

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

Annual Report to Stakeholders

2024-2025 Fiscal Year



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[www.mybigyellowbus.ca](http://www.mybigyellowbus.ca)

## To Our Stakeholders

At Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (STS), our mission is clear: to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation for every student, every school day. As we reflect on the 2024-2025 school year, we are proud to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to student safety and exceptional customer service.

Our collaborative partnerships with families, school boards, and school bus transportation operators remain central to our success, ensuring that every child arrives at school ready to learn and returns home safely.

We recognize that transportation is more than just a ride - it's a vital part of the educational experience. That's why we strive to deliver services that are not only dependable but also responsive to the needs of the communities that we serve. Our team remains dedicated to excellence in every aspect of student transportation.

Together, we are driving forward with purpose, ensuring that safety and service remain at the heart of everything we do. A few highlights from our 2024-2025 school year include:

- Finalized a 5-year contract extension with our current bus operators ensuring stability in student transportation through the 2028-2029 school year.
- Transported the most students in the history of STS – 53,645 students transported daily.
- STS was the successful recipient of \$7,000 from the Ministry of Transportation RSCPP Grant (Road Safety Community Partnership Program) for the creation of a Wayfinding Signs Toolkit and the installation of Wayfinding Signs at 12 elementary schools.
- 8,000 school charter requests were processed during the 2024-2025 school year.

We sincerely appreciate your ongoing support as we strive to provide a safe, reliable, and exceptional transportation experience for every student.



