. In the meantime, the Consortium is turning to secondary sources of input to assist in drafting the RFP to ensure that the timing of the procurement process enables appropriate market acceptance, response, evaluation and contract endorsement to take place prior to the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

### 6.3.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following area:

- The RFP Process introduced the business opportunity to a competitive market. Based on the RFP submission, the Consortium was able to identify the most qualified transportation service Operators that offered the best prices for the level of services provided. It is also noted that the Consortium did not adopt a "one-size-fit-all" approach for the RFP process. Based on the specific geographic condition of the area, special students' needs and particular Boards' requirements, the transportation needs of the area for the Partner Boards are divided into 4 categories, namely regular school bus, special needs bus, taxi and summer school bus. This builds flexibility into the transportation system, thus leads to cost saving and high quality services provided to students.

### 6.3.3 Recommendations

*RFP Evaluation Process*

Modifications to the existing RFP should include an adjustment to the evaluation methodology to ensure that the weighted scoring applied takes into account not only financial terms of proposals but also reflect the importance of service level standards which enable the goals and objectives of the Consortia to be achieved. This permits the evaluation to identify value for money in the procurement of transportation services.

## 6.4 Contract Management

Contracting practices do not end after a contract is signed. Ongoing monitoring of compliance and performance of contracted service is an important and valuable practice to enhance service levels and ensure that contractors are providing the level of services that were agreed upon. Monitoring should be performed proactively and on a regular and ongoing basis in order to be effective.

### 6.4.1 Observations

*Monitoring*

Compliance with contract terms is formalized in a checklist based approach (both an administrative audit and route audit form). Compliance is also monitored through notification from school officials and parents as to deviations in expected service levels. Complaints are taken and logged by the Consortium staff. Both parties involved in a dispute are interviewed by Consortium staff and actions taken are also recorded to close the dispute. If a dispute is not resolved at the staff level, it is referred to the management of the Consortium. The BOD is involved if the dispute or issue cannot be resolved at the Consortium level. Daily inspection (Trip) and maintenance are required by Operators on all school buses according to MTO legislation.

<u>Route Audit</u>

The Transportation Officer is responsible for random audits of bus routes and staff system usage training. The Consortium has also acquired assistance from the MTO in the past for the vehicle inspection portion of Operator audits. Based on the complaints received by the Consortium, and a rotation schedule that ensures appropriate coverage, Consortium staff select certain Operators and routes for audit. All Operators are audited yearly with routes of Operators who receive multiple complaints being given more attention.

A route audit form is used to enable verification of compliance with safety, legal, and service requirements. Compliance verification is also accomplished indirectly through notification of timing or route deviation from parents, Consortium and school staff.

In addition, the Consortium has installed video cameras in their school buses as a monitoring function. The equipment is provided by a third party supplier. The units are tamper proof in that if the recording device is disabled the bus is also disabled from starting. The cameras provide full coverage of the bus from rear, front, entranceway, and area just outside the doorway. Security cameras are not installed on all buses rather installed at the Consortium's discretion as the result of a complaint against driver, students, or as part of the route audit process. The Consortium have found that the use of cameras to be a very useful tool in dispute situations and an effective monitoring device.

Administrative Audit

The Operator Administrative Audit covers all administrative requirements for the bus such as valid drivers' license, proper training certificate, and insurance. Route Audit includes outside and inside examination of the school buses. The physical conditions of the buses and the operations are checked against the standard by the transportation officer during a regular audit. Logs in a check list format are designed to facilitate the auditing process. A follow up process is in place for compliance to audit deficiencies.

The Consortium also receives and reviews minutes of the Operators' internal meetings.

Fleet Requirement

Every year, the Operator vehicle list is updated in order to ensure that maximum fleet age policies and back-up fleet requirements are met. In 2006-2007 there was 100% compliance with these terms. The prior consent of the Consortium is required before any school buses above the maximum age requirement are used by the Operator. It is stated in the contracts that vehicles used in the provision of transportation services shall be a maximum of 12 years old for 24 passenger vehicles or higher and maximum 10 years old for all other vehicles in use at any time during the term of the contracts. While fleet age is monitored annually and no problems have ever been found, if a bus is found that is not in compliance with these fleet age terms, this would be covered within the contract clause that states that the operator must receive written confirmation from the consortia as to whether they can use the vehicle in question as part of the spare fleet, otherwise if no such permission is granted the bus in question may not be used for student transportation. If the operator is still found to be not in compliance that operator contract would be void and granted to another operator.

Training Audit

First Time Rider orientation, Bus Patroller Session, Emergency Evacuation training courses are provided by the Operators to students. A comment and suggestion form is designed to collect feedback for further improvement. Consortium staff audit the sessions to monitor the quality of the training session and provides recommendations and areas of improvements.

