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Student Transportation Effectiveness & Efficiency Review Leading Practices Guide

February 2010 (Updated April 2015)

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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.

À noter que la version anglaise est la version officielle du présent rapport. En cas de divergences entre les versions anglaise et française du rapport, la version anglaise l'emporte.

Purpose of this guide

- The **purpose** of this guide is to:

  - Define a common process, scope and supporting tool set for the E&E Reviews;

  - Identify existing Leading practices; and

  - Provide resource material so that consortia can build upon these Leading practices.

- **Leading practices** are methods and techniques that have consistently shown superior results, and which can be used as benchmarks to strive for. Leading practices may not remain the Leading practices for very long as new and improved ways of completing tasks are found, and governing legislation is revised requiring Consortia to adapt.

- New standards may emerge for a number of reasons:

  - New technologies; for example, the use of GIS to improve contract management and routing;

  - Increased expectations; for example, in terms of data accuracy and reporting capacity; and

  - Changing environment:

    - Social - demographic changes such as new accessibility standards;

    - Economic - fiscal climate, competitive pricing; and

    - Other environmental factors - new policy or regulation, environmental concerns, alternative fuels.

- While the E&E Review Team acknowledges each consortium's unique context and characteristics, there is a set of leading practices that should exist at some level in all consortia. However, consortia are encouraged to modify the leading practices based on their individual circumstances.

Leading practices are not static and consortia are encouraged to not only implement these, but to seek innovative ways in which to improve upon the practices identified in this guide.

Guide layout

This guide is split into five sections:

1. **Leading practices:** Presents a conceptual framework and overview of the leading practices in each of the following areas:

    • Consortium Management;

    • Policies and Practices;

    • Routing and Technology; and

    • Contracts.

2. Defining relationships: Provides detailed guidance on the means by which consortia should define their business relationships. Recommended contract clauses are also presented.

3. Consortium Manager's Workbook: Provides an overview of the leading practices and provides additional guidance to consortium managers on how they can implement and document the leading practices.

    – The workbook proposes a series of self assessment questions. These are questions that consortium managers should ask themselves when addressing a particular leading practice.

    – Also presented are examples of the documentation used by the E&E Review Team to verify that a leading practice is being exhibited.

4. Appendix 1: Provides background information on the E&E Review process and the E&E Follow-up Review process.

5. Appendix 2: Provides a management framework that should be considered by consortia. While these items are not explicitly evaluated during the E&E Review, the E&E Review Team believes that thoughtful reflection on these factors will contribute to the Consortium's overall success in the evaluated areas.
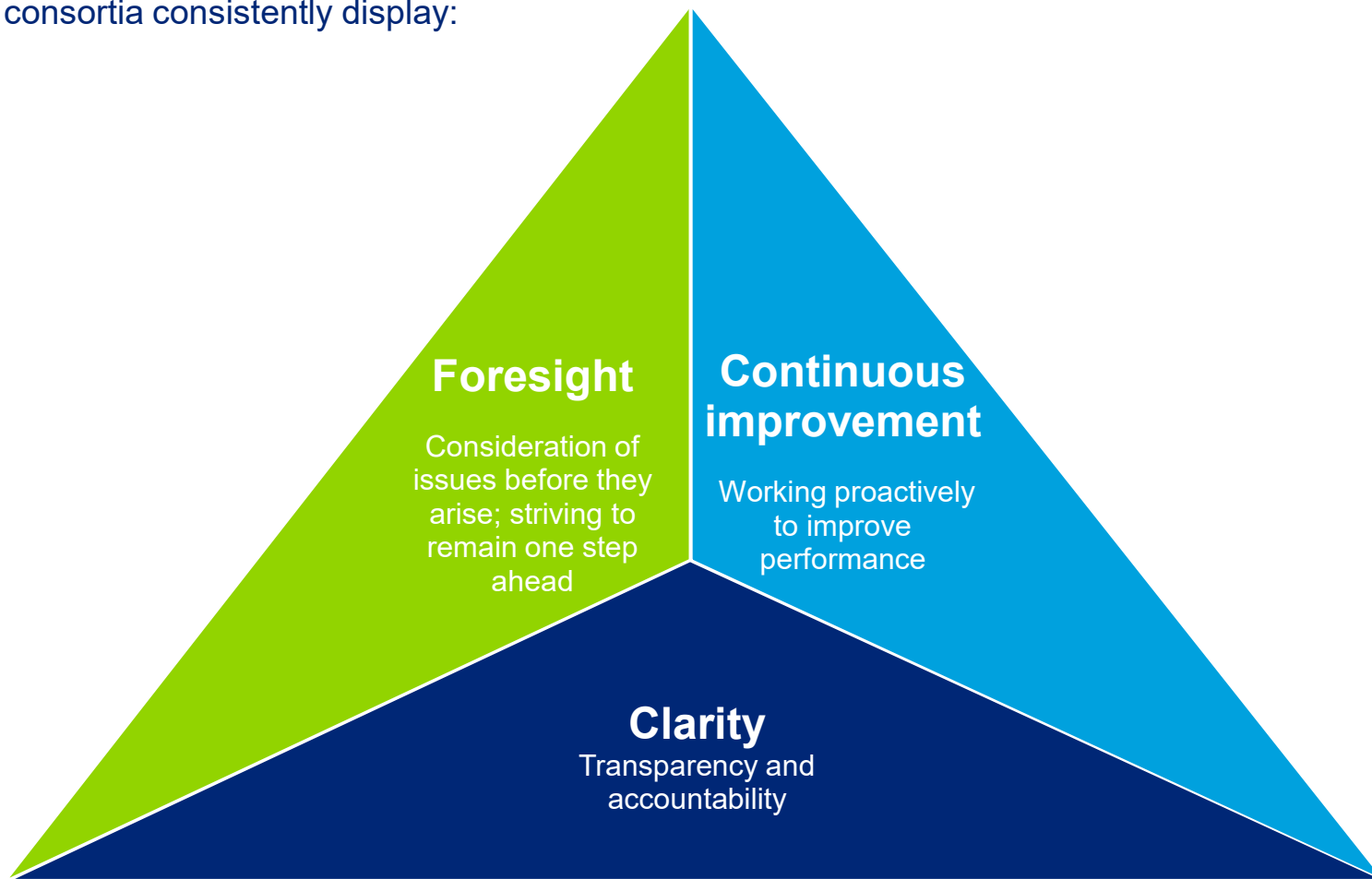
Section I
Leading practices

Key Themes

Leading practices
Key themes

Highly effective and efficient consortia demonstrate three central characteristics. These arch over all four areas evaluated in the E&E Review: consortium management; policies and practices; routing and technology; and contracts; and underlie all leading practices identified in this guide. Highly effective and efficient consortia consistently display:

Foresight

Consideration of issues before they arise; striving to remain one step ahead

Continuous improvement

Working proactively to improve performance

Clarity
Transparency and accountability

1.0 Consortium Management
Consortium Management Overview

Consortium Management encompasses the management of the entire organization providing student transportation services. Consortium Management is comprised of four key sections: governance; organizational structure; consortium management; and financial management. Identified below are some of the questions the E&E Review Team seeks to address in the review of Consortium Management:

Governance
- How is the Consortium directed and controlled?
- What structures are in place to monitor, measure and improve Consortium management?
- Have the roles and responsibilities of the governance committee been clearly defined and documented?
- How does the Consortium ensure independence from school boards while remaining accountable?
- What is the nature of the relationship between governance body and Consortium management?

Organizational structure
- What is the Consortium's legal status?
- How are the Consortium's departmental functions defined?
- What are the reporting and communication structures within the Consortium?
- Have roles and responsibilities of Consortium staff been clearly defined, documented and communicated?

Effective and Efficient Consortium Management

Consortium Management
- Has the Consortium formalized its service-level relationship with school boards?
- Does the Consortium have appropriate agreements in place with all of its suppliers?
- Does the Consortium carry sufficient insurance?
- Are appropriate Human Resource management practices being employed for all staff?
- What is the Consortium's strategic planning process?
- How does the Consortium monitor its operational performance?
- How has the Consortium addressed issues related to the use of student information?

Financial management
- How does the Consortium plan for its future financial needs?
- How does the Consortium monitor its ongoing financial performance?
- What are the Consortium's accounting policies and procedures?
- Does the Consortium have an expenditure review/reduction plan?
- Is there appropriate internal oversight?

1.1   Consortium Management - governance

Governance refers to the way in which an organization is directed and controlled. Establishing organizational structures and processes that facilitate, monitor, measure and improve effective business management are the primary responsibilities of a governance structure. Three key principles for an effective governance structure are: accountability; transparency; and recognition of stakeholders.

Leading Practices	Description
The Consortium has an identifiable governance structure.	An effective governance structure should provide oversight and act as an accountability mechanism for the Consortium, thus helping to ensure that the Consortium is operating as effectively and efficiently as possible.
Governance committee membership is clearly defined with equal representation from member boards.	The membership structure of the Consortium should be clear, documented and must have appropriate protocols in place (relating to, for example, the qualifications required to be a member of the Consortium's governance committee). The Consortium's governance committee should also have equal representation from all member boards in order to promote fairness, allow for equal participation in decision making, and to ensure that the rights of all member boards are considered equally. Governance committee decision making should be inclusive without jeopardizing efficiency.
Existence of member board level dispute resolution process.	A dispute resolution policy should be in place with a clear process that has been communicated to all member boards.
The roles and responsibilities of the governance committee are clearly defined, and governance committee members are fully informed as to what their roles and responsibilities are.	Consortium governance structure(s) and individual members of the governance committee should have defined roles and responsibilities, and have sufficient decision making responsibility delegated to them in order to ensure comprehensive and efficient oversight. In addition, governance committee members should be fully informed as to what their roles and responsibilities are, particularly for Consortia that are separate legal entities. There should be no ambiguity on the function(s) of individual Consortium governance structure(s) or the individuals involved with governance for the Consortium.
Separation of governance from operations. Note – this is very important.	There should be a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities delegated to Consortium governance and Consortium management. This allocation of roles and responsibilities should reflect a separation between oversight and the day-to-day activities of Consortium management. This separation should be reflected in both the documentation and in practice.
Meetings of the governance committee are structured and documented.	Meetings of the Consortium's governance structure(s) should be scheduled in advance and should have formal agendas. These meetings should also be documented using meeting minutes that are then ratified and signed, with an 'original' copy stored with the Consortium.

1.2 Consortium Management - organizational structure

An optimized organizational structure can promote effective communication and coordination which will enable operations to run more effectively. This section includes three key subsections: entity status, internal organization and consortium staff roles and responsibilities.

Leading Practices	Description
The Consortium has an identifiable legal status.	The Consortium's legal status should reflect careful consideration of issues related to, among others, liability; corporate continuity; staff planning; contracting and management. Ideally, the Consortium is incorporated as a separate legal entity, thus ensuring stability, accountability and continuity while safeguarding member boards against third party liabilities. This structure provides the Consortium with independence in terms of the management of its own daily operations.
Existence of an effective and efficient internal organization.	The Consortium should have a clear, documented and functionally or geographically delineated organizational structure. Each role and department in the Consortium should have a clear understanding of its roles, responsibilities and reporting/accountability relationship.
The roles and responsibilities of Consortium staff are clearly defined.	The roles and responsibilities delegated to each position within the Consortium should be clearly defined using job descriptions. These job descriptions should specify actual day-to-day responsibilities, reporting and delegation relationships, and should be reviewed on a regular basis. Clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities will lead to operational efficiencies by ensuring tasks are not duplicated and issues raised can be addressed effectively by Consortium management. Clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities will also ensure that staff can be held accountable for their performance.
Responsibilities to provide effective stakeholder communication are clearly defined.	The Consortium has clear documentation regarding stakeholder communication. This documentation should include who is responsible for communicating with stakeholders (schools, operators, parents, students), the appropriate media to convey information, and how often relevant information should be communicated. The Consortium should have a clear understanding about how effective stakeholder communication is to be conducted regularly and in emergency situations.

1.3 Consortium Management - consortium management

Consortium management focuses on the operational aspects of the organization. This includes four key subsections:

1.3.1 Human resource management:

- The success of employees determines the success of any organization. As such, this area assesses the Consortium's ability to effectively motivate its staff.
- Performance evaluations are essential to ensure that employees keep Consortium's objectives in mind during day-to-day operations.
- Leading consortia should establish clear staff training and learning initiatives to promote continuous learning and to ensure that staff is able to fully utilize available technological aids.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has or follows appropriate policies related to human resource management, particularly with respect to staff training and evaluation.	The Consortium should have clear, governance committee-approved HR policies that provide guidance on the Consortium's approach to staff management, training and evaluation. These policies should include a regular review of staffing needs, outline cross-training and succession planning initiatives, and should be harmonized and/or be in line with member school board policies. Evidence of the implementation of these policies, such succession and retention plans, will be reviewed.
Staff training initiatives are planned, documented and tracked on a regular basis in line with the Consortium's HR policies.	Training initiatives for Consortium staff are planned in advance, are in line with the Consortium's goals and objectives, and are in line with the Consortium's HR policies. Training provided, including cross-training, is documented and tracked over time.
Staff performance evaluations are documented and conducted on a regular basis in line with the Consortium's HR policies.	Staff performance evaluations are conducted on a regular basis (at least annually) with a clear, easily understood framework that is specific to the Consortium and its needs. The metrics used are supportive of the goals and objectives of the Consortium and are clearly communicated to staff.

1.3   Consortium Management - consortium management

1.3.2   Risk management

- The Consortium should have clear, detailed and up to date agreements in place with all service purchasers and providers so as to mitigate risk and to clearly outline the scope of services to be rendered.