Ryan Readings

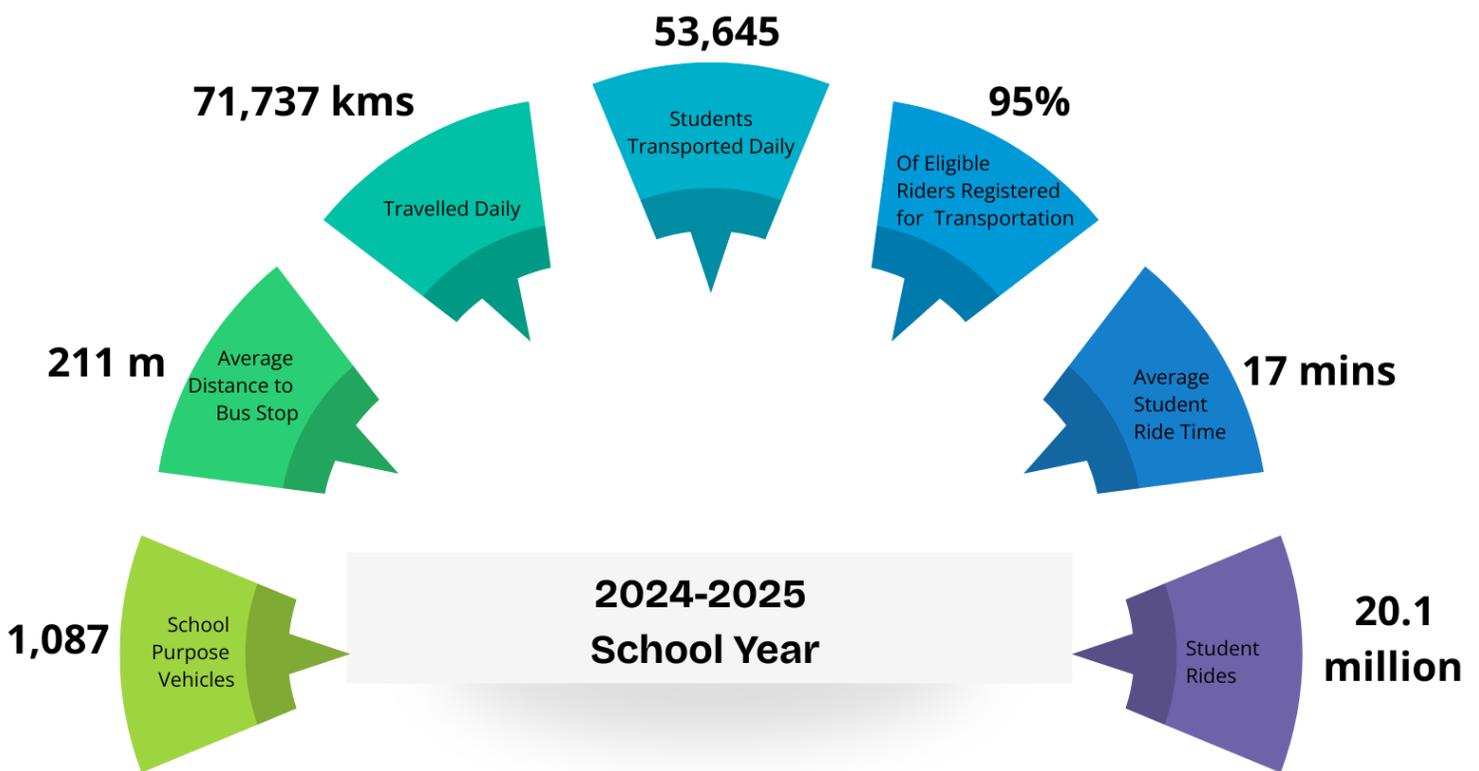
Chief Administrative Officer

January 31, 2026



## Performance at A Glance

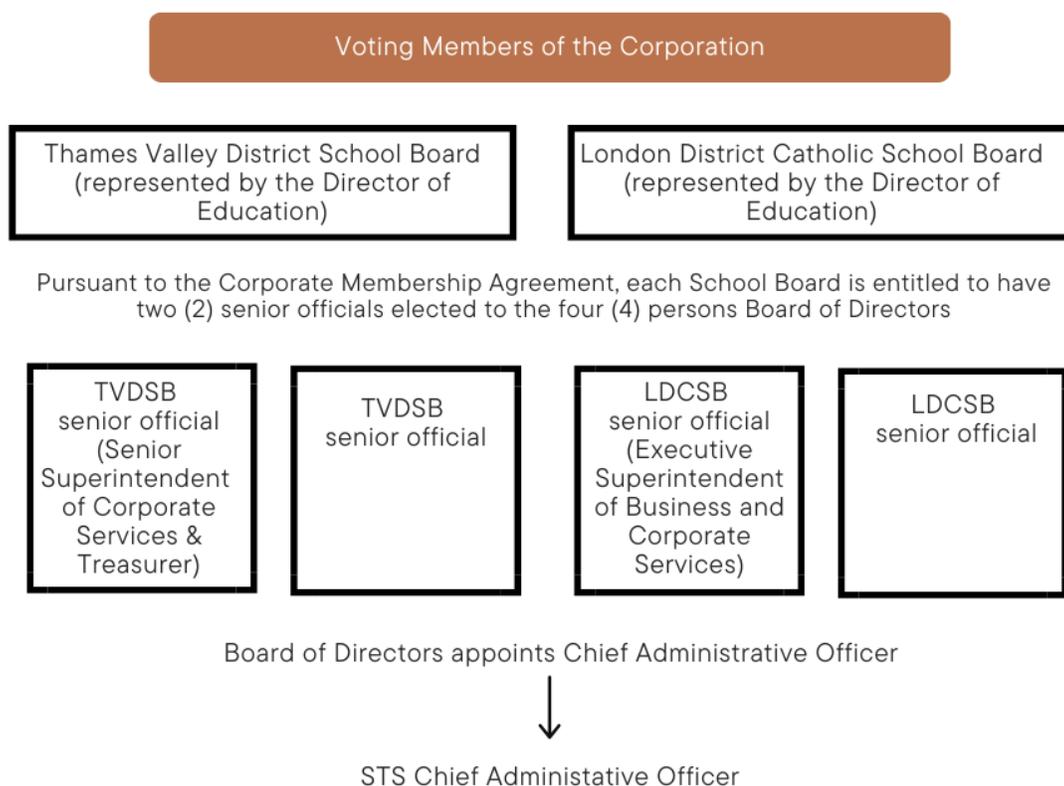
In the 2024-2025 school year, Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services was responsible for safely transporting over 53,000 students daily on approximately 1,100 bus routes to over 200 schools in the City of London, Middlesex County, Oxford County and Elgin County. Transportation services were provided by 6 bus operators under contract to STS operating a variety of school purpose vehicles including large school buses, mid-size school buses, mini-size school buses, passenger mini-vans, and wheelchair accessible vehicles.



## Governance Structure

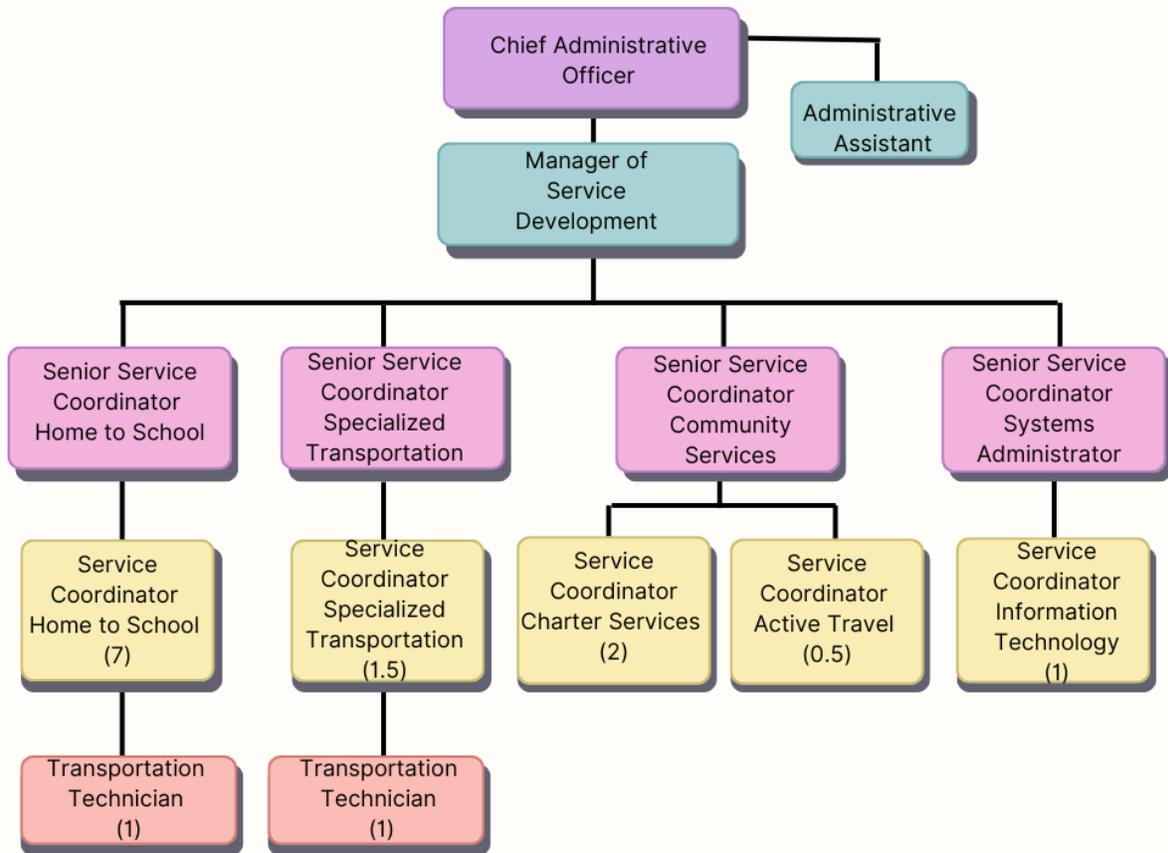
Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (STS) is a jointly held transportation consortium representing its member school boards: the London District Catholic School Board and the Thames Valley District School Board. Established in 2008, STS operates as a separate legal entity, functioning independently from its member boards. The organization was officially incorporated under the Incorporations Act on September 29, 2008.

Each member board sets its own distance and program-based eligibility policies through its respective Board of Trustees. STS is governed by a four-member Board of Directors, consisting of two senior officials from each school board. This Board provides governance oversight, approves organizational policies, and offers strategic direction to guide the corporation's operations.