*Consortium Assistance to the Operators*

The Consortium provides a wide array of training opportunities to Drivers. The Consortium hired Century Consulting to teach Operators a discipline related program for regular and special needs students. Training sessions were provided to Drivers to deal with autistic and special need students through a partner program with a School Board special education consultant. Drivers are required to attend Customer Service Course and training on “How to Deal with Difficult Situations and Diffuse Anger”. The Consortium has trained the trainers who must train new drivers or review when issues between drivers and students escalate.

Regular sessions were held by the Consortium with drivers to review Operator and Driver Compliance to set route and changes as well as discipline policies. These sessions have provided an opportunity for drivers to voice their concerns and provide input on future sessions.

*Dispute Policy*

Complaints from schools and parents are taken and logged by the Consortium staff. Both parties involved in a dispute are interviewed by the Consortium staff and actions taken are also recorded to close the dispute. If a dispute is not resolved at the staff level, it is referred to the management of the Consortium. BOD is involved if the disputes involving school discipline cannot be resolved at the Consortium level.

### 6.4.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated a best practice in the following area:

- The Consortium has a set of procedures in place to monitor the performance of the transportation Operators to make sure they achieve the service quality level indicated in the Contract. Because there is formal check list for the route and administrative audit, the checks performed by the Consortium staff covers all aspects of the services.

## 6.5 Results of E&E Review

Contracting practices have been assessed as **High**. The Consortium has demonstrated good practices in contracting by adopting competitive procurement processes for all its Operators. Contracts are well articulated to identify critical service elements, contract management, and auditing requirements. Administrative and managerial processes have been established to ensure that all contracts are signed and current. These management processes ensure and that the specific requirements of the contract are actually implemented. Additionally, specific provisions designed to promote and enhance student safety through mandated driver and student training represent model contracting practices. However, we do identify areas of improvement, such as the design and evaluation methodology within the existing RFP process which can be improved with the help of the Ministry.

# 7 Funding Adjustment

The Ministry has asked the E&E Review Team to apply their Funding Adjustment Formula to each Board that was subject to an E&E Review in Phase 2. Note that where Boards are incurring transportation expenses in multiple Consortium sites, the Board's adjustment will be prorated for the portion attributed to the Consortium under review. For example, if 90% of Board A's expenditures are attributed to Consortium A, and 10% of expenditures are attributed to Consortium B, the funding adjustment resulting from Consortium A's review will be applied to 90% of Board A's deficit or surplus position.

The Ministry's funding formula is as follows:

| Overall Rating | Effect on deficit boards[13] | Effect on surplus boards |
|---|---|---|
| High | Reduce the gap by 100% (i.e. eliminate the gap) | No in-year funding impact; out-year changes are to be determined |
| Moderate-High | Reduce the gap by 90% | Same as above |
| Moderate | Reduce the gap by 60% | Same as above |
| Moderate-Low | Reduce the gap by 30% | Same as above |
| Low | Reduce the gap in the range of 0% to 30% | Same as above |

Based on the Ministry's funding formula, in conjunction with our E&E assessment of the Consortium, the following funding adjustments will be made in the 2007-08 school year for each Board:

## Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| 2006-07 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | $792,920 |
| % of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded) | 80.56% |
| Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium | $638,779 |
| E&E Rating | Moderate-High |

[13] This refers to boards that have a deficit/surplus on student transportation

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula | No adjustment |
| 2007-08 Total Funding adjustment | $0 |

### Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| 2006-07 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | ($224,885) |
| % of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded) | 86.87% |
| Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium | ($195,350) |
| E&E Rating | Moderate-High |
| Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula | 90% |
| 2007-08 Total Funding adjustment | $175,815 |

### Rainbow District School Board

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| 2006-07 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | $11,464 |
| % of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded) | 100% |
| Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium | $11,464 |
| E&E Rating | Moderate-High |
| Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula | No adjustment |
| 2007-08 Total Funding adjustment | $0 |

## Sudbury Catholic District School Board

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| 2006-07 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | $968,581 |
| % of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded) | 100% |
| Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium | $968,581 |
| E&E Rating | Moderate-High |
| Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula | No adjustment |
| 2007-08 Total Funding adjustment | $0 |

## Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board

| Item | Values |
|---|---|
| 2006-07 Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | $171,755 |
| % of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded) | 5.88% |
| Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium | $10,101 |
| E&E Rating | Moderate-High |
| Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula | No adjustment |
| 2007-08 Total Funding adjustment | $0 |