- The Consortium should maintain clear guidelines regarding procurement and insurance requirements in order to limit liability exposure and increase transparency to stakeholders.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has clear, executed transportation service agreements with all service purchasers.	The Consortium should have agreements in place with all parties to whom it provides services, including member boards and non-member service purchasing boards. These agreements should have clear terms and conditions and should address how costs incurred by the Consortium when providing these services are to be allocated. This cost allocation formula should be rational and fair to all parties involved. Guidance on contract clauses is provided on slide 36.
The Consortium has clear, executed purchase of service agreements with all service providers.	The Consortium should have agreements in place with all parties from which it purchases services, including third party vendors and member boards. These agreements should have clear terms and conditions and should address how the Consortium will be charged for the services it is receiving. Guidance on contract clauses is provided on slide 36.
The Consortium has sufficient insurance coverage and coverage needs are periodically reviewed.	The Consortium should carry sufficient property and general liability insurance and should have a process in place to regularly review and assess its insurance needs.
The Consortium has guidelines in place regarding procurement and purchasing practices and policies.	The Consortium should have clear, documented, governance committee-approved procurement policies that define procurement methodologies with associated thresholds and approval requirements. These policies should be regularly reviewed by Consortium governance to ensure alignment with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act.*
The Consortium has appropriate, documented procedures and confidentiality agreements in place governing the use of student data and ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation.	The Consortium should be in compliance with information and privacy legislation and should have appropriate notices, consent and confidentiality agreements in place governing the use and handling of personal information. Compliance with confidentiality agreements should be regularly monitored and procedures should be in place to manage situations where a breach of confidentiality occurs. The governance committee should also regularly review Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation and the recommendations contained in the OASBO Guidelines for Sharing Personal Student Information with Transportation Consortia to ensure that the Consortium is compliant with known best practices.

1.3   Consortium Management - consortium management

1.3.3   Organizational planning

- The Consortium should maintain up to date long term and short term strategic and operational plans so as to inspire a culture of continuous self-improvement that seeks to proactively address issues before they arise. In addition, the Consortium should perform a regular analysis of its service delivery model to ensure it is providing the most effective and efficient service offering to its member school boards.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has an established, documented and inclusive long term and short term planning process.	The Consortium's strategic vision, as well as its long term and short term goals and priorities should be clearly defined, documented, and governance committee-approved. Goals and objectives should be accompanied by timelines. The specific tasks required to be implemented and the delegation of responsibility for these tasks should also be clearly identified. Procedures should be in place to monitor and report on progress against these strategic goals and objectives at regular intervals, along with procedures on refreshing the strategic and operational planning documents on a regular basis.
The Consortium has an established and documented process by which it analyzes its service delivery model on a regular basis.	The Consortium regularly analyzes portions of its service delivery model (such as its use of public transit, or paid parent drivers) to ensure its current model is providing the most effective and efficient service to its member school boards. The process should be governance committee-approved, and include requirements as to how often different aspects of the model are reviewed.

1.3.4   Performance measurement

- The Consortium should conduct regular operational assessments using Key Performance Indicators to track areas that require improvement and areas of achievement.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has an established, documented process by which it assesses its own performance using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or other performance measures	The Consortium uses a governance committee-approved process and set of metrics (Key Performance Indicators) to assess its own performance over time. These KPIs are tracked over time, are regularly reported to the governance committee, and changes above a pre-determined threshold are investigated and reported upon. The Consortium also utilizes other performance monitoring processes such as performance feedback surveys to assess its own performance.

1.4   Consortium Management – financial management

Sound financial management practices ensure that public funds are used in an accountable manner and also ensure the integrity and accuracy of financial information. This section includes two key subsections:
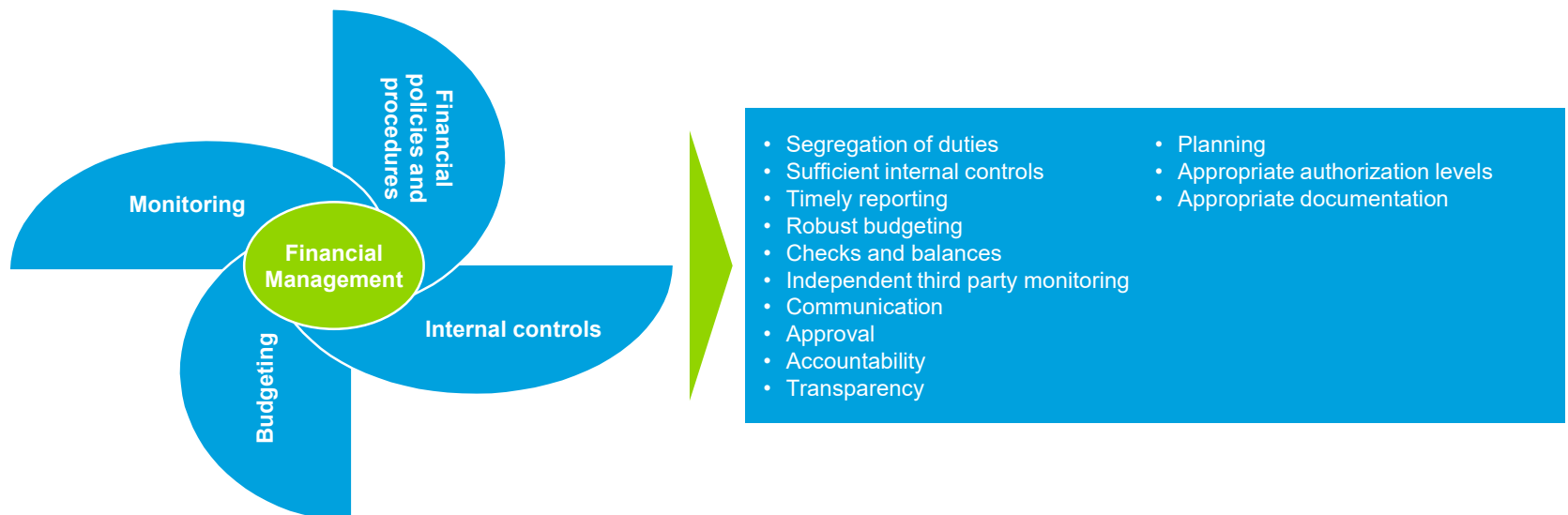
1.4.1 Budget planning and monitoring	– The Consortium should have a structured and documented budget planning process that looks to the future in order to anticipate its upcoming financial need; and
	– Regular, documented budget monitoring procedures should be in place to hold the Consortium accountable for its use of public funds. Such processes also ensure that Consortium management is constantly aware of the Consortium's financial position.
1.4.2 Accounting practices and management	– Appropriate internal controls, policies, responsibilities, authorization levels, and reporting requirements should be in place to ensure that the Consortium has a proper internal financial control system.

Effective financial management is facilitated by the following principles:

- Segregation of duties
- Sufficient internal controls
- Timely reporting
- Robust budgeting
- Checks and balances
- Independent third party monitoring
- Communication
- Approval
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Planning
- Appropriate authorization levels
- Appropriate documentation

1.4 Consortium Management – financial management

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has established a budgeting process, in conjunction with its member boards, that is transparent, clearly communicated and incorporates input from all key stakeholders.	The Consortium's budgeting process should be documented, governance committee-approved, and should detail the process, methodologies and people used to develop the annual budget. The development of the annual budget should include appropriate checks, balances and people in order to ensure the integrity and accuracy of financial projections. Ideally, the Consortium should implement a "bottom-up" budgeting process that starts with the detail of expected or desired costs and derives the overall budget from the detail.
The Consortium has established a budget monitoring process, with regular follow-up and reporting to the governance committee, that ensures that it is accountable for and transparent with its expenditures.	The Consortium's budget tracking process should be documented, governance committee-approved, and should detail the timelines and reporting responsibilities delegated to Consortium management. In turn, Consortium management should also follow up on unexpected or unexplained budget-to-actual variances.
The Consortium has strong, demonstrated long-term financial planning capabilities.	The Consortium's financial planning process should demonstrate foresight by including strategies for adapting to changes in funding levels associated with, for example, declining student enrolment in Ontario.
The Consortium has established appropriate policies, procedures and internal controls for the accounting of its revenues and expenses.	The Consortium's financial management policies and procedures should be documented, governance committee-approved, and should include appropriate checks, reconciliations and allocations of responsibility to ensure the accuracy of its financial results and to protect against accounting errors.
The Consortium reports on its financial performance on a regular basis, in line with its own policies and financial reporting requirements imposed by member school boards.	The Consortium's governance committee should reflect on the financial reporting responsibilities imposed on the Consortium by its member boards and should document the results of its reflections. In addition, and in line with its own financial management policies, the Consortium should report on its financial results over a timeline mandated by the Consortium's governance committee.

1.5 Consortium Management
Summary of key Consortium Management themes

The desired characteristics for an effective and efficient consortium identified in section 1 relate directly to leading practices identified in Consortium Management.

- Defining dispute resolution processes in all contracts and agreements will help ensure that grievances and disagreements are dealt with efficiently and equitably.
- Consideration of the Consortium's legal status with respect to liability, contracting, and staff planning all help to ensure that potential future risks have been considered.
- Maintenance of sufficient insurance helps mitigate the Consortium's exposure to future risks.
- Effective long term and short term planning processes help ensure that the Consortium anticipates and proactively addresses issues before they arise.
- All documentation requirements contribute toward effective succession planning.

- Detailed job descriptions provide a benchmark against which performance can be tracked.
- Clear, executed agreements with all service purchasers and providers outline service levels against which performance can be measured.
- Regular, planned staff training helps to ensure that staff are constantly improving their ability to deliver.
- Staff performance evaluations allow staff to find ways in which to improve on their performance.
- Regular assessments of the Consortium's performance aids in the identification of areas of improvement.

Foresight

Continuous improvement

Clarity

- Identifiable governance structures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities help ensure accountability.
- Clear organizational structures define roles and responsibilities of individual staff members, thus increasing transparency.
- Clear, executed agreements with all service purchasers and providers clarify the Consortium's service level relationships.
- Guidelines regarding procurement and purchasing practices and policies help guide the work of Consortium staff.
- All documentation requirements contribute toward increasing the transparency and accountability of the Consortium.
- Effective policies and procedures related to privacy and use of personal information help reassure stakeholders that their personal information is safe with the Consortium.

2.0 Policies and Practices
Policies and Practices Overview

- Policies and practices examine and evaluate the established policies, operational procedures, and the documented daily practices that determine the standards of student transportation services.

- Clear and concise policies, procedures, and enforceable practices are essential elements of an effective and efficient transportation operation.

- Policies establish the parameters that define and determine the level of service that ultimately will be provided by the Consortium. Equally important is the application of policies through well-defined and documented procedures, operational practices and protocols, all of which determine how services are actually delivered. Policy harmonization between the school boards helps to ensure that service is delivered safely and equitably to each of the service-providing and service-purchasing school boards.

- The E&E review analysis is focused on the assessment of five key considerations of the following three key areas: general transportation policies and practices; special needs and specialized programs; and safety and training programs.

Documentation	Content	Clarity	Enforcement	Consistency
• Critical policies that define service requirements, and procedures that dictate how services will be provided are clearly established and have been agreed to by the governance committee.	• Specific requirements of the policies and procedures are logical, relate to the topic at hand, and are consistent with desired and best operating practices.	• The language of the policies and procedures makes the rationale and criteria for each specific aspect of the operation clear.	• Procedures are established to ensure the requirements of the policies are appropriately implemented. • A review process is established to review policies or procedures where current practices are inconsistent with either expectations or operating requirements.	• Identify whether the policies adopted for transportation are consistent with other school board operating requirements.

2.1 Policies and Practices – transportation policies and procedures

- Policies reflect decisions made by the Consortium. Well-balanced decisions will take into consideration priorities of their member boards, quality of service and cost efficiency.

- The clarity and documentation of policies play an important role in ensuring that all parties follow the policies in an appropriate manner. Well-designed policies clearly establish service expectations and define the parameters of the services that will be provided.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has clear and concise policies that identify which students are eligible for services.	The Consortium has an approved policy manual in place which clearly defines which students are eligible for service and how this eligibility is determined. Responsibilities for policies which impact efficiencies such as bell times are identified and referenced in both the consortium agreement and policy manual. Policy differences between member boards are documented and accounted for and a regular policy review process is in place.
The Consortium has procedures that clearly identify how services will be provided.	A comprehensive procedure manual exists and addresses all policy requirements and key planning activities such as stop placement, run development and run pairing. A review process ensures that procedures remain consistent with policy and practice.
The Consortium has clear protocols for managing courtesy and otherwise ineligible riders.	The criteria for allowing an otherwise ineligible student rider on a bus are clearly defined and documented including a clear chain of authority for adding and removing riders. These students are clearly identified in the coding structure and in cost allocation agreements.
The Consortium has procedures in place to communicate its transportation policies, including forms, appeals and emergency protocols.	The Consortium communicates its transportation policies to stakeholders through appropriate media (e.g. A secure website, informative brochures/pamphlets, auto call systems, and information sessions). Static information, such as regular policies and practices, and real-time information, such as delays and cancellations are readily available. The responsibilities of updating this information are clearly defined.

2.2 Policies and Practices – special needs transportation

- Providing safe and effective transportation for special needs students is complex in both its implementation and management. It is imperative that clear and concise policies and documented practices are established and followed to ensure that the unique needs of the students are met without unduly impacting the entire routing network.

- This section focuses on how the Consortium and its member boards:

  – Evaluate special needs transportation requirements;

  – Consider the transportation impact of the special needs program locations;

  – Consider acceptable alternatives to traditional routing schemes; and

  – Promote an understanding of the demands of special needs students by operators, Consortium staff, and other stakeholders.

Leading Practice	Description
Where feasible, the Consortium integrates special needs planning with regular home-to-school transportation planning.	The Consortium regularly evaluates integrating special needs students with regular students and other alternatives for fully evaluating the costing implications relating to student transportation assignments.
The Consortium should have designated procedures for managing special needs students.	Comprehensive and clearly defined procedures, rules and regulations that give consideration to a wide variety of special circumstances that may need to be accommodated to ensure the safe transportation of students and aid in the comprehensive training of drivers and monitors. These procedures, rules and regulations include the requirement of the Consortium to work with the member boards to develop an Individual School Transportation Plan (ISTP) for each student identified with a disability in accordance with Section 75 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.*

2.3 Policies and Practices – safety

- Clear and concise safety policies, practices, procedures, and training are all essential to ensure safe student transportation. Given a consortium's responsibility for ensuring and managing safe delivery of transportation services involving multiple stakeholders, it is paramount that safety related initiatives are well-defined and documented to ensure system-wide compliance. Equally important is an understanding of the responsibilities for safety that is shared by parents, students, bus drivers, and each community in the provision of safe transportation.

