



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Memorandum

To: Ad Hoc Committee for Enhancing the Use of Public Transit

From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education

Date: April 18, 2024

Subject: **Presentation: DSTS Transit Overview**

Origin: Jim Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Kelly Mechoulan, Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS)

Please find attached presentation entitled “DSTS Transit Overview” and Memorandum of Understanding dated June 7, 2022 (Appendix 1).

TB/eb

Attachments:

DSTS Transit Overview presentation

Appendix 1 – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated June 7, 2022



Durham Catholic
District School Board
Ad Hoc Committee-
Transit

Durham Student
Transportation
Services



DSTS Transit Overview

April 2024



DSTS Formation

Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) is a consortium formed by agreement between the Durham Catholic District School Board and the Durham District School Board, for the purpose of providing a common administration of student transportation services for Durham Region. DSTS is one of more than thirty consortia within Ontario mandated by the Ministry of Education.




DSTS Governing Structure

DSTS is governed by the DSTS Governance Committee comprising of members from both partner boards.





History-Durham Region Transit and Secondary Students

- Until 2013, urban Durham secondary students utilized Durham Region Transit using a Restricted Student Pass costing \$49.50 per month.
 - DCDSB paid for the passes. DDSB students were responsible for purchasing passes.
 - Students were transported on several transit-dedicated school routes called “School Specials”
 - June 2013 School Boards and DSTS were informed that Restricted Student Pass was being discontinued and going forward Student Passes would be offered at a cost of \$86.50 per month.
 - September 2013 Secondary Students transitioned to School buses throughout the region for both DCDSB and DDSB.
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Memorandum of Understanding

- June 2022 DDSB, DCDSB, and Durham Region Transit signed a memorandum of understanding.
- As part of the agreement, DRT agreed to allow DSTS to purchase student monthly passes at the Y10 rate which is currently \$78.30 per month.
- Transit passes are currently being utilized for AMP Students at All Saints, Continuing Education, and short-term construction hazard areas
- Overview of Agreement:
 - Any purchased passes must be able to be accommodated within DRT capacity and pre-existing bus routes.
 - No agreed consideration of mid-year route changes or customized routing for secondary students.
 - No long-term agreement on the cost of student pass, 30 days notice of any fare increase.
 - Administration of Presto passes is the responsibility of the school boards.

Overall Key Statistics

494

Total School Buses

29, 248

Total Transported Students

6,250

Total Bus Stops

28, 898

Kilometers Travelled Daily

2,018

Total School Bus Routes

177

Total Schools

Secondary Student Information and School Bus Service Data

Total DCDSB Secondary Students

6,790

Large Buses Travelling to More than One School

95%

Total DCDSB Urban Secondary Students

(Eligible for Transportation)

3,373

Average Urban Secondary Ride Time In Minutes

20

Total Urban Secondary Walkers between 2-3.2KM

6,716

Average Urban Walk to Bus Stop Distance

(Meters)

295

Loss in Inefficiencies Costs

Due to extensive tiering of pre-existing fleet, transitioning urban DCDSB secondary students to transit would incur the inefficiency costs as noted below. Some implications of this inefficiency are:

- Based on the current consortium agreement DCDSB would be responsible for the additional costs incurred by the DDSB.
- Risk of losing funding from the Ministry of Education, as actions were taken to make the routes more inefficient.
- To reduce some of the inefficiency costs, bell time changes would be required by several elementary schools including recommendations for bell times between 8 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.

DCDSB

\$938,509

DDSB

\$892,366

Total

\$1,830,875



Key Considerations of Transit Use



Costs


- Transit pass cost can increase yearly.
- Additional Ridership may result in loss of student bulk rate of \$78 which may not be renewed.
- Student Pass Cost of \$96.50 results in a Ministry funding shortage of \$118,055 (current rate, Ministry funds one year behind).
- Additional DRT fares include under 12 years old ride free, Adult \$120.60, Senior Pass \$48.25, and Access Pass \$46.90.



Key Considerations of Transit Use



Service

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- Secondary student riders are incorporated on pre-existing transit routes.
 - No “school specials” are being contemplated by DRT.
 - Transit routes may extend student ride times and require 1-2 transfers depending on student area.
 - Transit routes may change 1-2 times per year as DRT bases routing on many areas by ridership.
 - Increased walk-to-bus-stop distances, as transit operates on main roadways.