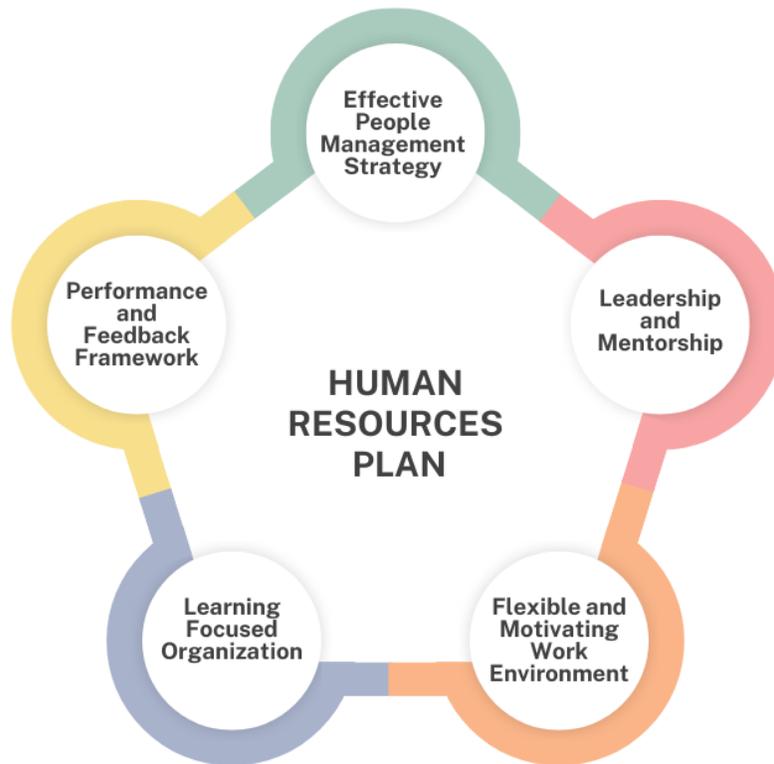
The daily activities of the corporation are under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer, who reports to the Board of Directors.

## Organizational Chart



## Human Resources

STS created its Human Resources Plan in 2012. The framework for the plan sets out the five key items:



During the 2024-2025 school year, STS undertook the following activities to support the HR plan:

- Members of Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)
- Staff attended the annual OASBO Fall Safety Conference in October 2024, focused exclusively on student transportation.
- Staff participated in the following courses:
  - Ontario Respect in Schools training program
  - Strategies for Resilience and Success
  - Sparking Creativity & Engagement
  - Fully Accessible – Imagining Accessible Futures in a post AODA Ontario
  - Human Rights in Action
  - Creating Accessible Documents
  - Various Cyber Security Sessions

## Service Area Profile

STS coordinated home to school transportation services for 210 schools during the 2024-2025 school year.



131 Elementary Schools  
27 Secondary Schools

43 Elementary Schools  
9 Secondary Schools

### Service Area

The service area of Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services is extensive, encompassing a diverse mix of urban and rural communities. Spanning over 7,000 square kilometers, it ranks among the largest transportation service areas in southern Ontario. This region includes the City of London as well as Middlesex, Oxford, and Elgin Counties.



## Home to School Bus Contract

The 2024-2025 school year marked the first year of our five-year home to school transportation contract extension with the school bus contractors in our region.

### Route Familiarization

The contract includes a designated route familiarization process, requiring the permanent driver assigned to each route to conduct both morning and afternoon runs prior to the start of the school year. Drivers are expected to provide feedback on their route to their employer and to STS before the routes go into service for the first day of school. This process offers valuable on-the-ground insight and allows drivers to become familiar with scheduled times, bus stop locations, and the overall operation of the route - ensuring readiness and reliability before students are on board.

### Video Cameras

Video surveillance equipment to be installed in the interior of 100% of STS vehicles for the start of the 2026-2027 school year. Interior cameras on school purpose vehicles are primarily for student and driver safety. They provide an objective record to investigate incidents, address student discipline, and evaluate driver performance.

### Global Positioning Systems (GPS)

GPS technology on school buses plays a crucial role in enhancing safety and operational efficiency. GPS units are installed in 100% of vehicles under contract to STS.

## Home to School Transportation Service Design

STS is responsible for designing school transportation service in keeping with policy to ensure that students receive similar service throughout the area regardless of school board affiliation. Transportation eligibility is established by policy. Distance and program eligibility is established at the school boards. The remaining policies are established at STS as approved by its Board of Directors.

### Transportation Eligibility

Transportation eligibility distances are harmonized across both member school boards, ensuring consistency and fairness in service delivery. This alignment is a key element of equitable and efficient transportation planning.

The distance-based policy applies to all families and students enrolled in schools within the member boards. Students attending their designated school are eligible for transportation based on the following criteria:

- **Elementary students** who reside more than **1.6 kilometers** from their home school
- **Secondary students** who reside more than **3.2 kilometers** from their home school

While there is no provincially mandated standard for distance-based eligibility, these thresholds align with common practices across Ontario and are consistent with the normative distance across the province.

### Determination of Transportation Eligibility

The determination of transportation eligibility for a given address is conducted by STS using specialized planning software to ensure consistency across the district. This software utilizes Geographic Information System (GIS) data provided by local municipalities, including detailed road and walkway networks. Eligibility is assessed by calculating the shortest travel route from the perimeter of the residential property to the school property.

If a residence does not meet the distance criteria for transportation eligibility, determined solely by STS, STS may provide a suggested walking route. However, it remains the responsibility of the parent or caregiver to decide how the student will travel to and from school.

## **Primary Address of Student**

STS coordinates home to school transportation based on the student's primary address and their board designated school, as registered with the school board. Each student may have only one primary address on file.

Transportation eligibility is determined using the primary address recorded in the school board's Student Information System. This data is securely transferred to STS through an established electronic process that includes robust confidentiality protections.

## **Secondary Address for Caregiving Purposes**

Students who are eligible for transportation may request to use an alternative address for caregiving reasons, typically used for the purpose of receiving childcare/babysitting at the elementary panel. Secondary panel requests are less common but are approved in keeping with the policy.

Both the primary address and the alternate address must be within the transportation boundary. A student can have a bus stop based on the primary address and another based on a secondary address within the same travel day, however the schedule must remain consistent morning and afternoon Monday through Friday. Under normal circumstances, secondary address transportation must be accommodated on existing bus runs and bus stops.

## **Joint Custody Transportation**

Transportation may be provided to a secondary address based on joint custody arrangements. Because of the safety issues with varying bus schedules, particularly at the elementary level, the policies governing this type of transportation are different based on the student's grade.

## **Use of a Vacant Seat**

Transportation may be provided to elementary aged students who are ineligible for transportation but who attend a daycare facility or home daycare where the daycare address is eligible for transportation.