- Safety policies should focus on the activities of the Consortium that are designed to promote both an awareness of, and training on, service expectation for students, operators, and Consortium staff.

- Specific emphasis is placed on driver training, student training, and contractual requirements. In addition, audit and/or follow up procedures are evaluated in order to ensure that services being paid for are being provided.

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has developed age-appropriate, safety programs for both riders and walkers.	The Consortium demonstrates a commitment to safe transportation of students by supporting and participating in a variety of safety and training programs. The operator's responsibility in safe transportation of students is clearly defined and communicated, e.g. contract clause and driver manual.
The Consortium's safety policies consider, capture and plan for a wide range of foreseeable events.	The Consortium has clearly documented policies and procedures in place for instances such as inclement weather. Procedures address communication between member boards, schools and bus operators; all parties have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.
Responsibility for safety policies, practices, procedures, and training has been clearly assigned to individuals within the Consortium.	The Consortium has clear assignment of responsibilities for safety related tasks such as development and review of safety policies (e.g. stop locations, hazards), implementation of safety programs (e.g. first rider, bus evacuation training, and conducting Operator Route and Facility audits to ensure Operators are fulfilling their performance requirements.

2.4 Policies and Practices
Summary of key Policies and Practices themes

The desired characteristics for an effective and efficient consortium identified in section 2 relate directly to leading practices identified for Policy and Practice development.

- Modeling of alternative policy and procedure requirements allow for the evaluation of service and cost impacts.
- Regular policy evaluation allows for consideration of the impact of uncontrollable constraints such as declining enrolment.
- Policy and practice reviews can determine whether existing service models are appropriate for each participating school board.
- Well defined policies and procedures allow for more accurate budget forecasting.

- Well-defined and executed policies and procedures allow school boards to establish appropriately tailored service delivery models.
  - Policies and procedures that are clearly articulated allow planners to focus on efficiencies and service improvements instead of simply managing exceptions.
    - Accountability and responsibility is more clearly defined.
      - Performance can be more accurately measured when the operational constraints have been clearly defined.

Foresight

Continuous improvement

Clarity

- Clear policies and procedures ensure service equity.
- Policies and practices that are clearly defined reduce the probability of conflict between school boards.
- Clarity in Policies and Practices allows for more efficient planning and development of alternatives to evaluate service improvements and/or effective cost control.

3.0 Routing and Technology - Routing and Technology Overview

Routing and Technology encompasses the management, administration, and use of technology for the purpose of student transportation management.

The E&E Review of Routing and Technology considers four primary aspects. Each of these considers the routing and scheduling system's capabilities and how these are used to analyze and promote operational efficiency. Identified below are some of the questions the E&E Review Team seeks to address in the review of Routing and Technology:

System reporting

- What data is collected?
- How is data used?
- To whom is data distributed? When is this data distributed?
- How is the data used to analyze operations?

Software and technology set up and use

- What systems are in use?
- Are maintenance and service agreements in place?
- Are backup and restoration processes in place to manage the data?

Effective and Efficient Routing and Technology

Transportation planning and routing

- How are routes planned?
- How and when is effectiveness and efficiency evaluated?
- What techniques are used to improve service and reduce costs?
- Who is responsible for conducting this analysis?

Digital map and student data management

- How is the map kept current?
- How is the student data kept current?
- Are appropriate student codes in place?

3.1 Routing and Technology - software and technology set up and use

- 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 evaluates the baseline acquisition, setup, installation, and management of transportation-related software.

Leading Practice	Description
Critical planning modules have been implemented and are used for route planning.	A centralized planning and routing system for managing day to day planning and route development is implemented and other ancillary technologies are in place to support the effective dissemination of data such as a web portal.
Maintenance and annual service agreements have been established with all systems vendors.	Service and maintenance agreements are established with all vendors and service providers. These agreements include reasonable support terms and timeframes. System upgrades and fixes are accounted for in these agreements and occur on a regular schedule.
Backup and restoration processes have been established and tested.	Data backup and restoration procedures are in place and are regularly tested to ensure procedures allow for full restoration of data and allow consortia to become fully operational within a reasonable timeframe in the event of a system failure or catastrophic event.

3.2   Routing and Technology – digital map and student database management

This aspect of the review focuses on how critical planning data is entered and maintained in the routing system. Effective data management builds upon effective and efficient software management and has two key elements: student data and map data.

Leading Practice	Description
Processes are established to promote and validate map accuracy and completeness.	Map accuracy and completeness checks occur on a regular basis and responsibility for performing these procedures are assigned.
Student data updates are performed regularly.	Student data updates occur on a regular basis and student data is kept current with effective use of "add/change/delete" downloads from member boards' student database systems with minimal manual intervention.
Coding structures have been established that allow for targeted analysis of performance.	Coding structures are comprehensive, hierarchical and well-conceived to allow for efficient identification and management of data records as well as comprehensive reporting and analysis.

3.3 Routing and Technology – transportation planning and routing

Transportation route planning is the key activity undertaken by any Consortium. This portion of the review is 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.

Leading Practice	Description
Planning cycles are established with specified tasks, timelines, and assignments.	Tasks and timelines necessary to design and evaluate the routing scheme are clearly delineated and include an evaluation of necessary staffing resources and critical dates for each task.
Regular analyses of routing effectiveness and efficiency are conducted, providing measurable and comparable results.	Levels of efficiency and effectiveness are measured through regular analysis and review of the routing solution and include evaluations of bus stops, runs, routes, bell times and alternative routing techniques. Results of these evaluations including cost implications are communicated to management on a regular basis.
A program of regular, progressive staff training is provided on both routing theory and practice.	Expectations and competencies regarding system use are established for each position in the organization. A process is in place to ensure that training is available so that all staff have the tools to meet expected competencies.

3.4   Routing and Technology – 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 is to evaluate what reports are typically generated, who receives these reports, and what capabilities exist to develop ad -hoc reports.

Leading Practice	Description
Data requirements for each position in the organization have been evaluated.	Data requirements and access for each system user have been identified. Reports and data access tables provide each user with required data.
Data is extracted regularly as part of a KPI monitoring process.	A regular schedule has been established for the monitoring of KPIs including the data needed to calculate each KPI as well as a process to assist in the interpretation of values including a rationale for the measure, expected values and trend indicators.
Information is submitted to stakeholder groups on an established schedule.	Stakeholder data needs have been identified including a schedule indicating frequency. Processes exist to allow access to data without compromising security protocols or placing undue burden on staff resources. A process is in place to accommodate ad hoc data requests.

3.5 Routing and Technology
Summary of key Routing and Technology themes

The desired characteristics for an effective and efficient consortium identified in section 3 relate directly to leading practices identified for Routing and Technology use.

- Technology systems are the key modeling tool to evaluate alternative policy and routing schemes.
- Regular trend analysis and reporting allows for early detection of issues and concerns.
- Transportation management software can provide valuable input into other systemic changes such as school closures, program locations, and policy changes.
- Technology is a key component of effective operational analysis and risk management.

- Regular scenario modeling can be performed to adjust service delivery models to changing environmental constraints.
  - Internal and external performance indicators can be used to evaluate staff and organizational performance.
    - Regular data analysis increases accountability for performance.
      - Technology can increase the productive time available to route planners.
        - Technology use can identify differences between planned and actual service delivery.

Foresight

Continuous improvement

Clarity

- Effective Routing and Technology use documents current service levels for future evaluation.
- Service level and cost impacts can be evaluated using transportation management software, thus increasing accountability to purchasers of the Consortium's service.
- Regular reporting increases the accountability of both service providers and users.

4.0 Contracts
Contracts Overview

The E&E Review of Contracts is comprised of three sections, each of which has its own subsections. Identified below are some of the questions the E&E Review Team seeks to address in the review :

Contract structure
- Does the Consortium have executed contracts with all of its transportation service providers?
- Are all contracts signed by the Consortium in line with the best practices identified in this guide?
- Are contract clauses clear, appropriate, enforceable and fully justified?
- Are payment terms included in the contract fully substantiated? i.e. do the payment terms reflect an appropriate use of public funds?
- Are performance expectations clearly outlined in the contract?
- Is the contract complete with respect to operator, driver and vehicle requirements?
- Does the contract appropriately address issues related to liability, dispute resolution and termination?

Goods and services procurement
- What process does the Consortium use to procure transportation services?
- Is the procurement method used by the Consortium open, transparent and fair? Does it ensure that the Consortium is getting value for its money?
- What timelines have been established for the procurement of operator services?
- Does the procurement conclude well before the start of the school year?

Effective and Efficient Contracting Practices

Contract Management
- What process is used to gauge operator performance?
- How often is operator performance reviewed?
- How does the Consortium follow-up on its findings?
- How does the Consortium ensure compliance with contract terms?

4.1 Contracts – contract structure

- An effective 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 or penalties for failure to provide these services.

- The review of the contract structure assesses three areas:

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium has contracts in place with all bus operators that detail appropriate legal, safety and other non-monetary terms.	The Consortium should have executed bus operator contracts that address all relevant compensation, compliance and monitoring requirements and that address all recommended clauses outlined on slide 37. The executed bus operator contract should also identify the appropriate parties to the agreement.
The Consortium has contracts in place with transportation service providers other than bus operators that detail appropriate legal, safety and non-monetary terms.	The Consortium should have executed contracts with all of its transportation service providers, including taxi and boat operators, municipal transit authorities and paid parent drivers. The Consortium's contracts with these operators should include a level of detail that is comparable to that of the bus operator contract and should address all recommended clauses outlined on slide 37.
The contract terms with respect to compensation are clear. Payment formulae, terms, schedules, and adjustments are appropriately defined. All operator invoices are sent to the Consortium for verification.	Operator compensation formulae are well communicated and understood. Operators should not be compensated for costs that have not been incurred, i.e. variable costs should not be compensated during periods when the operator is not incurring these costs. The process used to pay operators should also require the Consortium to play an appropriate role in verifying the invoices submitted by the operators.

4.2 Contracts – goods and services procurement

- The procurement process is intended to provide an avenue by which the Consortium, as a purchaser of services, can ultimately maximize the quality of services and value for money. The goal of the Consortium is to obtain high quality service at fair market prices.

- The review of the goods and service procurement process assesses two areas:

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium's chosen procurement method is open, transparent, and accountable. The chosen method introduces the business opportunity to a competitive market in order to ensure that the Consortium is receiving services that are of the highest quality at rates that reflect current market prices.	In line with its procurement policies, the Consortium should use a competitive process to procure the services of bus operators as it is the most appropriate means by which to expose the opportunity to a competitive market while ensuring that the Consortium is receiving the best rates for the services required. Consortia should ensure that their procurement methodology is compliant with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act*.
The Consortium procures transportation services in a structured, timely manner which ensures that a contract is in place well before the beginning of each school year.	The Consortium should have a documented, governance committee-approved planning calendar that mandates the completion of all operator procurement processes well before the start of the school year. This calendar should identify all key dates and milestones, and should also delegate responsibility to the appropriate member of Consortium management. Having such a calendar will help ensure that the Consortium has carefully considered all items that need to be addressed through the procurement process and has developed an approach to each of these items.

4.3 Contracts – contract management

- Day-to-day operations can often vary significantly from the expectations outlined in contracts. Contract management refers to the Consortium's efforts to ensure the performance standards and clauses outlined in the contract are matched by daily operator performance.

- Operator performance is comprised of four components: Operator facility and maintenance audits; Administrative contract compliance; Service and safety monitoring; and Performance monitoring.

- The Consortium's efforts to monitor each of these components will be assessed:

Operator facility and maintenance audits	Administrative contract compliance	Service and safety monitoring	Performance monitoring
• The degree to which the operator keeps its facilities and vehicles in line with the standards outlined in the contract. The operator should maintain appropriate documentation in order to prove to the Consortium that it is meeting these standards. • Example: Does the operator maintain a dispatch as required in its contract? Does the operator maintain vehicle inspection records for each vehicle?	• The degree to which the operator meets the administrative and compliance requirements set out in the contract. The operator should maintain appropriate documentation in order to prove to the Consortium that it is meeting these standards. • Example: Does the operator maintain sufficient insurance coverage as identified in the contract?	• The degree to which the performance of drivers and operators reflects the contract requirements. • Example: Does the driver stay on the route prescribed by the Consortium?	• The efforts made by the Consortium to track operator performance over time.

4.3   Contracts – contract management

Leading Practice	Description
The Consortium performs periodic facility audits to ensure that operator facilities are in line with expectations set out in the contract.	The Consortium should have a documented process available to ensure that operator facilities are in compliance with the expectations outlined in the operator contract. Where relevant, the Consortium should also follow-up on any deficiencies with the operator. *
The Consortium performs periodic administrative audits to ensure that operators and drivers are in compliance with safety, legal and contract requirements.	The Consortium should have a documented process available to ensure that operators are providing all the information required from them in the operator contract. The Consortium should also review these submissions on a regular basis and follow up with operators that are found to be deficient. Some recommended safety and legal contract management processes are provided on slide 31. *
The Consortium performs a specific audit following the award of a new contract to ensure the operator is prepared and in full compliance prior to the start of the school year.	The Consortium should have a documented process in place to ensure that following the award of a new contract, operators are fully prepared and in full compliance with the contract requirements well before the start of the school year. *
The Consortium regularly conducts random, documented route audits or has an alternative mechanism in place to monitor on-the-road operator performance.	The Consortium should have a documented process in place to ensure that operator on-the-road performance is in line with the expectations outlined in the operator contract. Where an operator is not meeting its performance expectations, the Consortium should follow-up with the operator to ensure that any deficiencies are rectified.*
The Consortium monitors operator's performance over time. Operators are aware of their relative performance over time.	The Consortium should track the performance of operators against the contractual requirements over time as this will allow the Consortium to identify the operators that are providing the best quality of overall service. The Consortium should also communicate the results of performance evaluations to operators in order to provide them with an opportunity to improve their performance. *

* For all Leading Practices identified above, the Consortium should lay the groundwork for the implementation of such performance evaluations by ensuring that necessary contractual clauses are included in the operator contract.

