ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 612 TRANSPORTATION – STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND DIVERSE ABILITIES

Purpose

This Administrative Procedure describes how the Chilliwack School District (the "District") provides transportation for students with disabilities and diverse abilities who require support getting to and from school. It clarifies eligibility, approval processes, parent and staff responsibilities, and safety requirements to ensure transportation services are delivered safely, fairly, and in a manner that supports student needs.

Scope and Application

Transportation is provided for students who are assessed by Student Services as unable to make their own way to and from school due to their physical or mental disabilities or diverse abilities. This service is provided on a door-to-door basis depending on accessibility. The Manager of Transportation will determine the suitability of each stop.

All transportation requests for students with disabilities or diverse abilities **must** be approved by Student Services. Once approved, Student Services will submit a request form to Transportation indicating whether Regular or Courtesy service is required, along with any special instructions and supporting documentation as required.

Transportation Guidelines

Regular Riders

1. A student may receive door-to-door transportation if:
    - they have a disability or diverse ability identified as a low-incidence need.
    - They attend their neighbourhood school.
    - Transportation resources are available.

    Parents who live close to the school will be asked to provide transportation for their child.

2. Transportation may be provided to students attending a school outside their neighbourhood school by District arrangement.

    Approval Procedure:

    a. Request is made to Student Services.

b. Student Services reviews the request and decides if the student is eligible for transportation.

c. The Transportation Department confirms whether transportation can be provided.

3. As per Administrative Procedure 613: Transportation – Registration and Fees, Transportation Assistance is available to parents, guardians, or caregivers of regular riders when the Transportation Department cannot meet the transportation needs of regular riders.

   - This assistance is provided at a rate of 30¢ per kilometer to a maximum of $15 per day plus $1 for each additional child.
   - Walk limits apply.
   - This does not include unforeseen cancelled bus routes due to shortages in bus drivers.

Courtesy Riders

1. Students with disabilities or diverse abilities who are not designated in a low incidence category may be considered for courtesy transportation if they are unable to walk safely to their neighbourhood school.

   Courtesy transportation is considered as follows:

   - The student's school principal submits a request to Student Services.
   - Student Services consults with Transportation to determine whether temporary transportation can be accommodated.

2. Students with disabilities or diverse abilities who have a low incidence designation and move to a new catchment during the school year may continue to receive transportation to their original school for the rest of the school year. This support:

   - Is based on the student's individual program needs.
   - must be requested made by the parents, guardians, or caregivers through Student Services.

   Parents, guardians, or caregivers who register their child at a school that is not their neighbourhood school are responsible for providing transportation.

Respite Care

Students with disabilities or diverse abilities who have a low incidence designation and attend respite care or daycare may be eligible for transportation if:

- the transportation does not disrupt existing bus routes
- there is no additional cost to the District.

Roles and Responsibilities

Transportation Department

- Work with parents, guardians, and caregivers, Student Services, and schools to plan transportation.
- Decide whether transportation can be provided and whether bus stops are suitable.
- Inform families on what is expected of them when their child receives transportation.
- Ensure transportation services are provided safely

Student Services

- Identifying students with disabilities or diverse abilities who require transportation.
- Approving all transportation requests.
- Sending completed bussing request forms and supporting documents to the Transportation Department.

Schools

- Submitting requests for courtesy transportation when needed.
- Supporting transportation planning for students, as required.
- Ensuring Education Assistants help students prepare for transportation when applicable.

Parents, Guardians, or Caregivers

- Register their child for bus service each year.
- Escort the student to and from the bus and assist the driver as required.
    - An adult approved by the parent, guardian, or caregivers, or an older sibling, may escort the student, provided they are able to care for the student.
- Helping their child understand how to behave on the bus including:

- Staying seated.
- Keeping hands to themselves.
- Using appropriate noise levels.
- Following the driver's instructions.

Students Requiring a Safety Harness

1. Restraint harnesses are provided by the District for students who need to be restrained because of safety issues related to their disability or diverse ability. The vest:
   - Provides support by helping hold the wearer upright.
   - Has been safety tested to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.
2. Once it has been determined that a student must wear a vest, this decision can only be changed after an assessment has been made by the School Principal. The Principal will:
   - Notify the parents, guardians, or caregivers, and the Manager of Transportation.
   - Consult with Student Services in this assessment.
3. The E-Z-ON universal harness (model # 103Z) is currently used and comes in two parts:
   - a zippered vest for the child
   - the seat mount, which is secured to the seat of the school bus.

   The vests come in four sizes for children based on waist measurements:
   - 22" extra small (XS)
   - 25" small (S)
   - 28" small medium (SM)
   - 32" medium (M).
4. Vests are the property of the School District and must be returned clean at the end of each school year and will be reissued in September.

   In the case of loss, damage, or non-returned vest, the replacement cost of $600.00 per set will be added to the student's school account.

Additional Responsibilities for Students who Require a Safety Harness

Parents, Guardians, or Caregivers

- Ensure the vest is properly fitted and worn according to the following instructions:
  - Place the vest on your child with the parachute emblem to the front and do up the zipper. Choose the zipper position that fits the child snugly.
  - Open the Velcro closure on the Sherpa fleece shoulder pads.
  - Adjust the strap by moving the plastic slide bar down and pulling down or loosening the metal adjuster until the shoulder strap fits snugly **over** the shoulder.
  - Reposition the plastic slide bar in its lowest position.
  - Reposition the Sherpa fleece shoulder pads.
  - Attach the crotch straps (if fitted) by snapping the plastic buckles together and tightening or loosening as required. The straps should be snug and comfortable while the child is sitting.
  - Double check for comfort and security.
- Keep the vest clean and washed:
  - Wash in cold water either by hand or in a machine using a mild detergent. If machine washing, select a delicate cycle and hang to dry.
  - Do not use bleach or dry-cleaning fluids.
- In some cases, parents, guardians, or caregivers may need to attach or detach the student wearing an EZ-ON Vest to the seat mount.

Bus driver:

- Inspect the vest and harness for deterioration.
- Install the seat mount.
- Secure the student to the seat mount.

Education Assistant

- Ensure the student is dressed as per instructions for use
- Have the student ready to board the bus.
- In some cases, Education Assistants may need to attach or detach the student wearing an EZ-ON Vest to the seat mount.

References:

- Policy 680: Student Transportation

- Administrative Procedure 610: Transportation – Eligibility and Conditions of Service
- Administrative Procedure 611: Transportation – Operating Instructions
- Administrative Procedure 613: Transportation – Registration and Fees