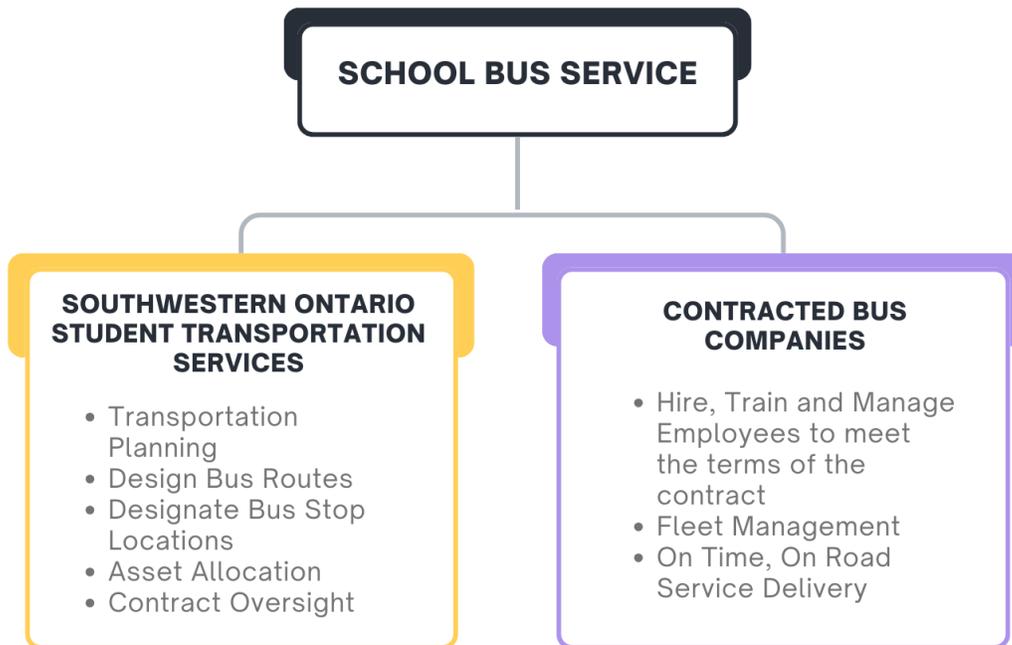
## **Choice of School**

Students who choose to attend a school other than their board designated school may apply for Choice of School Transportation. This service is granted on an exception basis and is not guaranteed. Approval requires an annual application and is contingent upon the availability of a seat on an existing bus route.

Additionally, students approved under this program must use the nearest existing bus stop, regardless of its distance from their residence. If a seat is later required for a student who qualifies under standard transportation policy, the service may be revoked for the Choice of School student. These seats are only assigned after all eligible students have been accommodated.

## Service Delivery Roles

The on-road service delivered to students is planned by STS and executed daily by the contracted school bus companies.



### Student Transportation Services

Student Transportation Services manages the contracts with the bus companies who are responsible for delivering the daily service which encompasses all operational matters including employee and fleet management.

## **Contracted Bus Companies**

For the 2024-2025 school year, a total of six (6) bus companies provided service under the home to school contract with STS.

- First Student Canada
- Langs Bus Lines
- Murphy Bus Lines
- Sharp Bus Lines
- STC o/a Elgie Bus Lines
- Transdev o/a Voyago

## School Bus Routes

For the 2024-2025 school year, a total of 1,117 school bus routes operated throughout the service area.

	Regular Bus Routes	Specialized Bus Routes	TOTAL
<b>2023-2024</b>	780	337	1,117
<b>2024-2025</b>	788	326	1,114
<b>Elgin County</b>	179	61	240
<b>Middlesex County</b>	210	75	285
<b>Oxford County</b>	166	68	234
<b>City of London</b>	233	122	355

For greater clarity, a school bus run is the loop picking up students for a school (noting more than one school may be served on the same run). A school bus route is the total number of school bus runs serviced by a vehicle. Typically, the first bus run serves a secondary school and the second bus run serves the elementary school. These two runs combined (both morning and afternoon) equal the total route serviced by one vehicle. STS uses single, double and triple runs where practical to do so.



## Kilometers Travelled

A key element of transportation planning is the total distance traveled by each vehicle. Kilometers are a significant piece of both route design and budget forecasting. Bus contracts are structured using a formula that includes a per-kilometer component.

Transportation has two key types of kilometers: planned and actual. Actual kilometers can vary from planned kilometers due to service cancellations such as inclement weather events or school closures.



## School Purpose Vehicles

### Types of Vehicles Used

STS uses a variety of vehicle types to provide effective and efficient student transport while recognizing unique transportation solutions for students with special needs. Vehicle mix can vary from one year to the next based on geographic distribution of students and student needs. Changes in the vehicle mix throughout the school year are also necessary to meet student needs.

Vehicle Type	2023-2024	2023-2024	2024-2025	2024-2025
	September	June	September	June
Full Size Passenger Bus	653	662	665	665
Mid Size Passenger Bus	30	29	29	29
Mini Size Passenger Bus	103	101	105	105
Mini Size Passenger Bus - Accessible	99	99	101	102
Minivan	192	191	189	184

### Public Transit

The use of public transit tickets is largely restricted to limited special programs.

## Transported Students

Students who are eligible for transportation under policy are assigned to a seat on a vehicle in the morning and/or afternoon based on the student’s registration request. The majority of students are eligible to their board-designated schools based on distance. Under limited circumstances, bus service may be provided based on Distance Based Exemptions. STS periodically reviews legacy hazard designations for improvements in pedestrian infrastructure to determine if the area meets Distance Based Exemption status.

Transportation Eligibility Type	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
<b>Eligible (Distance)</b>			
• <b>Regular Track</b>	41,187	45,123	45,504
• <b>French Immersion</b>	5,631	6,099	6,032
• <b>Specialized Education</b>	2,095	2,162	2,109
<b>Eligible (Distance Based Exemption)</b>			
• <b>Elementary Panel</b>	2,659	4,374	4,372
• <b>Secondary Panel</b>	421	496	527

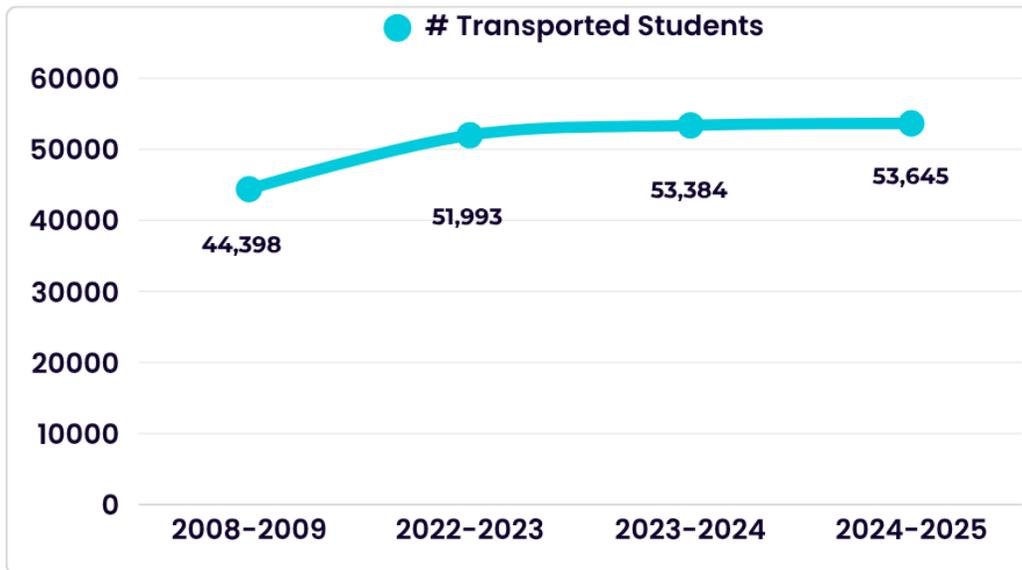
## Ridership

Overall ridership continues to increase year over year. 2023-2024 saw an additional 9% increase from the previous year totals while the 2024-2025 school year increased by 1% from the previous year. 2024-2025 marked the third consecutive school year where overall ridership was greater than 50,000 riders.