4.3   Contracts – contract management

Recommended contract management practices (these practices are subject to what is outlined as part of the Operator contract):

Contract clause	Monitoring leading practice
Driver licensing and First Aid/CPR/EpiPen training	• The Consortium should perform periodic administrative audits to ensure that operators have copies of their drivers' licenses, certificates, and other documents required for them to be in compliance. • The Consortium should use the most efficient means possible to monitor this information.
Operator information submission requirements	• The Consortium should perform periodic administrative audits to ensure that operators have copies of all information required to be in compliance with the contract requirements. • The Consortium should use the most efficient means possible to monitor that operators are in compliance with the contract requirements.
Operator legal compliance	• Verified through on-site audits. • For some operators, such as taxi operators, through communication with appropriate local/provincial authorities.
Vehicle age	• The Consortium should collect vehicle information such as serial numbers, chassis numbers and the date on which the vehicle was put into service. This information should then be verified during route audits.
Performance standards	• Verified during route audits or equivalent.

The sector has developed a Contract Performance Management Program Resource Package that can be accessed at: https://sbsb.edu.gov.on.ca/VDIR1/Resources/AboutTransportation/ContractPerformanceManagement.aspx

The purpose of the resource package is to provide a single, comprehensive, documented contract performance management resource package that includes:

• Fundamentals of contract management;

• Contract performance management principles and approaches;

• Contract performance management program descriptions;

• Contract compliance audit reference tools, samples and templates; and

• Performance measurement reference tools, samples and templates.

4.4 Contracts
Summary of key Contracting themes

The desired characteristics for an effective and efficient consortium identified in section 4 relate directly to leading practices identified for Contracts.

- Contracts that are clear, rational and comprehensive help to ensure that all of the Consortium's contractors can be held accountable for their performance.
- Contracts help to avoid miscommunications and conflicts in the future by clearly outlining the scope of services to be provided.
- Effective facility and administrative contract compliance monitoring can limit the Consortium's future liability. It will also help identify issues at the operator level early on, thus avoiding future conflicts or accidents.
- The availability of a procurement calendar will help the Consortium plan for the future and will help it meet critical contracting deadlines.

- Effective contract management processes help the Consortium drive towards improvement through its operators as it is the performance of operators that ultimately determines how school boards perceive the performance of the Consortium.
  - Effective contract management processes will also reward operators that perform well and address operators that perform poorly.

Foresight

Continuous improvement

Clarity

- Well defined contracts ensure that all parties are well-informed about expectations. Contracts also improve the Consortium's transparency by documenting its use of public funds.
- The use of competitive procurement opens the business opportunity to the market and helps to increase the Consortium's accountability.
- The availability of an operator procurement calendar and on-time completion of the procurement process will help limit the Consortium's exposure to liabilities and will ensure uninterrupted service to students.

Section II
Defining relationships

Defining a consortium's relationships
Overview

- In part, the E&E Review aims to assess the clarity and comprehensiveness with which a consortium defines its business relationships. Each of the Consortium's relationships should be contractually defined.

- Below is a sample of the types of relationships into which consortia might enter and the types of contracts that would be used to document them.
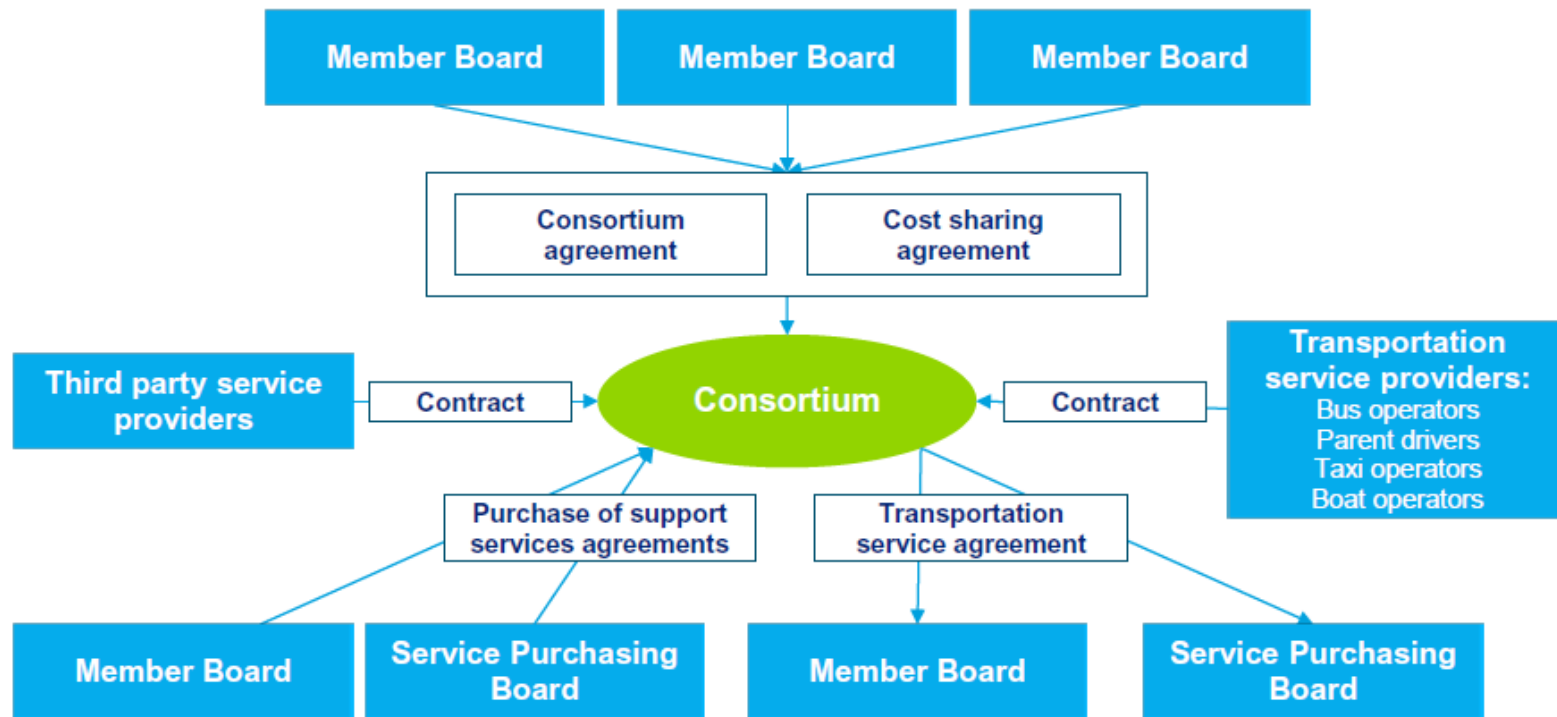
Defining a consortium's relationships

- **A consortium agreement** is the document that establishes the Consortium as a joint service provider to member school boards and others.

  - Additional documents (such as letters patent) may be necessary if the Consortium operates as a separate legal entity.

- **Contracts** are used to define the Consortium's relationship with other parties as a <u>service purchaser</u>. The Consortium signs a particular type of contract – a **Purchase of Support Service** agreement - with member school boards and third party service providers from which it purchases services.

- **Transportation service agreements** define the Consortiums' relationship as a <u>service provider</u>. Transportation service agreements should exist with all entities to which the Consortium provides services, these may include, among others, individual member school boards, non-member service purchasing school boards, first nations and private schools.

- Included in either the Consortium agreement or the transportation service agreement is a **cost sharing agreement** which defines the formula to be used to divide the costs associated with operating the Consortium between member boards.

Defining a consortium's relationships
Recommended clauses for all contracts

- Effective contracts establish a clear point of reference that defines the roles, requirements, and expectations of each party involved.

- Full and complete contracts also help to ensure that the Consortium is provided (or is providing) the standard of service that is required and helps to ensure that any miscommunication or conflicts can be swiftly and appropriately addressed.

- Outlined below are recommended contract clauses that should be included in all contracts for which they are appropriate.

Contract clause	Recommended clauses
Performance standards	• The contract should outline, in detail, the performance expectations imposed on the Consortium and/or expected by the Consortium.
Compensation	• Contracts should contain appropriate terms outlining the compensation to be provided for services rendered. Where appropriate, the compensation formula should also include adjustments to be made for non-performance, partial performance, and service cancellations.
Contract termination and extension	• The Consortium should reserve the right to terminate the contract at any point due to non-performance. • The contract should include an option to extend the terms and covenants of the contract by mutual agreement.
Indemnity/liability	• The contract should appropriately limit the Consortium's exposure to liabilities incurred during the provision of the services.
Confidentiality	• The contract should include appropriate clauses to ensure the confidentiality of all information submitted to/from the service provider/purchaser.
Ownership of data	• Where appropriate, the contract should include clauses that reserve ownership of data to the Consortium.
Dispute resolution	• The contract should outline a process for dispute resolution.

Defining a consortium's relationships
Recommended operator contract clauses

Given the critical importance of the Consortium's operator relationship to its overall success, the following are some non-monetary contract clauses that are to be included in all of the Consortium's operator contracts. This includes contracts with bus, taxi and boat operators, municipal transit authorities and paid parent drivers, wherever applicable.

Contract clause	Recommended clauses
First Aid/CPR/EpiPen training	• The contract should mandate that all drivers be certified with First Aid/CPR/EpiPen training. This training should be provided prior to the start of their work for the Consortium (i.e. prior to the first time they drive a bus, taxi etc. for the Consortium). Refresher courses, as appropriate, should also be mandated. • The contract should also outline whether the provision of this training is the responsibility of the Consortium or the operator.

Operator information submission requirements	• The contract should require the operator to submit the following information:
	  − Insurance coverage;
	  − Proof of WSIB coverage;
	  − Information about safety programs offered by the operator;
	  − Proof that the operator conducts appropriate background and criminal record checks on drivers;
	  − Proof that the operator collects appropriate medical testing information from drivers;
	  − Valid CVOR;
	  − Any training manuals offered by the operator to drivers;
	  − Verification of student numbers by October 31 of each year; and
	  − Where relevant, proof that operators conduct a practice-run of routes either prior to the beginning of each school year or when there are major in-year changes to routes.

Vehicle age	• The contract should define a maximum age for vehicles used. Most contracts with this clause use a 12 year maximum for 72-passenger school buses.
Performance standards	• The contract should outline, in detail, the performance expectations of operators. • Similarly, the Consortium should reserve the right to audit the operator in order to ensure that it is meeting the performance standards.
Route allocation and reallocation	• The Consortium should reserve the right to allocate or reallocate routes among operators. • Where necessary, the terms and conditions to be used to determine route allocation should be outlined and should be based on operator performance.

Defining a consortium's relationships
Recommended operator contract clauses (continued)

Contract clause	Recommended clauses
Contract termination and extension	• The Consortium should reserve the right to terminate the contract at any point due to non-performance. The Consortium should also reserve the right to renew the contract by mutual agreement.
Indemnity/liability	• The contract should appropriately limit the Consortium's exposure to liabilities incurred during the provision of transportation services.
Confidentiality	• The contract should include clauses that ensure the confidentiality of all information submitted to the operator.
Dispute resolution	• The contract should outline a process for dispute resolution.
Inclement weather and service cancellation compensation	• Contract terms should ensure that operators do not receive compensation for costs that have not been incurred during service cancellations. In general, operators should only be compensated for their fixed, capital and wage costs during inclement weather/service cancellation days.

Section III Consortium Manager's Workbook

Self assessment workbook
Governance

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has an identifiable governance structure.	• Does the Consortium have a committee or structure that provides oversight to the Consortium and ensures that the Consortium is operating as effectively as possible? • What kind of structure would best ensure oversight of the Consortium?	• Structure of the governance committee is documented in an executed agreement between member boards.
Governance committee membership is clearly defined with equal representation from member boards.	• Which stakeholders need to be included in Consortium decision making? • Who needs to be directly involved in the decision making processes? • How can the Consortium maximize inclusiveness without jeopardizing efficiency?	• Governance committee membership with equal representation is clearly mandated in an executed agreement between member boards. • Clauses in Consortium agreement mandating equal representation from member school boards.
Existence of member board level dispute resolution process.	• Are there dispute resolution policies in place? • Is the dispute resolution process clearly articulated and appropriate?	• Documented dispute resolution clause.
The roles and responsibilities of the governance committee are clearly defined, and governance committee members are fully informed as to what their roles and responsibilities are.	• What responsibilities does the governance committee need in order to ensure comprehensive oversight? • What items need to go to the governance committee for decision-making? • What processes are in place to ensure governance committee members are fully informed on their roles and responsibilities? • Who is responsible for managing policy review timelines?	• Roles and responsibilities should be documented in the Consortium agreement.
Separation of operations from Governance.	• Are roles, rights and responsibilities of the governance committee clearly separated from those of Consortium management? • How should policies be developed? Who should be involved? • What role does Consortium staff have at governance meetings?	• Roles and responsibilities should be documented in the Consortium agreement . • Meeting minutes from governance meetings should inherently reflect the role being undertaken by the governance structure.

Self assessment workbook
Governance

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Meetings of the governance committee are structured and documented.	• What documentation is necessary to accurately record details of the decision making process? • How often do governance committee meetings need to take place? • What documentation is required to ensure that governance committee members can be held accountable for their decisions?	• A schedule of meetings is mandated in the consortium agreement or is set at the beginning of the year. • Meeting minutes are taken. These minutes are then ratified and signed at the following meeting and a signed 'official' copy is retained.

