



# OSTA

Ottawa Student  
Transportation  
Authority

## Kindergarten Transportation Information 2017-2018

**In order to secure a seat for your child from the first day of school, it is important that you ensure an accurate home or daycare address is in the school's information system prior to July.** Routes will be run with all stops as planned from the first day of school, regardless of intermittent KG start up schedule.

### Motorized Transportation for Students in the Bus Zone

The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) shall provide transportation for students of Member School Boards who reside, or in the case of students in elementary grades (KG to Grade 8) whose caregiver resides, within the designated attendance and/or program boundary of the school they are attending and meet the minimum transportation eligibility distances as follows:

Junior and/or Senior Kindergarten	0.8 km or more
Grades 1 to 8	1.6 km or more

The caregiver address shall supersede the home address within the designated attendance boundary of the school attended for distance measurement purposes. The pickup and drop off addresses must be consistent five (5) days a week.

### Transportation to Two Homes

Students who are in a **joint custody arrangement and require transportation to two homes** may apply for transportation to an alternate home/daycare location based on the parties' access schedule. All eligibility rules apply to the second address. **Deadline for September 2017 seating is JUNE 1, 2017.** All documents are available at: [www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies/transportation-for-students-in-a-joint-custody-arrangement-and-having-two-homes](http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies/transportation-for-students-in-a-joint-custody-arrangement-and-having-two-homes)

### Get Active! Resources for Students in the Walk Zone

We encourage students and their parents who are within the walk zone to use human-powered transportation. This leads to a healthier lifestyle, readiness to learn, and reduces traffic congestion around the school. Preferred walk routes to every school are available at:

<http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/resources/walking-routes>

Addresses inside the green line are designated walkers. Addresses outside the green line are assigned motorized transportation. If the address is in a shaded area inside the walk zone, the address is assigned to motorized transportation based on a walking hazard.

### **Meeting KG at Bus Stop:**

To ensure the safety of transported Kindergarten students, school bus drivers shall not drop off these students unless the parent/guardian or a responsible individual identified by the parent/guardian is present at the stop location to accompany the student home.

**If there is no one at the stop to receive your Kindergarten student, s/he may be transported back to the school to be picked up by the parent/guardian or may be dropped off at the local police station. Failure to receive your KG child at the stop may result in termination of transportation services.**

OSTA will be providing bright yellow plastic tags for each KG student. Schools will attach these tags to any KG student's backpack (preferably on the lower left side) that is assigned to motorized transportation services. These bands will assist the driver in making sure a responsible person is at the stop to collect the student at their drop off point, per policy.

### **Bus Stop Location and Parent/Guardian Responsibility:**

- **Your child's bus stop will not be at your door.**
- Kindergarten students can be expected to walk up to 500 meters to their bus stop and must be accompanied by a responsible adult on their walk.
- Arrive at the bus stop 5-10 minutes before the scheduled pick up time
- Dress properly for the weather

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

- Ensuring a parent or guardian is available to receive the kindergarten student at drop off
- Accompanying student(s) on their way to the stop location;
- Ensuring the safety and security of student(s) while waiting at the stop location
- Assisting student(s) when getting on and off of a school bus or into or out of a small vehicle, including restraints if applicable;
- Ensuring the safety and security of student(s) after getting off the bus at the drop-off location when returning from school; and
- Providing adequate access/supervision to the student(s) at home and/or caregiver as specified by the parent/guardian.

### **Safety Awareness Day (First Time Rider Program):**

OSTA will conduct a safety program for first-time school bus riders, and young pedestrians, on **Sunday August 27, 2017** and again on **Sunday September 24, 2017**. If you are interested in having your child(en) attend this important program, please check our website in early July for program date and registration information at [www.ottawaschoolbus.ca](http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca). All students are welcome to attend.

If you cannot attend the First Rider Program, please take some time to review the school bus safety brochure with your child. **Repetition of school bus safety rules during the first two weeks of school ensures your child, and others, will be safe during their trip to and from school.**

### **Bus Stop Finder and the Bus Planner Parent Portal**

Parents may access transportation information for their child as of mid-August using the Parent Portal on [www.ottawaschoolbus.ca](http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca), or by clicking Bus Stop Finder. Eligibility will be identified as “walker” or will provide information about yellow bus or van service. Students will be provided a booster or car seat on van service.

We strongly encourage parents/guardians to sign up for email notification. This service provides delay information for your child’s route as well as other important service notices like snow day service cancellations.

### **Courtesy Seating (Empty Seats) for Students in Walk Zones**

Students, who do not meet the distance eligibility requirement for motorized transportation, may apply for an empty seat on the school bus. The **“Application for Access to Empty Seats on School Bus Vehicles”** form is available on the OSTA website at <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies/empty-seat-provision>.

All applications are processed and managed by OSTA. OSTA will begin reviewing and processing applications after October 1. This ensures accurate rider numbers and how many empty seats may be assigned to other students.

**Please do not place your child on a bus until the seat assignment has been confirmed through the Bus Planner Parent Portal. We have also instructed schools not to put unassigned students on buses for the ride home. To do so could compromise your child’s safety, as their name would not show up on any bus route lists.**

**Thanks for helping us keep all students safe!**