The continued use of the mandatory school bus registration system provides more accurate information about ridership needs across the district. By planning routes and service levels for those who have registered, STS has been able to ensure service levels match demand and Operators are able to plan driver recruitment to reflect specific needs of the families who use transportation.

## Ridership by Entity (all categories)



Some transported students require additional service to/from additional addresses or access to a vacant seat for childcare purposes. The figures below represent transported students who benefit from the additional services offered by STS.

Additional Services	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Alternate Address	1,056	1,006	992
Joint Custody - Elementary	266	314	271
Joint Custody - Secondary	351	418	385
Vacant Seat	289	260	312
Choice of School	429	376	380
Out of District	35	41	43
<b>Total Transported Students Using Additional Services</b>	<b>2,262</b>	<b>2,415</b>	<b>2,383</b>

## Travelling to the Bus Stop

Parents and caregivers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety while traveling to and from the school bus stop, as well as while waiting at the stop. This responsibility aligns with the expectations for families whose children do not qualify for transportation and must travel to and from school independently.

Students are required to meet transportation at designated community-based bus stop locations. The maximum walking distances to these stops are 800 meters (0.8 kilometers) for elementary students and 1,600 meters (1.6 kilometers) for secondary students. These distances represent half the travel distance of students who are not eligible for transportation services.

Community bus stops are strategically placed to serve multiple students and are typically located near community mailboxes, green spaces, or street corners. While many stops remain consistent year over year, they are reviewed annually and may be adjusted based on routing changes and student distribution.

Although policy permits greater walking distances to bus stops, the figures below illustrate the average distance students travel to access transportation services.

### Elementary Students

Geographic Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Elgin County	130 m	130 m	140 m
Middlesex County	110 m	120 m	100 m
Oxford County	160 m	160 m	160 m
City of London	200 m	200 m	190 m

### Secondary Students

Geographic Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Elgin County	240 m	300 m	230 m
Middlesex County	280 m	260 m	250 m
Oxford County	350 m	320 m	340 m
City of London	420 m	420 m	400 m

## **Kindergarten Students and Bus Stops**

JK/SK students must be accompanied to and met at a bus stop location by a responsible person. JK/SK students not met at the bus stop in the afternoons will be returned to the school by the bus driver at the end of the route.

## **Active Travel and School Bus Stops**

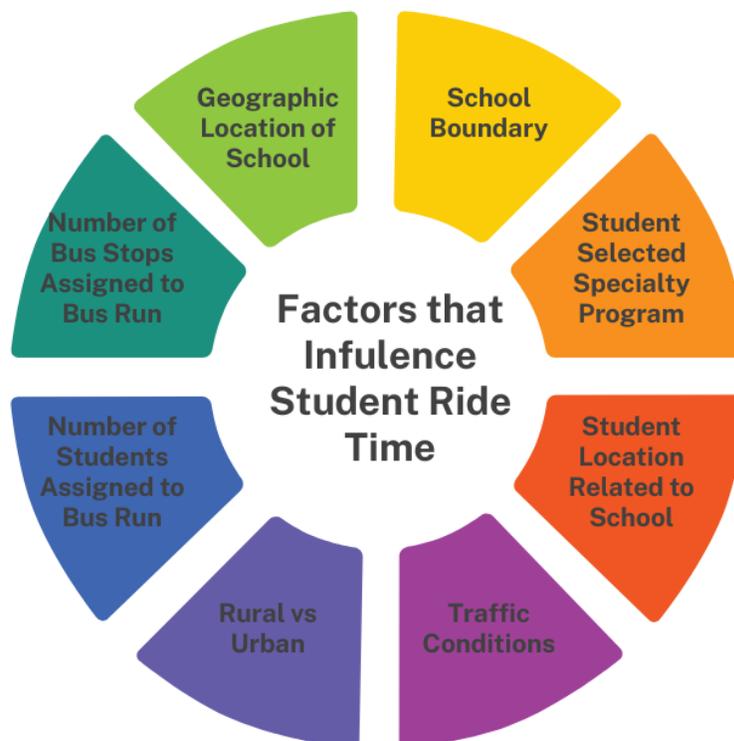
Students who ride the bus may miss out on the daily physical activity experienced by peers who actively travel such as walking, biking, or using a scooter to and from school. School bus service operates as a fixed-route, shared transportation model and is not intended to provide door-to-door service.

By utilizing centrally located community bus stops that serve multiple students and placing these stops on collector and secondary roads rather than local streets STS encourages physical activity as part of the school commute. This approach aligns with STS Service Design Standards and promotes healthier routines for bus riders.

Walking to a bus stop is an important way to incorporate active travel into the daily routine of students who receive transportation services. Beyond the well-documented health benefits of physical activity before the school day begins, walking to a community stop also helps reduce overall ride time for students.

## Ride Time on the Vehicle

Students may spend a maximum of 70 minutes one way on the bus. Under certain limited circumstances, based on geography or program choice, this travel time may be exceeded.

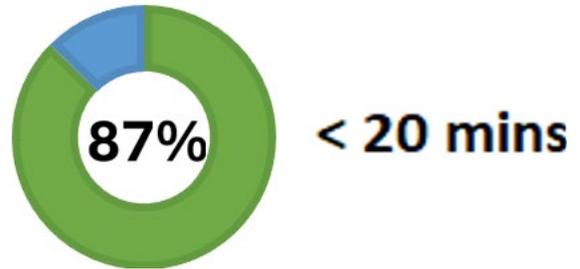


Ride times are reviewed annually as part of the transportation planning cycle and periodically throughout the school year. Inquiries related to ride durations are also addressed where possible to ensure service quality and responsiveness.

The tables below illustrate the distribution of bus ride durations among students, categorized by geographic area and school panel, over the past three school years. This data provides insight into the operational efficiency of transportation services, with a strong majority of students experiencing short ride times.

## City of London - Elementary Students

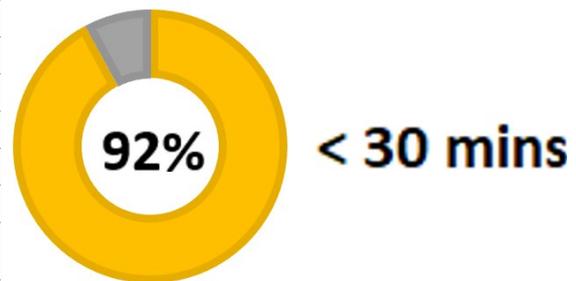
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	7,275	6,486	7,821
11-20 mins	6,175	5,576	6,231
21-30 mins	1,379	1,287	1,463
31-40 mins	354	270	331
41-50 mins	73	101	145
51-60 mins	59	63	51
61-70 mins	10	10	28



87% of Elementary Students in the City of London ride less than 20 mins one way to school.

## City of London - Secondary Students

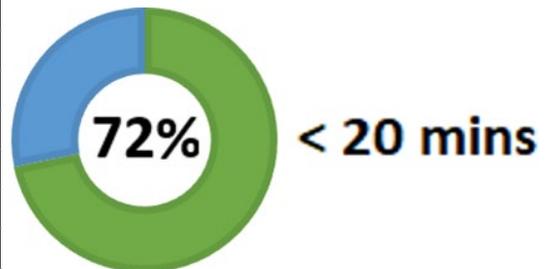
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	1,165	1,289	1,591
11-20 mins	3,918	4,454	4,533
21-30 mins	1,396	1,323	1,361
31-40 mins	469	445	417
41-50 mins	200	190	147
51-60 mins	54	61	62
61-70 mins	4	-	10



92% of Secondary Students in the City of London ride less than 30 mins one way to school.

## Elgin County – Elementary Students

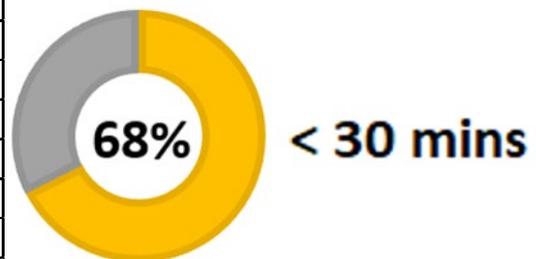
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	2,504	2,378	2,120
11-20 mins	1,629	1,617	1,754
21-30 mins	756	706	759
31-40 mins	378	394	452
41-50 mins	185	220	203
51-60 mins	77	49	77
61-70 mins	8	26	28



72% of Elementary Students in Elgin County ride less than 20 mins one way to school.

## Elgin County – Secondary Students

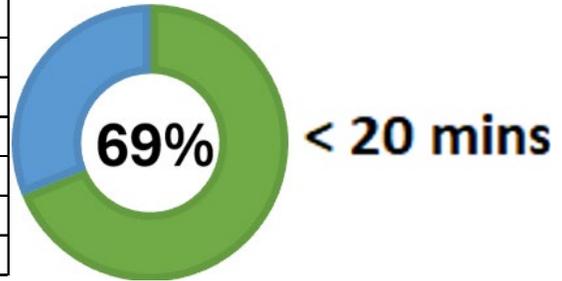
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	244	198	230
11-20 mins	603	570	596
21-30 mins	442	526	512
31-40 mins	263	317	336
41-50 mins	190	211	172
51-60 mins	116	103	92
61-70 mins	32	46	28



68% of Secondary Students in Elgin County ride less than 30 mins one way to school.

## Oxford County – Elementary Students

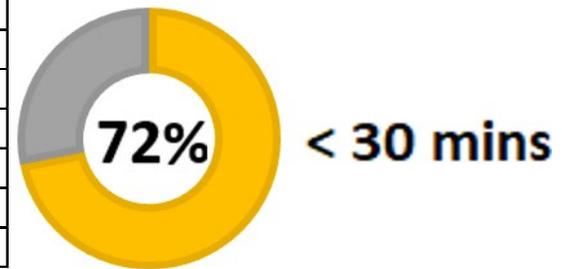
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	2,311	1,883	2,451
11-20 mins	1,955	1,681	1,884
21-30 mins	1,168	998	1,153
31-40 mins	346	361	507
41-50 mins	172	148	178
51-60 mins	80	56	102
61-70 mins	13	11	16



69% of Elementary Students in Oxford County ride less than 20 mins one way to school.

## Oxford County – Secondary Students

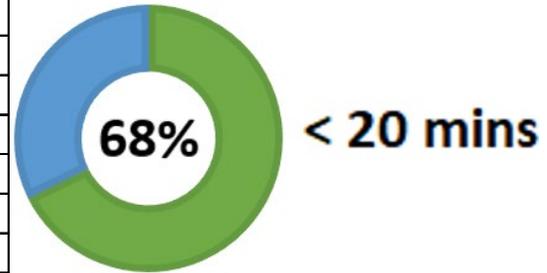
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	258	258	296
11-20 mins	573	665	563
21-30 mins	489	466	491
31-40 mins	219	260	300
41-50 mins	162	184	131
51-60 mins	33	63	76
61-70 mins	24	7	11



72% of Secondary Students in Oxford County ride less than 30 mins one way to school.

## Middlesex County – Elementary Students

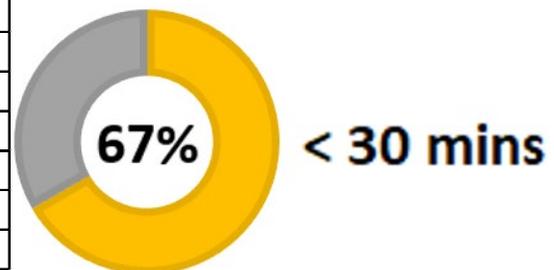
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	2,283	1,921	2,230
11-20 mins	1,666	1,354	1,708
21-30 mins	904	817	977
31-40 mins	607	489	488
41-50 mins	276	180	259
51-60 mins	94	84	128
61-70 mins	17	13	17



68% of Elementary Students in Middlesex County ride less than 20 mins one way to school.