Self assessment workbook
Organizational structure

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has a clear and documented legal status.	• What is the legal entity status of the Consortium? • What are the primary risks associated with this status particularly with respect to liability, corporate continuity, staff planning, contracting and management? • What documentation is necessary in order for the Consortium to incorporate as a separate legal entity?	• Legal entity status outlined in a signed and approved consortium agreement. • Any other documentation confirming the Consortium's status as a separate legal entity such as letters patent and corporate bylaws.
Departmental roles and responsibilities within the Consortium are clearly outlined.	• What is the primary responsibility of each department within the Consortium? • Can the existence of separate departments ensure open lines of communication?	• Each department's roles, responsibilities and reporting structures should be clearly documented.
Roles and responsibilities for stakeholder communication are clearly defined.	• What role does each staff member play in communicating to stakeholders? • To whom do we need to communicate? • How and when do we communicate during normal operations? • Do communications change during emergency situations?	• Documented communication plans.
Detailed job descriptions are available for all Consortium staff members.	• Do clear and detailed job descriptions exist for each staff member? • Do the existing job descriptions outline specific responsibilities; skills and reporting/delegation authority for each position? • Are these job descriptions continuously updated? • Do job descriptions allow for cross training and succession planning?	• Documented clear and updated job descriptions for each position. • Documented succession plans for each position.
Evidence of organizational structure.	• How is the Consortium organized? • What is the Consortium's organizational structure?	• Documented organizational chart displaying either a functional or geographic separation of departments and clear lines of reporting.

Self assessment workbook
Consortium Management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has clear, executed transportation service agreements with all service purchasers.	• What services does the Consortium provide? • What are the service standards to which the Consortium is committed? • How are costs to be allocated among all member boards? What should be the rationale for cost sharing? • How will costs be allocated to service purchasers that are not a member school board? • What are the agreed upon terms with respect to insurance/liabilities, quality of service and dispute resolution?	• A clearly defined and documented formula by which the Consortium's costs are to be split among the school boards. This can either be documented in the Consortium agreement or transportation service agreement. • Clear, executed and jointly signed transportation service agreements with all service purchasers that outline all relevant clauses. Guidance on contract clauses is provided on slide 36.
The Consortium has clear, executed purchase of service agreements with all service providers.	• What services does the Consortium purchase from school boards and other organizations? • What are the service standards expected by the Consortium? • How will the Consortium render payment for services provided? • How can the Consortium best limit its exposure to potential liabilities and disputes?	• Clear, executed purchase of service agreements with all entities that outline all relevant clauses. Guidance on contract clauses is provided on slide 36.
The Consortium has sufficient insurance coverage and coverage needs are periodically reviewed.	• What are the Consortium's insurance coverage requirements, particularly with respect to liability, omissions and errors insurance? • Is the insurance policy updated regularly? • Do all school boards carry sufficient insurance and does their insurance cover the Consortium?	• Valid certificate of insurance issued by the insurance carrier. • Evidence that insurance needs are regularly reviewed.

Self assessment workbook
Consortium Management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has guidelines in place regarding procurement and purchasing practices and policies.	• What are to be the purchasing thresholds assigned to each staff member? • Are these policies readily accessible for Consortium-wide access? • How often should the Consortium review its compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act*? What should be the process for this review? • For what services should the Consortium initiate competitive procurement? • Are purchasing polices adhered to in practice?	• Clear, documented, governance committee-approved procurement policies with associated thresholds and approval requirements. • Evidence that these procurement policies are regularly reviewed by Consortium governance to ensure compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act.*
The Consortium has or follows appropriate policies related to human resource management, particularly with respect to staff training and evaluation.	• What are the Consortium's staffing needs and requirements? • What is to be the employment status of Consortium staff? • Are human resource initiatives in line with the employment status of Consortium staff? • How will the Consortium ensure that reference checks and criminal background checks are performed for all Consortium staff? • How should the Consortium's HR policies be implemented? • How should the Consortium promote cross-training and effective succession planning?	• Governance committee-approved human resource policies. • Documented human resource policies – either those of member school boards or the Consortium's own policies. Where necessary, these policies should be harmonized and/or be in line with member board policies. • A document outlining the Consortium's approach to succession planning and cross-training.
Staff training initiatives are planned, documented and tracked on a regular basis in line with the Consortium's HR policies.	• How should staff training be planned? Will it be an annual or multi-year process? • How will the planning process ensure that staff training is in line with the Consortium's objectives? • How and when will staff be cross-trained? • How can the Consortium encourage continuous learning? • How will the Consortium evaluate the quality of staff development activities?	• Up to date and documented staff training plans. • Documented tracking of cross-training initiatives. • Evidence that staff training is tracked on a regular basis. • Evidence that training plans are consistent with Consortium goals and objectives.

Self assessment workbook
Consortium Management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Staff performance evaluations are documented and conducted on a regular basis in line with the Consortium's HR policies.	• Against what criteria should staff performance be evaluated? Who should conduct the evaluation for each staff member? • How should the Consortium's goals and objectives be reflected in the staff evaluation criteria? • How often will performance evaluations be conducted? • Should there be opportunities for upward feedback? • How should performance targets and objectives be communicated to staff? • Who will follow up on poor performance reviews to ensure that corrective action is taken?	• Documented staff evaluation criteria for each position. • Evidence that staff evaluations are conducted and regularly reviewed. • Evidence of communication of performance objectives to staff.
The Consortium has established a retention and succession plan to manage the retirement and resignation of Consortium staff.	• How should the Consortium prepare for future retirements and resignations? • What initiatives can the Consortium undertake in order to retain key Consortium staff? • What processes need to be put in place to ensure that resignations and retirements do not impact the Consortium's performance?	• Clear, detailed and documented succession and retention plan for all key positions within the Consortium. • Evidence that the succession and retention plan is being implemented.
The Consortium has an established, documented process by which it assesses its own performance using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or other performance measures.	• What KPIs does the Consortium need to monitor to ensure the quality of its service? • What are the thresholds for changes in KPIs above which further action will be taken? • What process will be used to monitor and document the tracking of KPIs? Who will be responsible for this? • What process will be used to track follow-up on the KPI analysis? Who will be responsible for this? • If other measures are used – such as surveys – what will the process by which measurement and follow-up is to occur? Who will be involved in the process?	• Clear, documented process and metrics to be used to assess and track the performance of the Consortium. • Evidence, if applicable, of performance measures being presented to appropriate stakeholders. • Evidence of follow-up in response to changes in KPIs.

Self assessment workbook
Consortium Management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has an established, documented and inclusive long term and short term planning process.	• Which key stakeholders need to be involved in the Consortium's goal setting process? • What are the Consortium's mission and strategic vision? • What are the short term (within 1 year) and long term (more than 1 year) goals of the Consortium? • What steps will Consortium staff undertake towards the achievement of these goals? What is the timeline over which each of these goals is to be achieved? • What are the implications of these goals on the Consortium's policies and procedures? • Who will be responsible for each of these goals? • How will the achievement of these goals be tracked over time? To whom will the Consortium report its achievements? • How will management communicate these plans to Consortium staff? • How are the Consortium's goals and objectives publicized?	• A clear, documented and governance committee-approved process for Consortium goal setting with associated timelines, assigned responsibilities and expected levels of stakeholder consultation. • Clear, documented and governance committee approved vision and mission statements • Documents outlining the Consortium's long term and short term objectives with associated timelines and delegation. • Evidence that the achievement of goals and objectives is regularly monitored.
The Consortium has an established and documented process by which it analyzes its service delivery model on a regular basis.	• Does the Consortium have appropriate polces in place related to a regular analysis of its service delivery model? • Has the Consortium recently reviewed portions of its service delivery model (such as its use of Public Transit, or paid parent drivers)? • How are the results of the analysis presented to the governance committee?	• A clear, documented and governance committee-approved process for completing service delivery model reviews • Evidence that the Consortium has analyzed portions of its service delivery model in line with its policies

Self assessment workbook
Consortium Management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has appropriate, documented procedures and confidentiality agreements in place governing the use of student data and ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation.	• Do member school boards have consent to collect and distribute student information? • Does the Consortium have appropriate polices in place related to the collection, storage, use, access, distribution and destruction of student data? • What processes need to be followed by the governance committee to ensure that policies and procedures are routinely reviewed and updated to comply with Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation? • Does the Consortium have confidentiality agreements in place with all member school boards, governance committee members, staff, and operators? • Does the Consortium have a process to conduct administrative audits to ensure operators have confidentiality agreements in place with their drivers? • Is the Consortium in line with the recommendations of the OASBO Guidelines for Sharing Personal Student Information with Transportation Consortia?	• Member school board policies related to the collection, storage, use, access, distribution and destruction of information. • Operator confidentiality agreement. • Evidence that the Consortium ensures that Operators execute and collect confidentiality agreements from drivers. • Evidence that the Consortium executes confidentiality agreements with all staff. • Evidence that Freedom of Information and Privacy legislation requirements are regularly reviewed and reflected in the Consortium's policies and procedures.

Self assessment workbook
Financial management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has established a budgeting process, in conjunction with its member boards, that is transparent, clearly communicated and incorporates input from all key stakeholders.	• Over what timeline should the budgeting process be implemented? When are the mandated deadlines? • How should Consortium governance and member school boards be involved with the budgeting process? • What process should be used to develop the budget? • What process should be used to ensure that all known cost pressures are tracked and incorporated into the budget? • How will the Consortium incorporate past budget variances into its forecast? • What checks and balances need to be in place in order to ensure the integrity of the data?	• Clear, documented, governance committee-approved processes for the development of financial budgets. • Evidence, if applicable, that budgets are presented to the governance committee and member school boards in a timely manner.
The Consortium has established a budget monitoring process, with regular follow-up and reporting to the governance committee, that ensures that it is accountable for and transparent with its expenditures.	• How often should budget-to-actual performance be tracked? • Who should be responsible for tracking this performance? • How often should the Consortium's year-to-date financial performance be presented to the governance committee? • How will follow-up to the monitoring process be ensured?	• A clear, documented and governance committee-approved process for budget monitoring. • Evidence that budget to actual reconciliations are done on a regular basis. • Evidence that budgets are presented to Consortium governance on a regular basis. • Evidence, where applicable, that variances are tracked and acted upon.
The Consortium has strong, demonstrated long-term financial planning capabilities.	• How will the Consortium manage transportation costs in areas with declining enrolment? • What processes are in place to ensure member school boards provide enrolment forecasts? • What processes need to be in place to ensure that the Consortium is constantly assessing the strength of its financial position? • How should the Consortium plan for future changes in funding levels/formulas?	• Clear, documented plans for the management of the Consortium's revenues and expenses. • Clear, documented, governance committee-approved processes for obtaining enrolment forecasts from member school boards • Evidence that the Consortium has established plans to address changes in its future financial position.

Self assessment workbook
Financial management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has established appropriate policies, procedures and internal controls for the accounting of its revenues and expenses.	• What policies and procedures does the Consortium need in order to ensure accountability for its revenues and expenses? Specifically: − How will duties be appropriately separated in order to ensure oversight and transparency? − Who will have the authority to authorize changes in the accounting system? − Who should be responsible for documenting and approving the expenses of the Consortium? • Where should the Consortium's accounting function be performed? Will it be done internally or outsourced? • How will the Consortium ensure that all transportation related costs are appropriately captured?	• Clear, documented and governance committee-approved accounting policies for the Consortium. • Clear, documented accounting procedures with appropriate thresholds and required approvals identified. • Accounting policies and procedures demonstrate appropriate levels of centralization and internal controls.
The Consortium reports on its financial performance on a regular basis, in line with its own policies and financial reporting requirements imposed by member school boards.	• What are the financial reporting requirements imposed on the Consortium, particularly in terms of timing and financial audits? How will these requirements be met? • Do Consortium staff have sufficient access, rights and privileges in the accounting system in order to meet reporting requirements? • How will the Consortium ensure appropriate input on its financial performance from stakeholders?	• Clear, documented policies related to financial reporting requirements. • If appropriate and where necessary: − Financial reports produced by the Consortium; − Evidence that financial reports are reviewed; and − Internal and/or third party sign-off on the accuracy of reported results; and, if appropriate, an engagement letter from the Consortium's chosen auditor.

Self assessment workbook
Transportation policies and procedures

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has established clear and concise policies that identify which students are eligible for services.	• How have we (the Consortium) defined eligibility? Have we defined which students are eligible for services? • Have we clearly identified how eligibility distances will be measured? • Have purchasing practices been clearly defined to ensure timely access to necessary goods and services? • How have we defined responsibility for addressing efficiency considerations such as seating guidelines, bell time setting, and ride time criteria? • Are criterion for determining an exception area clearly defined and documented? • Are policy differences between member boards documented and accounted for in cost allocation agreements? • Have we established a cyclical review process for transportation policies?	• Policy manual. • Consortium agreement. • Cost sharing documentation.
The Consortium has established procedures that clearly identify how services will be provided.	• Do our procedures draw from and identify the enabling statutory and/or policy requirements? • Have we identified how school assignment procedures (e.g., open enrolment versus zoned versus home school assignments) will impact costs and service levels? • Have procedure statements been considered for all key planning activities including bus stop placement, bus run development, and route pairing? • Have we established a cyclical review process for our procedures to ensure they remain consistent with policy and practices and are consistent with procedural requirements? • Have stop, operator and route audit procedures been established that include both an evaluation and review with relevant parties?	• Procedure manual. • Consortium agreement. • Vendor agreements.

Self assessment workbook
Transportation policies and procedures

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has established clear protocols for managing courtesy and otherwise ineligible riders.	• Are criterion for allowing an otherwise ineligible student rider on a bus clearly defined and documented? • How are otherwise ineligible students assigned to bus runs? Is there a clear chain of authority allowing for adding and removing the rider? • Have we clearly identified these students through the coding structure? • Do our reporting practices clearly identify otherwise ineligible students to bus operators to ensure that established protocols are followed? • Have we evaluated otherwise ineligible rider allowances in both the aggregate and individual cases? • Are policy differences between member boards documented and accounted for in cost allocation agreements?	• Courtesy, hazard, and other exceptional circumstance trip policies. • Routing manifests.
The consortium has procedures in place to communicate its transportation policies.	• How are policies communicated? • What is the most effective media to use for communications? • Are communications materials periodically reviewed and updated? • How are updates or changes to policies communicated? • Is information available in a variety of formats so that it is readily accessible?	• Consortium website. • Information brochures.