# 8 Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

| Terms | Definitions |
|---|---|
| Act | *Education Act* |
| Assessment Guide | The guide prepared by the E&E review team and the Ministry of Education which will be used as the basis for determining the overall effectiveness and efficiency of each Consortium |
| Budget and Administration Assistant | As shown in Figure 5 |
| Common Practice | Refers to a set of planning parameters that have been reported by Ontario school boards as the most commonly adopted planning policies and practices. These are used as references in the assessment of the relative level of service and efficiency. |
| Consortium or Sudbury | Sudbury Student Service Consortium |
| CSCGO | Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario |
| CSCNO | Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario |
| Deloitte | Deloitte & Touche LLP (Canada) |
| Driver | Refers to bus Drivers, see also Operators |
| E&E | Effectiveness and Efficiency |
| E&E Review Team | As defined in Section 1.1.5 |
| E&E Reviews | As defined in Section 1.1.4 |
| Effective | Having an intended or expected effect; the ability to deliver intended service |
| Efficient | Performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort; the ability to achieve cost savings without compromising safety |
| Evaluation Framework | The document, titled "Evaluation Framework For Sudbury Student Transportation Services " which supports the E&E Review Team's Assessment; this document is not a public document |
| Executive Director | As shown in Figure 5 |

| Terms | Definitions |
|---|---|
| Funding Adjustment Formula | As described in Section 1.3.6 |
| HR | Human Resources |
| Huron | Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board |
| IT | Information Technology |
| JK/SK | Junior Kindergarten/Senior Kindergarten |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicators |
| Management Consultants | As defined in Section 1.1.5 |
| Memo | Memorandum 2006: SB13, dated July 11 issued by the Ministry |
| Ministry | The Ministry of Education of Ontario |
| MPS | Management Partnership Services Inc., the routing consultant, as defined in Section 1.1.5 |
| MTO | The Ministry of Transportation of Ontario |
| Operators | Refers to companies that operate school buses and the individuals who run those companies. In some instances, an Operator may also be a Driver. |
| Overall Rating | As Defined in Section 3.2 of the Evaluation Framework |
| Partner Boards or Boards | The school boards that have participated as full partners in the Consortium |
| Rainbow or RDSB | Rainbow District School Board |
| Rating | The E&E Assessment score on a scale of High to Low, see Section 1.3.4 |
| Report | The report prepared by the E&E Review Team for each Consortium that has undergone an E&E Review (i.e. this document) |
| Separate Legal Entity | Incorporation |
| Service Purchasing Boards | Refers to School Boards who purchase student transportation services for their students through the Consortium. These Service Purchasing Boards are not full partners in the Consortium |

| Terms | Definitions |
|---|---|
| SCDSB | Sudbury Catholic District School Board |
| Transfer Site | A location not owned by the School Board where students move from one vehicle to another to enable more efficient routing. |
| Transportation Clerk | As shown in Figure 5 |
| Transportation Planner | As shown in Figure 5 |
| Transportation Officer | As shown in Figure 5 |
| Transportation Technician | As shown in Figure 5 |

# 9 Appendix 2: Financial Review – by School Board

## Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel-Ontario

| Item | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allocation[14] | 5,436,778 | 5,683,929 | 5,741,839 | 5,905,602 |
| Expenditure[15] | 4,920,383 | 4,992,628 | 4,948,919 | 5,290,498 |
| Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | 516,395 | 691,301 | 792,920 | 615,104 |
| Total Expenditures paid to Sudbury | N/A | 4,024,141 | 3,986,869 | 4,273,187 |
| As % of total Expenditures of Board | N/A | 80.6% | 80.56% | 80.77% |

## Conseil scolaire publique du Grand-Nord de l'Ontario

| Item | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allocation[14] | 1,407,587 | 1,466,825 | 1,467,536 | 1,496,886 |
| Expenditure[15] | 1,702,318 | 1,648,704 | 1,692,421 | 1,819,900 |
| Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | (294,731) | (181,879) | (224,885) | (323,014) |
| Total Expenditures paid to Sudbury | N/A | 1,424,211 | 1,470,145 | 1,594,491 |
| As % of total Expenditures of Board | N/A | 86.38% | 86.87% | 87.61% |

## Rainbow District School Board

| Item | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allocation[14] | 10,930,113 | 11,304,974 | 10,776,096 | 10,991,753 |
| Expenditure[15] | 10,957,627 | 11,745,622 | 10,764,632 | 11,099,250 |
| Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | (27,514) | (440,648) | 11,464 | (107,497) |

[14] Allocation based on Ministry data – includes all grant allocations for transportation (Section 9 0008C, Section 13 00006C, Section 13 000012C)
[15] Expenditure based on Ministry data – taken from Data Form D: 730C (Adjusted expenditures for compliance) - 212C (Other Revenues) + 798C (Capital expenditures funded from operating)