## Middlesex County – Secondary Students

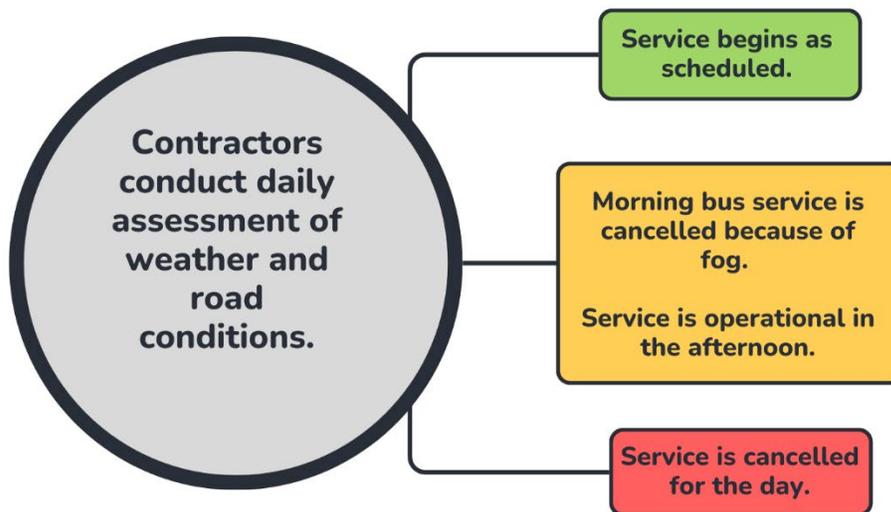
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
0-10 mins	427	370	527
11-20 mins	787	796	595
21-30 mins	712	759	810
31-40 mins	521	551	556
41-50 mins	222	255	231
51-60 mins	125	77	104
61-70 mins	39	50	44



67% of Secondary Students in Middlesex County ride less than 30 mins one way to school.

## Inclement Weather

During inclement weather, the bus companies determine whether school purpose vehicles operate. When area-wide inclement weather events occur, the following processes occur:



Inclement weather can be disruptive to operations and significantly affect family routines. To minimize unnecessary interruptions, school bus routes are carefully planned. However, due to the size of the service area and the distance some routes must travel to reach program locations, certain routes may be affected by cancellations even when others are not.

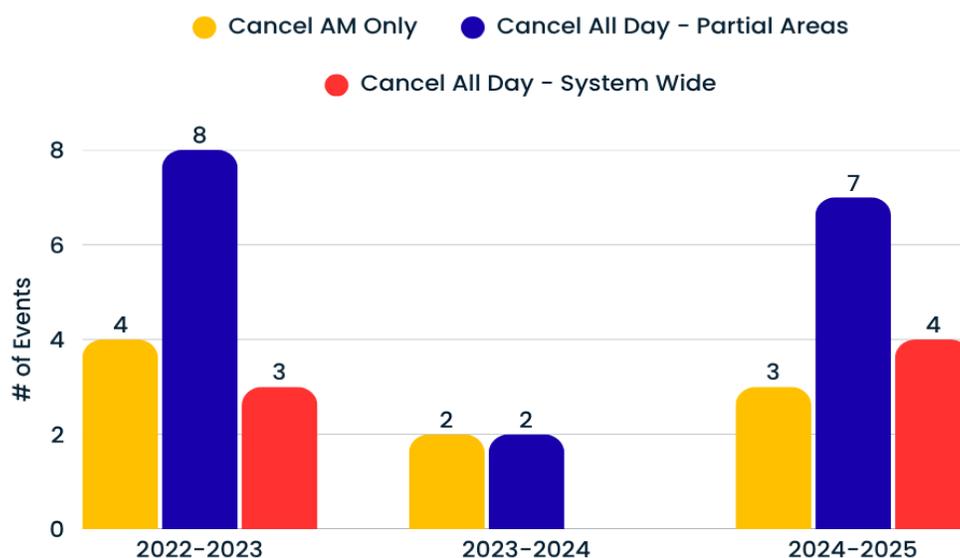
While bus companies are responsible for determining whether service will operate during inclement weather, parents and caregivers ultimately decide whether their student will use the service.

The following chart illustrates the inclement weather cancellation events during 2024-2025:

Date	Affected Areas	Reason	CANCEL (AM Only)	CANCEL (All Day) Partial Areas	CANCEL (All Day) SYSTEM WIDE
20-Nov-24	Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Red	Fog	CANCEL (AM Only)		
2-Dec-24	ALL	Winter Weather Conditions			CANCEL (All Day)
3-Dec-24	City of London, Middlesex, Red Zone	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
5-Dec-24	ALL	Winter Weather Conditions			CANCEL (All Day)
6-Dec-24	ALL	Winter Weather Conditions			CANCEL (All Day)
16-Dec-24	Middlesex, Oxford	Fog	CANCEL (AM Only)		
8-Jan-25	Middlesex, London, Red	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
28-Jan-25	Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Red	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
3-Feb-25	West Elgin	Fog	CANCEL (AM Only)		
6-Feb-25	Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Red	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
13-Feb-25	ALL	Winter Weather Conditions			CANCEL (All Day)
18-Feb-25	Middlesex, Elgin	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
19-Feb-25	Lucan Biddulph	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	
6-Mar-25	Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Red	Winter Weather Conditions		CANCEL (All Day)	

Inclement weather events played a very large role during the winter months of the 2024-2025 school year. The 2024-2025 school year saw four system-wide cancellation days, compared to zero in 2023-2024 and three in 2022-2023. Winter weather conditions continue to be the largest factor affecting student transportation in our service area.

### Inclement Weather Events



Inclement weather cancellations are posted publicly on the website by 6:30 AM on the morning of the weather event. There are multiple channels used to notify stakeholders of cancellations resulting from inclement weather:

- STS's website, [mybigyellowbus.ca](http://mybigyellowbus.ca) is updated by 6:30 AM at the latest;
- Notification posted to X account;
- Notification posted to Instagram and Facebook pages;
- Notifications issued via email to subscribers;
- Notifications pushed to BusPlanner Delays app for subscribers.



The BusPlanner Delays app was introduced in 2017 and is free to use. More information can be found on the website in the policy document entitled Public Notice of School Bus Delays and Cancellations.

STS created a video to explain the behind-the-scenes look at the decision-making process to help guide stakeholders understand the complexity of the task. The video remains featured on the website and is the core tool for informing and educating the public on the process. The video can be viewed using the following link: [STS Bus Delays & Cancellations.](#)



## Safety Programs

STS is pleased to offer a variety of safety programs to students, their families and schools.