Self assessment workbook
Special needs transportation

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Special needs planning is integrated where feasible.	• Is there a rationale either for, or against a wholly separate special needs transportation system? • Have we (the Consortium) evaluated alternatives for integrating special needs students with regular students? • Have we established a costing process to ensure full understanding related to student assignments? • Is the Consortium consulted regarding transportation requirements as part of the IPRC process?	• Policy manual. • Costing procedure statements. • Route development procedures.
Designated procedures for special needs students have been established.	• Have we customized evacuation training procedures to address the specific requirements of special needs students? • Have we promoted the coordination of education staff and bus drivers to provide training on behavioral expectations for different types of special needs students? • Do our policies and procedures sufficiently account for accommodations that may be necessary for special needs students? • Do our policies and procedures include the requirement of the Consortium to work with the member boards to develop an Individual School Transportation Plan (ISTP) for each student identified with a disability in accordance with Section 75 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.*	• Policy manual. • Procedure statements. • Training records. • Individual School Transportation Plans.

Self assessment workbook
Safety

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Age appropriate programs are developed for both riders and walkers.	• Have we evaluated the specific safety training needs of children in different age groups? • Regardless of age, have we addressed different experience levels with school bus safety procedures? • Have we considered casual riders (e.g., field trips, athletics) and their training requirements? • What is the most appropriate media through which training should be delivered? • Have we established opportunities for students to assist in emergencies and provided the relevant training? • Do we collect, and have we provided, sufficient ridership documentation to ensure that students can be readily identified in an emergency? • Have we made provisions for the differences between regular and special needs students and students of different ages in integrated systems? • Are students who walk to school provided with adequate information to ensure safe school access? • How do we coordinate with other local agencies to remedy safety-related concerns?	• Operator contracts. • Training services contracts. • A documented planning schedule with safety training days identified. • Complete, documented training procedures or guidelines. • Intergovernmental agreements or Memorandums of Understanding.
Foreseeable events have been considered and planned for.	• How do we address inclement weather delays, cancellations, and early dismissals? • Have we considered identification, communication, and notification requirements for late and unaccounted for children? • How do we coordinate with each member board to ensure consistency of disciplinary procedures between the classroom and the bus? • How do we ensure that responsible parties are addressing discipline issues in a timely manner?	• Inclement weather procedures. • Clear, documented procedures or guidelines related to the management of unaccounted for students. • Policies and procedures related to student discipline.

Self assessment workbook
Safety

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Responsibility for safety policies, practices, procedures, and training has been clearly assigned to individuals within the Consortium.	• What Consortium tasks related directly to safety? • Have all safety related tasks been assigned to specific individuals within the Consortium?	• Clearly assigned responsibilities for safety related tasks within Consortium job descriptions • Operational planning documentation with assignment of safety related tasks to individuals

Self assessment workbook
Software management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Critical planning modules have been implemented and are used for route planning.	• Have we considered supplemental technologies that would increase efficiency or data availability? How should the cost/benefit analysis be conducted? • Are all of our route planning, driver management, contract management, and fleet management modules installed and base data requirements established? • Are all student groups (special needs, regular education, other specialized programs) included in the transportation database? • Are all runs for these students developed using the transportation software?	• Software license agreements. • Cost/benefit reports. • Student and/or run lists.
Maintenance and annual service agreements have been established with all systems vendors.	• Do our maintenance agreements provide reasonable technical support terms and timeframes? • Does our agreement entitle us to system upgrades and fixes on a regular schedule? • Have we established a designated rate for additional services? • Does our agreement require pre-approval of all additional technical support charges?	• Software license and maintenance agreements.
Backup and restoration processes have been established and tested.	• Have we considered the implications of a server failure on our ability to continue operations? • Have we tested our backup and restore processes to ensure they work as expected? • Does our backup process ensure that we are protecting all important files including email, documents, routing databases, etc.? • Have we identified an off-site location in the event that we lose access to the primary office? • Have we established catastrophic recovery procedures including off-site storage, spare hardware, and remote access options?	• Procedures statements and staff assignments. • Backup and testing schedules. • Off-site storage location agreements.

Self assessment workbook
Student map and database management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Process are established to promote and validate map accuracy and completeness.	• How do we identify issues related to map inaccuracies? • Are we structured to ensure accountability for management of default values? • Have default map values been evaluated relative to travel speeds and route timing? • Have we established a priority for addressing changes to default map values? • Have we established processes to use external inputs (e.g., driver input, route audit results) to evaluate map characteristics? • Have we established appropriate external relationships to ensure timely access to geospatial data? • Are we able to accommodate multi-lingual address data? How? • Have we established and documented exception areas that may restrict certain planning options in designated areas? • How are unmatched addresses reconciled?	• Map management procedure statements. • Job descriptions including map management responsibility. • Agreements with external agencies for access to geospatial data. • Exception area policy and procedure statements. • Performance indicators: – Student address match rate; – Ratio of digitized vs. geocoded addresses; and – Average and median difference between planned and actual times and distances.
Student data updates are performed regularly.	• Does the transfer of student data occur electronically? How frequently? • Have we established manual processes to address student updates between electronic transfers? How much effort is required to maintain those updates? Would more frequent updates eliminate the manual process? • Have we identified differences in regular and special needs student data that would require separate management processes? • Have we established accountability for the transfer and reconciliation of the student data? • Have we addressed inaccuracies at their source where possible?	• Student data transfer procedures. • Job descriptions with student data management responsibility identified. • Manual process documentation and forms. • Performance indicators such as the Student match rate.

Self assessment workbook
Student map and database management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Coding structures have been established that allow for targeted analysis of performance.	• Have we considered the types of efficiency and effectiveness analyses we are likely to conduct and established the coding structure to meet those requirements? • Have we modified the default coding structure that was part of our original system implementation? • Have we established unique student, run, and school groups based on the specific operating characteristics required to provide service? • Does our coding structure allow us to extract designated populations at an increasing level of specificity and detail? • Have we established a structure that is not so detailed or explicit to be confusing or inflexible?	• Student data management procedures with a description of required codes. • Run and route identification management procedure with a description of required structure.

Self assessment workbook
Transportation planning

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Planning cycles are established with specified tasks, timelines, and assignments.	• Have we defined both the tasks and timelines necessary to design our routing scheme? • Have we sequenced those tasks back from the required dates to identify required start times? • Have we evaluated the resources required to accomplish each task to ensure we have sufficient staff? • Have we made provisions for the use of temporary staff where required? • Have we rationalized the detail of the plan to ensure it can be used as both a training and monitoring tool? • Have we established operational procedures to address planning delays?	• Planning schedule. • Planning procedure statements. • Temporary staffing procedure statement. • Position descriptions.
Regular analyses of routing effectiveness and efficiency are conducted, providing measurable and comparable results.	• How do we measure current levels of effectiveness and efficiency? • How frequently do we evaluate the assignment of bus stops, runs, and routes? • Who conducts these analyses? What are their guidelines? Who oversees the analyses? When is feedback provided? • What techniques are used to realize efficiencies? • Do we consider non-traditional routing techniques such as shuttle runs, transfers, perimeter runs, grade integration, board integration, special needs integration, etc? • How frequently are bell time changes considered? What are the criteria used to evaluate the options? • How do we communicate the results of efficiency analyses? • How are cost implications calculated and communicated? • Have we considered contract clauses in our planning?	• Planning scenario summaries. • Cost analyses. • Route development procedure statements or guidelines. • Planning calendars. • Training plans. • Performance indicators: – Cost per student; – Cost per bus; – Cost per kilometre; – Buses per 100 students transported; – Capacity use (simple and planned); – Run and Ride length; – Percent of runs at or below contract minimums; and – Contract minimums relative to average and median run characteristics.

Self assessment workbook
Transportation planning

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
A program of regular, progressive staff training is provided on both routing theory and practice.	• Have we established the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities of each position in the organization? • Have we established specific expectations regarding system use for each position in the organization? • Have we identified both technical and operational knowledge expectations of staff? • Have we identified sources of training internally and externally? • Have we established a costing and scheduling mechanism to ensure regular training can be offered? • Have we established a process that allows external training to be introduced and/or taught to all staff following the initial program? • Have we established a process that provides for equitable access to training for all staff? • Have we created a process that shares responsibility for the identification of training opportunities between the Consortium and the staff? • Have we created an organizational structure and compensation system that reinforces the value of training and skills enhancement?	• Job descriptions. • Training plans.

Self assessment workbook
System reporting

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
Data requirements for each position in the organization have been evaluated.	• Have we identified the access and data requirements of each system user? • Have we structured a series of reports or data access tables that provides each user the required data?	• Position descriptions with data needs identified or procedure statements. • Reports and data access tables.
Data is extracted regularly as part of a KPI monitoring process.	• Have we established a KPI monitoring process? • Have we identified the data needed to calculate each KPI? • Have we identified the source system for each data element of the KPI calculations? • Have we established a process to assist in the interpretation of KPI values including a rationale for the measure, expected values, and trend indicators? • Have we established a schedule for calculating each KPI that reflects both its importance and usefulness for evaluating operational performance?	• Procedure statements and sample KPI reports.
Information is submitted to stakeholder groups on an established schedule.	• Have we identified all of the stakeholders that require transportation-related data? • Have we established a schedule that indicates when they need the specified data? • Have we established a process that offers access to that data while limiting the production and distribution effort of transportation staff? • Have we established security protocols that ensure access is appropriately available and limited to only the needed data? • Have we established procedures to validate the rationale for and accommodation of ad hoc data requests?	• Reporting schedule procedure statements. • Copies of specific reports to each stakeholder group.

Self assessment workbook
Contract structure

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements

The Consortium uses standard contracts with bus operators that detail appropriate legal, safety and other non-monetary terms.	• What services/actions does the Consortium require from its bus operators?
	• What are the Consortium's expectations with respect to service levels?
	• Are the terms included in the contract appropriate? Do they outline:
	  − Operator insurance requirements;
	  − The maximum age of vehicles to be used;
	  − Expected spare bus ratios;
	  − Mandatory First Aid, CPR, EpiPen training obligations;
	  − Confidentiality of information – for operator and each driver;
	  − Valid drivers license, CVOR, vulnerable sector check;
	  − Information submission requirements; and
	  − Fuel escalator/de-escalator clauses?
	• What additional terms need to be included in the contract in order to ensure that bus operators make student safety their primary concern?
	• Given that compliance with all clauses will need to be ensured, what is the Consortium's capacity to monitor contract compliance?
	• Are the terms included in the bus operator contract in line with the best practices identified in this guide?
		• Signed, executed contracts with all bus operators.
		• Contracts signed by parties that have the appropriate authority to bind their respective organizations.
		• Guidance on operator contract clauses is provided on slide 37.

The Consortium uses standard contracts with transportation service providers other than bus operators that detail appropriate legal, safety and non-monetary terms.	• Are terms included in contracts with other service providers in line with the best practices identified in this guide and compliant with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive*? • Are all relevant terms in these contracts outlined in sufficient detail? • What information does the Consortium need from transportation service providers?	• Signed, executed contracts with all transportation service providers, including taxi operators, boat operators, municipal transit authorities and paid parent drivers, among others. • Guidance on operator contract clauses is provided on slide 37.

Self assessment workbook
Contract structure

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The contract terms with respect to compensation are clear. Payment formulae, terms, schedules, and adjustments are appropriately defined. All operator invoices are sent to the Consortium for verification.	• What level of compensation does the operator require in order to remain financially viable? • What level of operator compensation will maximize service quality, safety and competitiveness while minimizing the cost of service? • What levels of compensation can the Consortium provide while remaining fiscally responsible? • Is the compensation pre-determined by law (e.g. taxi operators)? • What components should be included in the compensation formula? How will the Consortium verify these components? • What adjustments will need to be made to the compensation formula? How will these adjustments ensure that the Consortium is not overpaying for services received? • How will invoices be verified?	• Compensation related clauses in operator contracts. • Evidence that operator invoices are sent to the Consortium and reviewed by appropriate staff.

Self assessment workbook
Goods and services procurement

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium's chosen procurement method is open, transparent, and accountable. The chosen method introduces the business opportunity to a competitive market in order to ensure that the Consortium is receiving services that are of the highest quality at rates that reflect current market prices.	• Is the procurement process in compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act?* • Given the value of the contract being awarded, what is the procurement method prescribed in the procurement policies? • Which procurement method will best ensure that the business opportunity is exposed to a competitive market? • Which procurement method will best ensure that the Consortium is maximizing transparency, accountability and fairness to both operators and member boards? • How will the Consortium ensure that it is receiving market rates for services procured? • How does the procurement method selected impact the rates and quality of service received by the Consortium? • How should governance and member boards be involved with the procurement process?	• Clear, documented, governance committee-approved policies on procurement. • Procurement processes are used that are consistent with the Consortium's procurement policies. • Developed templates for competitive procurement, including: − A fully developed procurement document; and − A draft operator contract.
The Consortium procures transportation services in a structured, timely manner which ensures that a contract is in place well before the beginning of each school year.	• What key milestones need to be achieved in order to ensure that a contract is in place well before the beginning of each school year? • How long does it take to achieve these milestones?	• Documented, clear and comprehensive operator procurement calendar. • Operator contracts show that they were executed prior to the beginning of the school year.

Self assessment workbook
Contract management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium performs periodic facility audits to ensure that operator facilities are in line with expectations set out in the contract.	• What standards does the contract outline in terms of operator facilities? • How often should the Consortium conduct facility audits?	• Evidence that the Consortium conducts facility audits including, if appropriate, a completed facility audit form. • If necessary, evidence that facility audits lead to follow up with operators.
The Consortium performs periodic administrative audits to ensure that operators and drivers are in compliance with safety, legal and contract requirements.	• What information does the Consortium require from its operators? • How often should the Consortium ensure contract compliance? • How will the Consortium monitor and ensure compliance on an ongoing basis. For example, how will the Consortium ensure that a driver's license is renewed if it expires mid-year?	• Evidence that the Consortium collects and monitors compliance with all legal and administrative clauses outlined in the contract. • Evidence that the Consortium completes preparedness audits when new contracts are awarded prior to the start of the school year.
The Consortium performs a specific audit following the award of a new contract to ensure the operator is prepared and in full compliance prior to the start of the school year.	• What specific processes are in place to ensure new operators are in full compliance with the contract prior to the start of the school year?	• Evidence that the Consortium completes preparedness audits when new contracts are awarded prior to the start of the school year.