Key Considerations of Transit Use



Administration Costs


- Presto pass administration is the responsibility of the school/school board.
- Current process is labor intensive and union consultation may be required.
- Additional communication staffing may be required to assist families and students with presto pass concerns (each student needs to register their own card) and routing issues.
- Transit routes may extend student ride times and require 1-2 transfers



Key Considerations of Transit Use



School Bus Logistics

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- Once secondary school tiers are removed, there is no way to return the tier in year.
 - If additional drivers or vehicles are required to return service, it may take up to 2 years to return students to school bus transportation. Delays would be due to additional driver recruitment and delays in fleet manufacturing.
 - Legal challenges with material changes to bus operator contracts.

Key Considerations of Transit Use

Special Education Students


- The majority of DCDSB special education students currently ride 70 passenger vehicles.
- DSTS estimates that approximately 5% of secondary students will require specialized transportation due to transit transfers or extended walk distances to transit stops.
- To transport, 34 additional small school buses will be required.
- Estimated cost at current contract rates \$1,758,715



Key Considerations of Transit Use



Privacy Implications

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- Presto passes are issued directly to students.
 - Privacy prevents school boards from accessing any information on the use of the pass.
 - Frequency of Presto card use and number of students who activate their monthly pass is not available.
 - Concerns about lack of service within an area could not be confirmed by ridership.
 - Ridership by area or school is not available.

Overall Potential DCDSB Financial Exposure

Additional Costs of Transit Passes beyond Ministry funding	\$ 118,055
Inefficiency Costs Related to Pre-Existing School Bus Routes	\$1,830,875
Additional Small Bus Fleet Required for Special Education/Medical Students	\$1,758,715
Total	\$3,707,645



Thank you!
www.dstst.on.ca

Dated as of the 7th day of June 2022

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

BETWEEN:

Durham District School Board (DDSB)

Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)

Durham Region Transit (DRT)

RECITALS:

1. The parties to this MOU agree to the cause and initiative as herein described and detailed in this MOU and agree to work with best efforts and good faith with regard to the cause and initiative with the guiding principles as detailed herein.
2. Increased public transit usage has immense benefits including socioeconomic and environmental benefits, as well as reduced traffic for the residents of Durham Region.
3. DRT public transit services are available to all fare-paying passengers and the service is planned and delivered based on an approved service strategy, guidelines, and budget.
4. Public transit customers are required to adhere to all policies regarding the use of DRT public transit services.
5. Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) is a consortium formed by agreement between DCDSB and the DDSB, for the purpose of providing a common administration of student transportation services based on each Board's policy governing transportation eligibility of students.
6. DDSB and DCDSB already purchase PRESTO transit passes for some of their students.

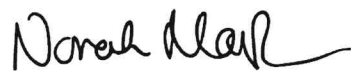
NOW THEREFORE, the parties agree to collaborate in good faith based on these guiding principles.

1. The parties commit to enhancing the use of public transit by youth, including secondary school students, within a fiscally responsible framework.
2. The DRT network is planned in consideration of key trip generator locations and resident demand across the Region, including secondary schools.
3. The school boards will ensure that the number of PRESTO passes purchased can be accommodated within DRT's scheduled capacity available in identified areas.
4. When purchasing PRESTO products, DDSB and DCDSB will administer the products in accordance with the terms and conditions established by PRESTO.
5. Any fare rate change to the bulk purchase youth pass program will be communicated to DSTS within thirty days following approval of the annual DRT Business Plan and Budget.
6. DRT, DDSB and DCDSB will share ridership and other appropriate data subject to availability and legal/privacy considerations.
7. The parties endeavour to collaborate to promote public transit usage among students, including educational programs for customer safety and etiquette, developing life skills to navigate a public transit system, and activities to highlight the benefits of public transit.

REVIEW:

1. This MOU shall be reviewed by the parties once per year.
2. DSTS and DRT shall meet at least semi-annually to monitor progress and review priorities, and the projected capacity on the public transit network.

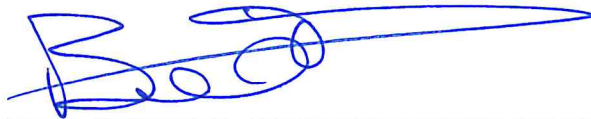
Memorandum of Understanding reviewed and signed by:



Norah Marsh, Director of Education, Durham District School Board



Tracy Barill, Director of Education, Durham Catholic District School Board



William (Bill) Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit