



TRANSPORTATION CONFIRMATION GUIDE 2022-2023



OSTA
Ottawa Student
Transportation
Authority

A how-to guide providing information for your school that also includes parent messages for your school community.



OSTA is planning for September 2022!

OSTA is pleased to provide you with information regarding our **new transportation confirmation process for the 2022-2023 school year**. By introducing a confirmation process, we can plan transportation for only those eligible students who require transportation. This new process will benefit school communities by ensuring more students receive a seat on a vehicle.

Why the change?

OSTA is aware that parents/guardians may not be using OSTA's transportation services now or next year due to various reasons. With the continuing driver shortage, OSTA must ensure that services are available, consistent, and reliable for students who rely on transportation. We want to confirm whether the parents/guardians of these students intend to use transportation services in 2022-2023, before our planning cycle.

When will OSTA launch the confirmation form?

OSTA is planning to launch the transportation confirmation form to our community the week of February 28th. It is important that schools understand the change and why it is happening. This guide includes valuable information to help our schools respond to and assist their communities.

Who needs to complete the confirmation form?

Students who are in one of the following school programs **and** eligible for transportation must complete the [transportation confirmation form](#).

Programs = Early French Immersion, Middle French Immersion, Regular (English with core French), Gifted, International Baccalaureate, School of Arts, High Performance Athletes, Specialist High Skills, Major Program, English as a Second Language, English Language Learner, English Literacy Development, Alternative Program, and Adaptive Program.

Specialized Transportation

Parents/guardians of students using specialized transportation **do not** need to complete the transportation confirmation form. OSTA will continue to provide specialized transportation subject to the approval of the applicable member school board, and those approvals are submitted through separate forms to OSTA. Confirmation of transportation will be done upon receipt of the appropriate transportation forms. Parents/guardians must contact their child's school to initiate the process.

Empty Seat/Courtesy Program

This is not the same as OSTA's empty seat/courtesy program, which is currently suspended due to COVID-19. OSTA plans to resume the empty seat/courtesy program when all COVID protocols are removed, and it is feasible to do so.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If parents/guardians do not confirm transportation before the April 3rd deadline, their child **may not** have transportation on the first day of school. OSTA will review late submissions beginning on September 12th, 2022.

It is important that families understand that they must be [eligible for transportation](#) in order to be assigned.

Don't have access to technology?

OSTA knows that not all families have access to technology. As much as possible, we would ask that schools help these families by completing the [online transportation confirmation form](#) on their behalf. A paper form is also available through the School Portal for your convenience. Upon request, please provide hard copies to parents/guardians. Upon receiving the completed form, we ask that you enter the details into the online form or send the completed forms to OSTA through the school board mail. These forms can be printed and distributed to students to take home at any time.

Can families change their minds?

We know family circumstances can change. If a parent/guardian decides to use transportation next year, and then circumstances change, they can decline transportation by completing the same [Transportation Confirmation Form](#). Conversely, they can confirm transportation using the same form if they decline transportation now and decide they need it later.

Parent Portal

The [Parent Portal](#) provides parents/guardians and students access to important transportation information. This includes the student's route, ride times, and pickup/drop off locations.

The Parent Portal will open for parents/guardians in **mid-August 2022**. At this time, families can access their student's transportation information for 2022-2023. Included is a [guide](#) to help parents navigate the Parent Portal.

Transportation Communication

We encourage all families to stay up-to-date on important transportation information. OSTA communicates information about service issues, delays and cancellations. Parents can subscribe to receive notifications through the [OSTA Parent Web Portal](#). Parents can also follow OSTA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @OttSchoolBus.

Please refer to OSTA's [Transportation Confirmation FAQ](#) for important details and information.

IMPORTANT: Messaging for School Communities

This page provides you with messages that have been pre-written for your convenience. Schools may select those messages that are the most appropriate for their school community and edit them as necessary.

NEW: Transportation Confirmation for 2022-2023

Are you planning on using student transportation in 2022-2023? To make better use of transportation services, OSTA is asking all parents and guardians of [eligible students](#) who are in one of the following school [programs](#) to confirm their intentions for transportation services for 2022-2023.

It's simple! Let OSTA know your intentions by completing the [Transportation Confirmation Form](#) by **April 3rd, 2022**.

[Programs](#) = Early French Immersion, Middle French Immersion, Regular (English with core French), Gifted, International Baccalaureate, School of Arts, High-Performance Athletes, Specialist High Skills Major Program, English as a Second Language, English Language Learner, English Literacy Development, Alternative Program, and Adaptive Program.

Important: If you do not confirm transportation [before](#) the deadline, your child **may not** have transportation on the first day of school. OSTA will review late submissions beginning on September 12th, 2022.

For more information, visit [OSTA's website](#).

Unsure if you are eligible for transportation?

Families can check if an address is eligible for motorized transportation on [OSTA's website](#). Please note that this software verifies the address against the [current](#) school year and excludes new schools, boundary changes and eligibility changes due to changes in schools, grades, addresses or programs. We also encourage you to read OSTA's [T18 Transportation Eligibility Policy](#) for helpful information.

OSTA will review the form submission to ensure the student is eligible for transportation and meets all terms and conditions [before](#) assigning transportation.

Parents/guardians can access their student's transportation information for 2022-2023 through the [Parent Portal](#) in mid-August 2022.

Is this the same as OSTA's empty seat/courtesy program?

Transportation Confirmation is [not](#) the same as the empty seat/courtesy program, which is currently suspended due to COVID-19. OSTA plans to resume the empty seat/courtesy program when all COVID protocols are removed, and it is feasible to do so.

What if my child goes to a caregiver?

As per OSTA's [T18 Transportation Eligibility Policy](#), as long as the caregiver's address is within the designated attendance boundary of the school, they will be eligible for transportation. Please complete the [transportation confirmation form](#) to notify OSTA of your decision.

Joint Custody and Transportation to Two Homes

Parents/guardians of students applying for joint custody (variable) transportation **do not** need to complete the transportation confirmation form.

OSTA does provide variable transportation services to eligible students who have a joint custody arrangement and whose two homes meet all eligibility requirements. Separate forms are required and must be completed for Joint Custody (variable) Transportation. Confirmation of transportation will be done upon receipt of the appropriate transportation forms.

Refer to [OSTA's website](#) for more information on variable transportation for students in a joint custody arrangement and having two homes, including important deadline dates for applications.

Parent Inquiries and Requests for Changes

If you require changes or have an inquiry about transportation services, please complete a [Transportation Issue Form](#). Transportation Issue Forms are prioritized over email requests and inquiries.

Transportation Communication

We encourage all families to stay up-to-date on important transportation information. OSTA communicates information about service issues, delays and cancellations. Parents can subscribe to receive notifications through the [OSTA Parent Web Portal](#). Parents can also follow OSTA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @OttSchoolBus.

In the Walk Zone

For students that live within the walk zone, we encourage families to use active transportation as much as possible. OSTA has many [resources](#) (e.g., walk-a-block maps, walking school bus) to help students' human-powered commute to school be safe and fun!

IMPORTANT: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

OSTA has created a [transportation confirmation FAQ](#) to help answer questions families may have while making their transportation decisions for 2022-2023.