Self assessment workbook
Contract management

Leading practice	Self assessment	Documentation requirements
The Consortium has sufficient capacity and has laid the groundwork for the implementation of random, structured route audits or their equivalent.	• Does the operator contract give the Consortium the right to conduct random route audits? • What policies and procedures need to be in place for staff to follow when conducting route audits? • Are staff appropriately trained to conduct route audits? • How many route audits does the Consortium need to conduct in order to ensure that it is receiving the quality of service that it expects?	• Documented, clear policy or procedure regarding route audits. • Route audit form to be filled by staff. • Proof that the Consortium has followed up with operators regarding their performance.
The Consortium regularly conducts random, documented route audits or has an alternative mechanism in place to monitor on-the-road operator performance.	• What are the criteria against which performance should be measured? • Who will be responsible for conducting route audits? • How will follow-up be ensured?	• Completed route audit form. • Documented follow up activities initiated by the Consortium.
The Consortium monitors operator's performance over time. Operators are aware of their relative performance over time.	• What tools can be used to track operator performance over time? • How should this information be communicated to operators? • How can follow-up on outstanding issues be ensured?	• Documented operator report cards, or equivalent. • Evidence that the Consortium communicates performance results to operators.

Appendix 1
About E&E Reviews

Background

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 regular home to school 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. However, a decision was made to hold funding for student transportation steady, on an interim basis, while the Ministry worked to develop and implement a new approach. From 1998-1999 to 2015-2016, an increase of over $321 million in additional base funding has been provided to address increasing costs for student transportation, such as fuel price increases, despite a general decline in student enrolment.

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; to achieve an equitable approach to funding; and to reduce the administrative burden of delivering transportation, thus allowing school boards to focus on student learning and achievement.

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

- Initial reviews were scheduled by the Ministry, with follow-up reviews being triggered at the request of consortia. However, a follow-up review will not be triggered less than one year after an initial review in order to allow consortia to develop and implement recommendations that have been identified. Capacity building workshops are available to consortia prior to their initial review to assist them in understanding their readiness for a review.

Purpose of E&E Reviews

- The purpose of the E&E Review is to assess the current state of the Consortium against the E&E evaluation criteria. This is fulfilled by reviewing supporting evidentiary working papers and interviewing various stakeholders to determine leading practices and make recommendations on areas for improvement.

- Recommendations are intended to identify specific opportunities for efficiencies and to enhance the effectiveness of the operations. It is recognized that this does not mean that all recommendations will result in cost savings.

- The E&E Review will recognize each consortium's unique context and characteristics in order to:

  − Strengthen management capacity in each consortium with recommendations that support operations;

  − Highlight existing successful business practices used by consortia to the rest of the sector;

  − Leverage leading practices across the sector to increase standards for the delivery of transportation services;

  − Enhance the transparency and accountability of consortia; and

  − Provide the Ministry with important input on capacity and capabilities across the sector.

Funding adjustments

- The Ministry will use the results of the E&E Reviews to inform any future funding adjustments. Only school boards that have undergone E&E Reviews are eligible for a funding adjustment.

- The table below illustrates how the Overall Rating will affect a school board's transportation expenditure-allocation gap.

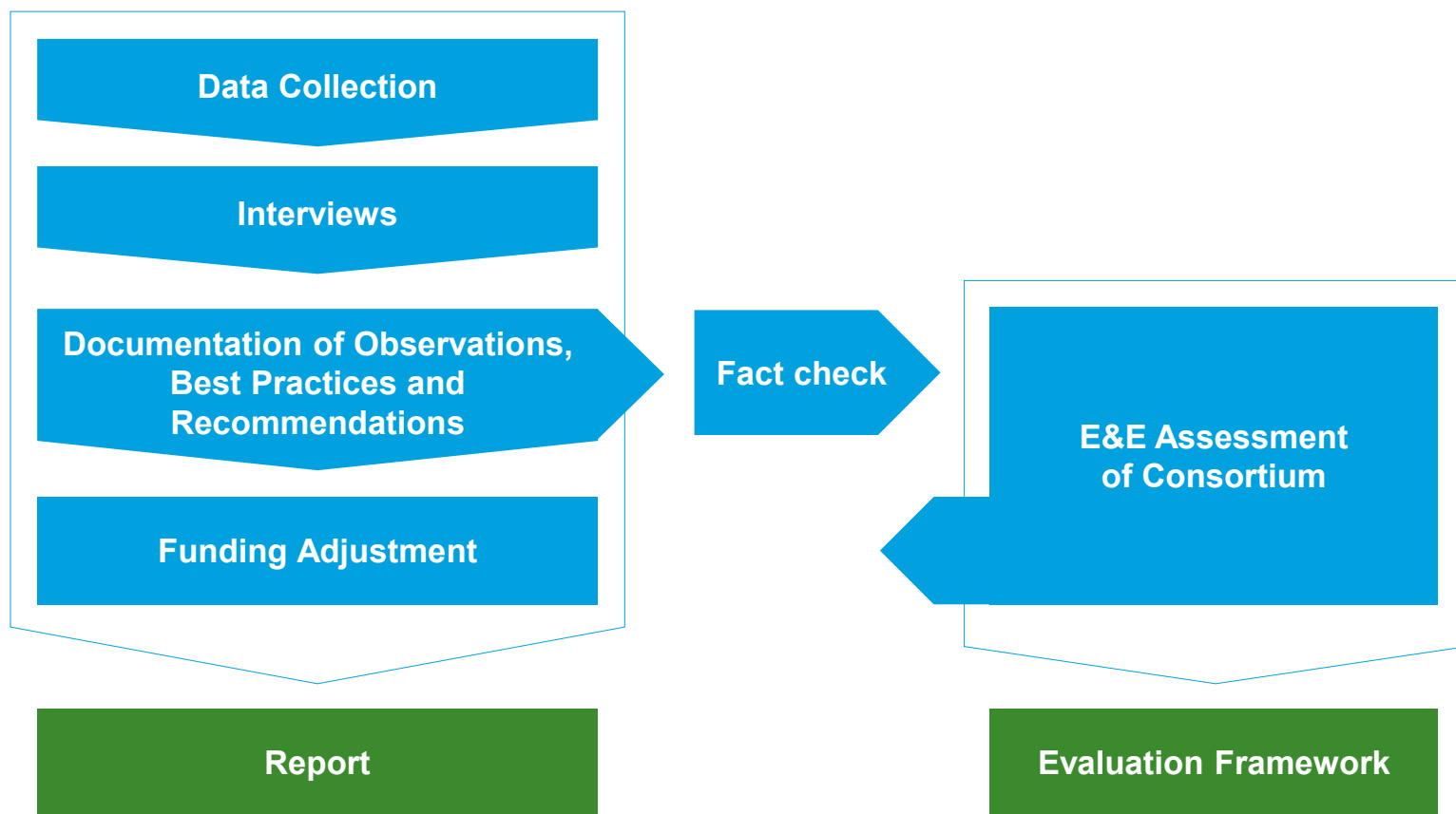| Overall Rating	Effect on deficit school boards	Effect on surplus school boards
High	Reduce the gap by 100% (i.e. eliminate the gap)	No in-year funding impact; out-year changes are to be determined
Moderate-High	Reduce the gap by 90%	Same as above
Moderate	Reduce the gap by 60%	Same as above
Moderate-Low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

Introduction to E&E follow-up reviews

- The follow-up review provides an opportunity for a consortium to improve its initial rating.

- In order to achieve a high rating, consortia will need to demonstrate the same qualities as those sites that have already achieved high ratings.

- There is no guarantee that a consortium's rating from its initial reviews will not be reduced.

- It is recommended that consortia wait until they are ready before requesting a follow-up review, and that at least one year has passed since the initial review was completed.

- The E&E Review Team will continue to rate sites based on the same fundamental criteria as has always been used but will provide expanded recommendations based on the experience gained by team over the course of the Review process in what are seen as leading practices.

- Consortia are expected to:

    1. Continue optimizing existing leading practices;

    2. Implement changes to address the recommendations given during the initial review;

    3. Address applicable recommendations given to other consortia;

    4. Implement leading practices outlined in this Leading Practices Guide; and

    5. Review the information packages produced by the Ministry and, as appropriate, implement the recommendations/leading practices.

Approach and methodology
Overview

- The E&E Review methodology is based on a six step approach as illustrated below:

Data Collection

Interviews

Documentation of Observations, Best Practices and Recommendations

Fact check

E&E Assessment of Consortium

Funding Adjustment
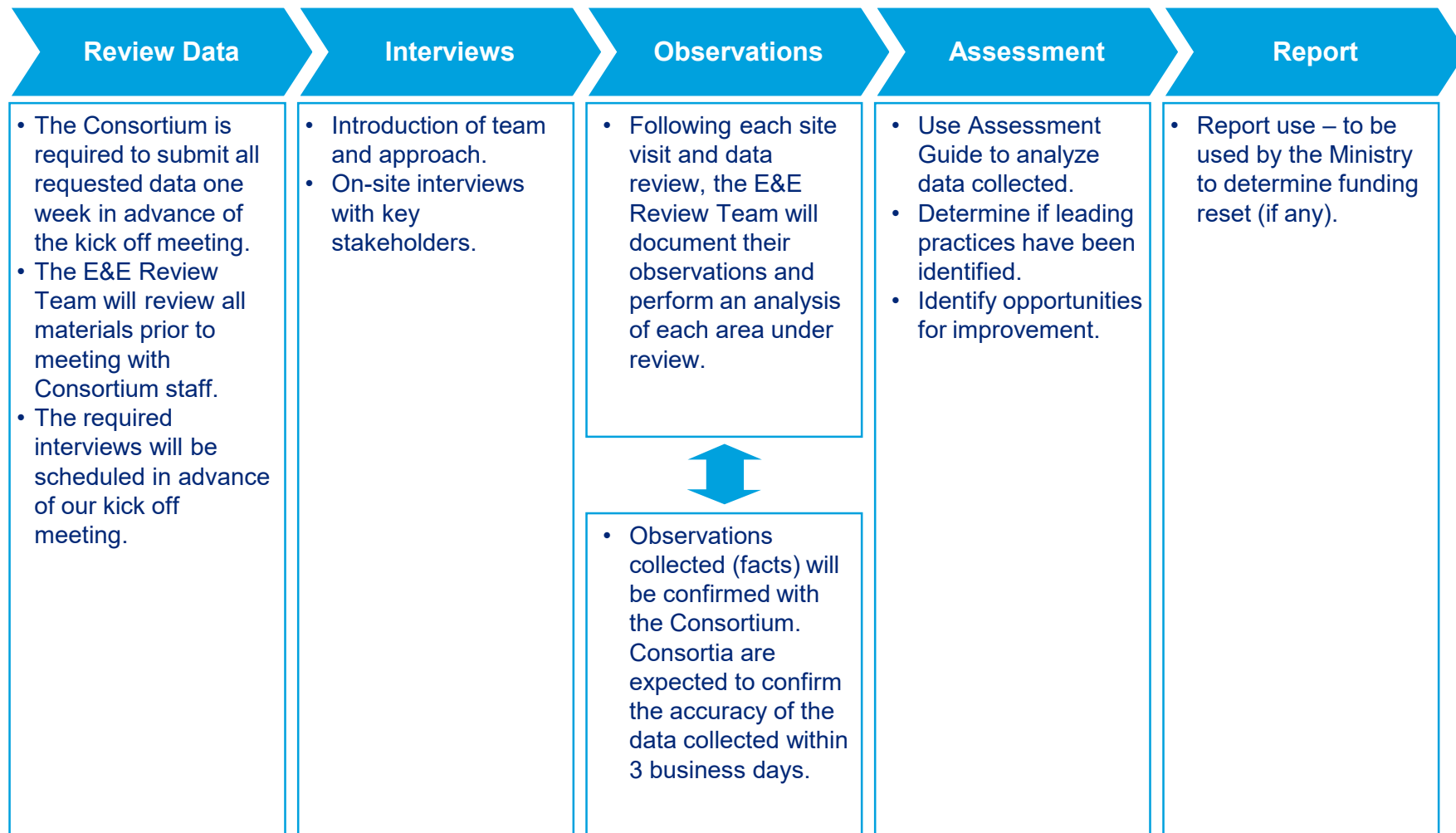
Report

Evaluation Framework

The fact check process gives consortia the opportunity to confirm that the E&E assessment is based on a correct understanding and interpretation of data and interviews.

Methodology and approach
Site Reviews

Review Data	Interviews	Observations	Assessment	Report
• The Consortium is required to submit all requested data one week in advance of the kick off meeting. • The E&E Review Team will review all materials prior to meeting with Consortium staff. • The required interviews will be scheduled in advance of our kick off meeting.	• Introduction of team and approach. • On-site interviews with key stakeholders.	• Following each site visit and data review, the E&E Review Team will document their observations and perform an analysis of each area under review. • Observations collected (facts) will be confirmed with the Consortium. Consortia are expected to confirm the accuracy of the data collected within 3 business days.	• Use Assessment Guide to analyze data collected. • Determine if leading practices have been identified. • Identify opportunities for improvement.	• Report use – to be used by the Ministry to determine funding reset (if any).

The E&E Review Team

- Deloitte leads the E&E Review Team and is responsible for the overall completion of the E&E Review reports. Deloitte is also responsible for the completion of the E&E Review on Consortium Management and Contracts.

- MPS is primarily responsible for the completion of the E&E Review on Policies and Practices and Routing and Technology.

- The Transportation Peer Reviewer is available to lend expertise to the E&E Review Team. For the follow-up E&E Review there is no Transportation Peer Reviewer.