## Sudbury Catholic District School Board

| Item | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allocation[14] | 4,979,283 | 5,183,279 | 5,264,785 | 5,370,081 |
| Expenditure[15] | 4,565,810 | 4,226,929 | 4,296,204 | 4,441,522 |
| Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | 413,473 | 956,350 | 968,581 | 928,559 |

## Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board

| Item | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allocation[14] | 3,176,441 | 3,369,660 | 3,358,976 | 3,426,335 |
| Expenditure[15] | 3,263,136 | 3,183,722 | 3,187,201 | 3,201,450 |
| Transportation Surplus (Deficit) | (86,695) | 185,938 | 171,775 | 224,885 |
| Total Expenditures paid to Board | N/A | 187,218 | 187,422 | 188,260 |
| As % of total Expenditures of Board | N/A | 5.88% | 5.88% | 5.88% |

# 10 Appendix 3: Document List

1. Consortium Governance Policies Agreement
2. Organizational Chart
3. Minutes from Board of Directors Meetings
4. Minutes from Superintendents Meeting
5. Description of the Roles and Responsibilities of Governance Members Including Meeting Requirements
6. School Bus Discipline Workshop and Overview
7. Purchase of Services Agreement
8. Performance Review (Union and Non-Union)
9. Description of Staff Training Requirements Programs
10. Goals, Objectives and special Projects
11. Key Service Indicators
12. Consortium Quarterly Report
13. Comment and Suggestion Forms
14. Transit Study Report
15. School Emergency Evaluation
16. Administrative Policies and Procedures
17. Departmental Procedures and Policies
18. Annual Financial Statement
19. Monthly Annual Reconciliations
20. Expenditure and Authority Approval
21. Copy of Chart of Accounts

22. Annual Budgeting Process
23. Calculation of Board Advances
24. Cost Sharing for Home to School Transportation
25. Cost Sharing Process for Administration
26. Consortium Agreement
27. Purchase of Services Agreement – First Nations
28. Dispute Resolution Process
29. School Bus Discipline Workshop and Overview
30. Procedures and Policies for Bus Contracts
31. Request for Proposal – Regular
32. Request for Proposal – Special Needs
33. Request for Proposal – Summer School
34. Request for Proposal – Taxi
35. Procedures and Policies for Contracting Vehicles for Special Needs
36. Operator Contracts
37. Signed Contracts
38. Description of Contract Compensation
39. Copy of Driver Training Manual – Leuschen
40. Joint Operator Training with MTO Staff
41. Monitoring Program
42. Confidential Forms
43. Inventory of School Bus Fleet

# 11 Appendix 4: Common Practices

## Home to School Distance

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 0.8 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 3.2 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.5 |
| Policy - RDSB | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.5 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.5 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.5 |
| Practice | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.5 |

## Home to Bus Stop Distance

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.25 |
| Policy - RDSB | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.25 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.25 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.25 |
| Practice | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.25 |

## Arrival Window

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 25 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Policy - RDSB | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Practice | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |

## Departure Window

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 16 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 18 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Policy - RDSB | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Practice | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 20 |

## Earliest Pick Up Time

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 6:30 | 6:30 | 6:30 | 6:30 | 6:00 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 6:20 | 6:20 | 6:20 | 6:20 | 6:15 |
| Policy - RDSB | 6:15 | 6:15 | 6:15 | 6:15 | 6:15 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 6:55 | 6:55 | 6:55 | 6:55 | 6:55 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 6:50 | 6:50 | 6:50 | 6:50 | 6:25 |
| Practice **Note 3** | | | | | |

## Latest Drop Off Time

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 5:30 | 5:30 | 5:30 | 5:30 | 6:00 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:35 |
| Policy - RDSB | 5:00 | 5:00 | 5:00 | 5:00 | 4:55 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 4:20 | 4:20 | 4:20 | 4:20 | 4:20 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:50 | 4:35 |
| Practice **Note 4** | | | | | |

## Maximum Ride Time

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-7 | Gr. 8 | Gr. 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 75 | 75 | 75 | 75 | 90 |
| Policy - SCDSB | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Policy - RDSB | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Practice | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | **Note 1** |

## Seated Student Per Vehicle

| Activity | JK/SK | Gr. 1-3 | Gr. 4-6 | Gr. 7-12 | Gr. JK-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Practice | 69 | 69 | 69 | 52 | - |
| Policy - SCDSB | 66 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 55 |
| Policy - RDSB | 66 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 55 |
| Policy - CSGNO | 66 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 55 |
| Policy - CSCNO | 66 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 55 |
| Practice | 66 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 55 |

Note 1: In practice, rides times may be as longer than 60 minutes for students that live in rural areas. The Consortium will be reviewing all routes for possible solutions.

Note 2: Policies are fully harmonized.

Note 3: Bell times and routing efficiency determine actual Pick Up times

Note 4: Bell times and routing efficiency determine actual Drop Off times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