

Document Category:	Operating Parameters
Document Name:	Charter Busing
Approved By:	Board of Directors
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1. Policy Scope

This policy document applies to all member school boards, schools, and approved school purpose vehicle and coach bus operators in the Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services ("STS") service area.

2. Policy Statement

STS is responsible for the administrative oversight and coordination of charter based busing for it's member school boards. STS has established the following standards for Charters.

3. Policy Action Items

Charter Trip Requests	<p>Charter bus trip requests include and is not limited to, elementary and secondary athletics, field trips, educational site trips, year end trips, games, system events, etc.</p> <p>Booking parties (school or board staff) must make all charter bus requests using the STS booking system.</p> <p>Requests must be submitted no later than seven business days prior to the event date.</p> <p>For unknown or last-minute athletic playoff activities and events, requests must be entered with as much advance notice as possible.</p> <p>Normal processing time of Charter Trip requests is three business days.</p> <p>In the event of same day urgent requests made outside of STS business hours, the booking party can contact Operators directly. It is the booking party's responsibility to enter the trip request into</p>
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	the STS booking system no later than the next business day.
Bidding on Charters	<p>Charter bus requests are made available to pre-approved school purpose vehicle and coach bus operators for bidding through the STS booking system.</p> <p>Under normal circumstances, the bidding window will remain open for two business days. Exceptions may apply when requests submitted with short notice do not allow a 48-hour bidding window.</p> <p>STS reserves the right to close the bidding window after 24 hours if a bid is received that fulfils the trip request.</p> <p>Once the bidding window has closed, STS may assign the request to a charter bus operator.</p> <p>Requests that do not receive bids after 24 hours will be closed without bids.</p> <p>Charter trip requests closed without bid can be re-opened at the request of the booking party. It is the responsibility of the booking party to contact STS to re-open the charter trip for bid.</p>
Charter Trip Award	<p>Charter bus requests are assigned based on the lowest priced bid with the ability to fulfill the specific request details. If there are multiple bids with varying ability to accommodate the request, STS may assign based on the bid most closely matching the original trip request. STS may review differences in the ability to fulfil the request specifications and/or the price with the booking party prior to assignment.</p> <p>If the assigned Operator cannot fulfill a Charter trip booking following assignment, the assigned Operator must immediately contact STS. If multiple bids were received on the trip, STS will reassign the bid. If another bid is unavailable, STS will reopen the bidding window for 24 hours.</p> <p>The assigned Operator is responsible for viewing and signing the requested charter bus contract.</p> <p>Once the Operator accepts the assigned trip request, the booking party is responsible for viewing and signing the contract.</p>
Rider Manifests	The booking party or designate must submit a rider manifest to STS no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled start of the trip booking. Rider manifests may be needed in the event of an emergency.

	<p>The booking party or designate is responsible to ensure that all riders are on the bus by the scheduled departure time. Charter buses cannot remain at locations past the scheduled departure time.</p>
Modification to Charter Trips	<p>Modifications to charter requests may be submitted through STS.</p> <p>Modifications to booked charters may be requested through the assigned Operator.</p> <p>The booking party is responsible for any additional costs related to the modification request.</p> <p>When appropriate, STS will modify the trip details through the STS booking system.</p> <p>Failure to adhere to the charter schedule may result in additional fees.</p>
Cancellations	<p><u>Trip No Longer Needed</u> The booking party is responsible for cancelling a Charter in STS booking system no later than 24 hours before the start of the trip.</p> <p>Failure to cancel a charter booking may result in cancellation fees.</p> <p><u>Due to Inclement Weather</u> The decision to delay or cancel a booked charter bus due to inclement weather rests solely with the assigned Operator.</p> <p>Charter buses will be cancelled if the charter bus begins, travels through, or ends in a zone with Home to School bus cancellations.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the Operator to monitor cancellation notices on the STS webpage and social media to determine which charter bookings are cancelled.</p> <p>The assigned Operator is responsible for cancelling the booking through the STS booking system by 6.30AM on the day of the inclement weather cancellations.</p> <p>The operator may delay or cancel a charter bus due to inclement weather when home to school cancellations is not in effect. It is the responsibility of the assigned Operator to immediately notify the booking party and STS. The assigned operator will cancel the booking through the STS booking system when the decision is made to cancel the booking.</p>

Billing	<p>The booking party is responsible for paying the invoice related to a charter bus, including any additional fees resulting from schedule adherence, modifications, or failure to cancel.</p> <p>Split billing is not permitted.</p> <p>Charter bus invoices will be sent from the assigned Operator directly to the booking party.</p> <p>STS will provide oversight and assist with matters related to invoicing disputes or late/non payments.</p>
Student Conduct	<p>The booking party or designate is responsible to ensure that all riders adhere to bus safety and conduct rules.</p> <p>All parties understand that the school bus is an extension of the classroom and student discipline falls under the responsibility of the principal, therefore, students are required to demonstrate the same conduct on the school bus as in the classroom</p> <p>Drivers will report any incidents of poor student conduct that are not resolved by teacher/ adult supervisor on board, to their dispatch.</p> <p>When an incident occurs that cannot be resolved by the teacher/ adult supervisor on board, the driver will contact Dispatch for advice.</p> <p>The school principal is to be notified of the incident and a full report will be sent to STS within 24 hours of the incident.</p> <p>Bus driver reserves the right to return students to school when excessive poor student conduct occurs.</p>

4. Forms

There are no forms associated with this policy.