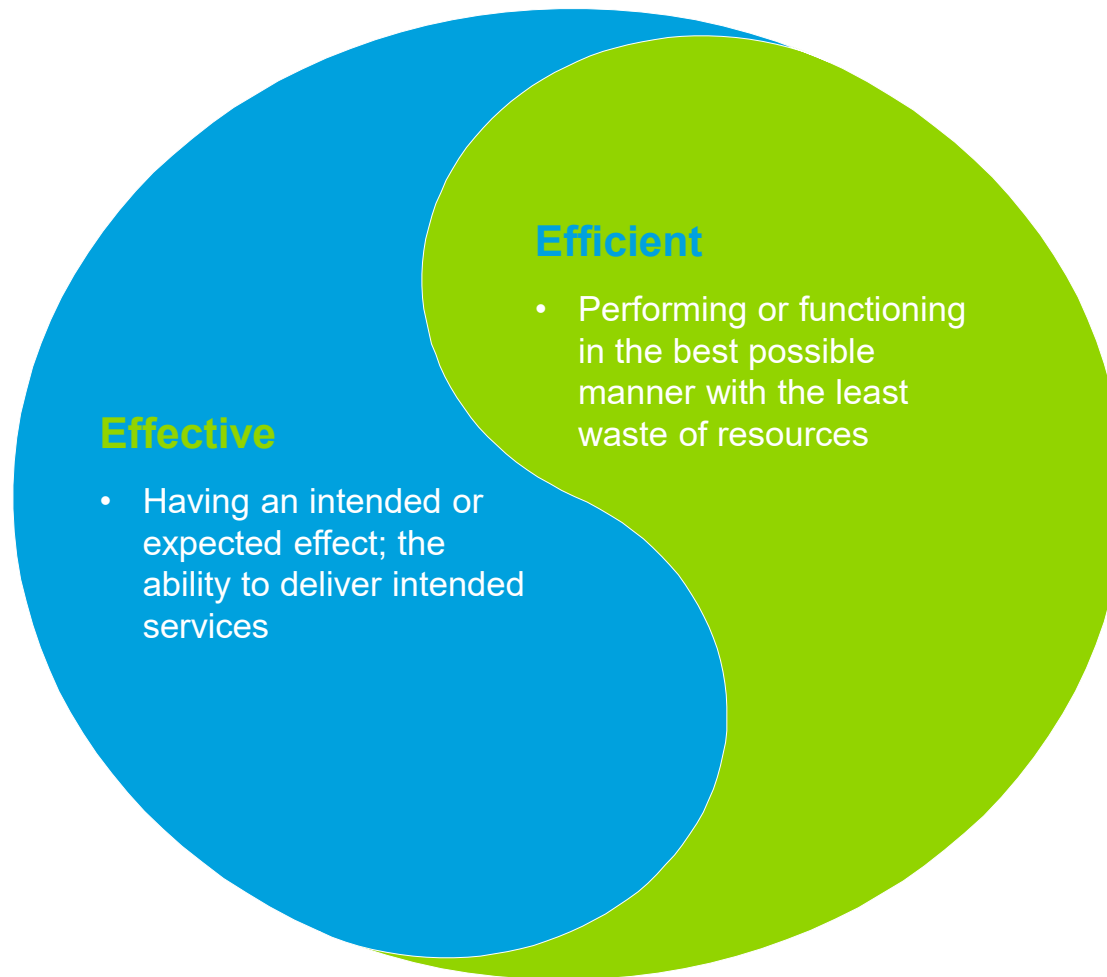- Ministry staff are available to provide support to the E&E Review Team.
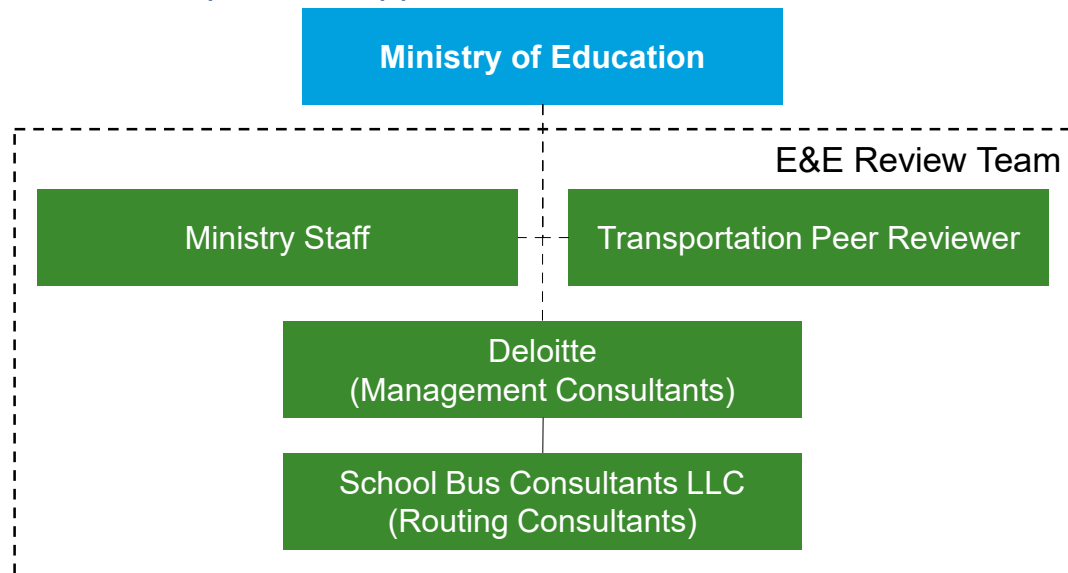
Assessment guide

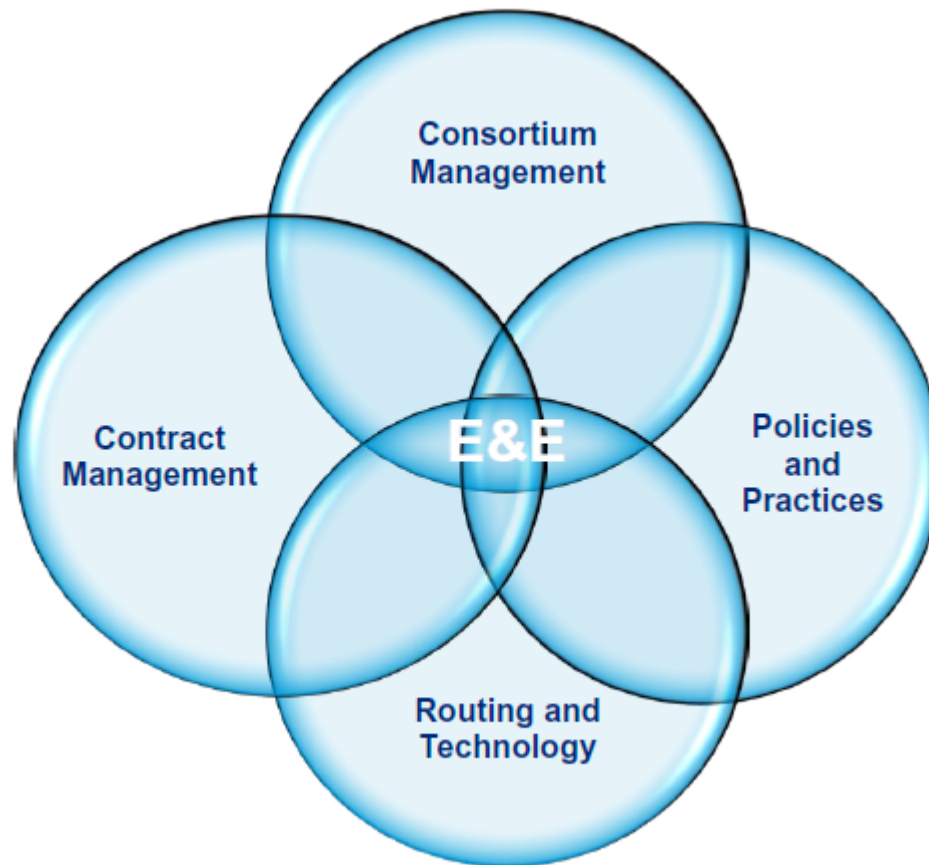- E&E Reviews assess four areas of performance:

	Consortium Management	Policies and Practices	Routing and Technology	Contracts
Effectiveness	YES	YES	YES	YES
Efficiency	YES	YES	YES	YES

- **Consortium Management** encompasses the management of the entire organization. The four key components of Consortium Management are governance, organization structure, consortium management processes and practices and financial management.

- **Policies and Practices** encompasses the development, use, and monitoring of transportation service standards. The three key areas of policies and practices are general transportation policies and practices; special needs and specialized programs; and safety and training programs.

- **Routing and Technology** encompasses the management; administration and use of technology for student transportation management. The four key components of Routing and Technology are software and technology setup and use; digital map and student database management; system reporting; and regular and special needs transportation planning and routing.

- **Contracts** refers to the processes and practices by which the Consortium enters into contractual relationships with service providers. The three key components of Contracting and Practices are goods and services procurement; contract structure; and contract management.

Effective and Efficient

Efficient

- Performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of resources

Effective

- Having an intended or expected effect; the ability to deliver intended services

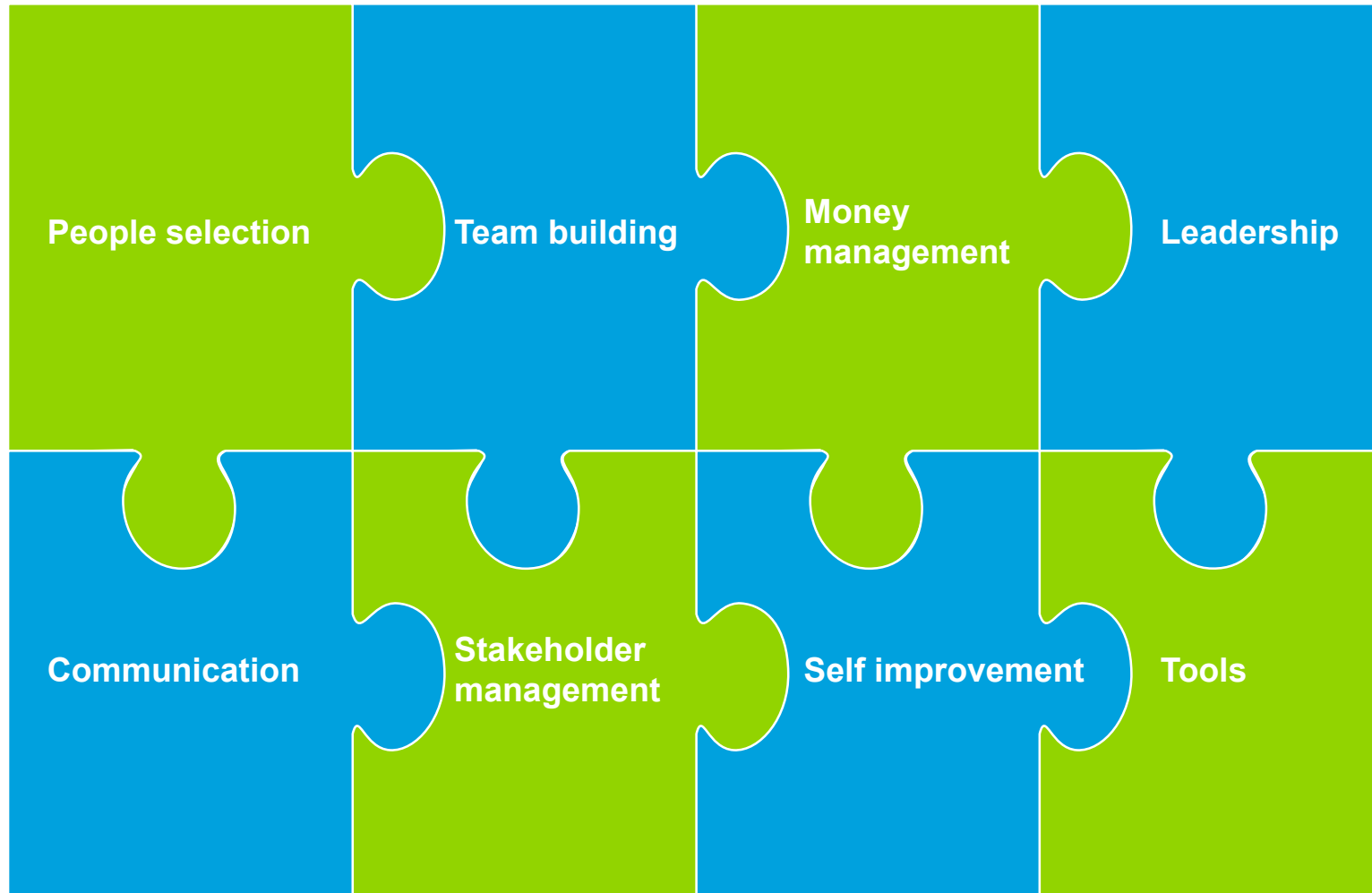# Relating efficiency, effectiveness and the leading practices

Effectiveness and efficiency requires the demonstration of leading practices in all areas. If any one area begins to stray then the overall E&E of the site is impacted.

Appendix 2
Management Framework

Management Framework

There are eight essential management principles necessary in a successful business.

People selection	Team building	Money management	Leadership
Communication	Stakeholder management	Self improvement	Tools

Management Framework

Principle	Description
People selection	The ability to employ the right people with skills and competencies that match the Consortium's strategic requirements.
Team building	Making sure that all staff feel like they are a part of something larger than themselves. Effective teams – ones that represent a diverse mix of skills, competencies and personalities – help the Consortium produce results by motivating staff to work together towards a common objective.
Money management	Refers to the process of budgeting, saving, investing, spending or otherwise overseeing the usage of the Consortium's limited resources in the achievement of its strategic objectives.
Leadership	Leadership should provide the Consortium with a vision towards which its resources can be dedicated. In terms of character, an effective leader plans, mentors, coaches and motivates to empower every individual to perform at his/her best.
Communication	Refers to both the content and method used to convey information across the Consortium. Effective communication can move the Consortium towards its objectives by ensuring that all staff have a common understanding of expectations, goals and objectives.

Management Framework

Principle	Description
Stakeholder management	The way in which the Consortium communicates and maintains ties with the community, other consortia, parents, students, service suppliers, the Ministry of Education and member boards. Effective stakeholder management strikes a balance between seeking greater input and quick, efficient decision making.
Self improvement	The Consortium's efforts to constantly improve on its own performance. Its ability to improve its own performance depends, in turn, on the availability of the right people with the right resources communicating the right information to each other.
Tools	The overall suite of resources available to the Consortium that helps it achieve its goals and objectives. Having the right tools – technology, funds, access to stakeholders – can ensure that both leadership and staff are able to execute their duties in a way that improves the Consortium's overall performance.