### First Rider Day August

STS typically hosts a First Rider Day at five locations each year in August, with two London locations and a location in each of the three counties. Approximately 400 students and their families attend this event each year at no cost to attendees. Both full sized yellow and wheelchair accessible vehicles are on site to ensure inclusivity and promote integrated accessibility.



Students and their parents/caregivers receive a safety lesson, learn how to properly board and de-board and evacuate the bus and be a safe school bus rider. The program session lasts approximately 30 minutes.

### Kindergarten Bus Tag Program

STS continues to utilize a bus tag program to support school staff and bus drivers in managing kindergarten students. The bus tag serves as a visual cue for staff during dismissal, helping them identify students boarding the correct bus, and alerts drivers to ensure a responsible adult is present to meet the student at the bus stop.

The tags are brightly colored for visibility and correspond with the bus number displayed on the side of the vehicle. STS distributes the tags to schools, which then provide them to registered kindergarten students.



## School Bus Safety Programs

During the 2024-2025 school year, 392 onsite school bus rider safety training sessions were offered at all of our member School Board's elementary schools. These 30 minute programs are funded by the Ministry of Education and are designed to provide elementary students with training on how to be safe in and around the school bus. This training is designed to actively promote and support appropriate behaviour on the bus which also contributes to a positive school climate. Every year two distinct programs are delivered to elementary students. The Primary Program (JK-grade 3) uses the robotic school bus (Buster the Bus), animated cartoon characters and sing-alongs. The Junior Program (grades 4-8) uses student volunteers picked by the school who are split into two teams and compete against each other in a game show style learning experience.

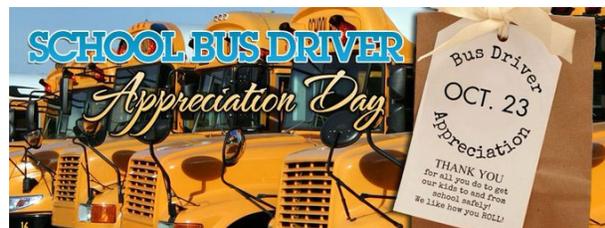


## School Bus Safety Week & School Bus Driver Appreciation Day

School Bus Safety Week is held annually during the third week of October. Supported by news releases and social media campaigns, Wednesday of School Bus Safety Week is School Bus Driver Appreciation Day. Parents/caregivers and schools alike are encouraged to recognize the valuable contributions of school bus drivers and bus monitors on this day.



Transportation consortia across the province use a series of coordinated messages and social media graphics to promote School Bus Safety Week.



## School Bus Registration Form

STS continued the use of the online school bus registration form for the 2024-2025 school year. All eligible students wishing to ride the bus must complete a registration form indicating service requirements. Students may register for morning and/or afternoon transportation.

The information collected on the registration form is recorded on the manifest for the bus driver and the school. This creates accurate bus lists for school loading procedures, seating plan development, and helps the driver know when to expect each student on board.



## Communication Tools

To promote safety messaging and on-going information for stakeholders, STS has an active presence on social media channels, including Facebook, X (formally known as Twitter) and Instagram. Additionally, STS News Updates are published on the website on an as-needed basis. Newsletters are emailed to families to communicate information regarding bus registration as well as important information regarding back to school information. BusPlanner web is also used to push emails and app notifications about bus delays and bus cancellations as well as general school bus information and FAQ's.



# Community Services Division

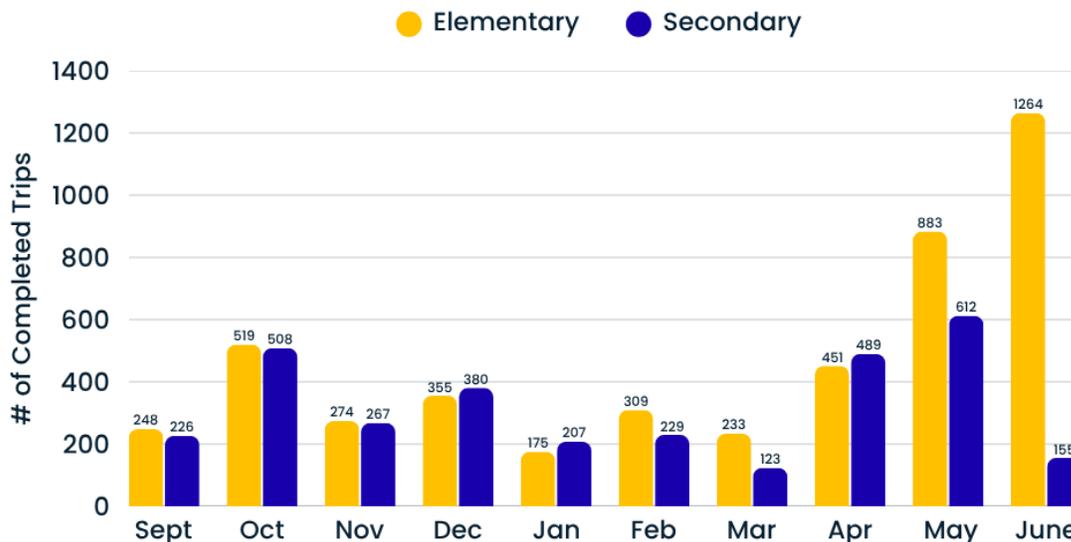
## Charter Services

During the 2024-2025 school year 7,982 charter trips were requested by schools and school board staff. A charter trip consists of at least one vehicle requested for the trip. Many charter trips consist of multiple vehicles requested. Below are the highlights from the 2024-2025 school year:

- 4,711 Secondary trips requested
- 3,196 Elementary trips requested
- 75 trips requested directly from the school boards
- 8,048 vehicles were used to accommodate all trips
- 95% of all requested trips were scheduled

The standard school bus remains the most popular mode of transportation, consisting of 93% of all trips. 4% of all trips were completed with a Coach/Activity Bus while the remaining 3% were completed using special purpose vehicles or mini-vans.

### Completed Charter Trips 2024-2025 School Year



## Elgin London Middlesex Oxford Active and Safe Routes to School

As co-chair of the Elgin London Middlesex Oxford Active and Safe Routes to School Steering Committee (ELMO ASRTS), STS continues to support active travel programming by developing programming and resources. The ELMO ASRTS (est. 2012) mission is to work in partnership for the improvement of children's health, well-being, and environment by encouraging the safe use of active school travel and working to remove barriers to active school travel through comprehensive health promotion strategies. Active members include STS (co-chair), Fanshawe College (co-chair), MLHU (Middlesex-London Health Unit), Southwestern PH (Southwestern Public Health), City of London, TVDSB, LDCSB, MTO (Ministry of Transportation), and London Cycle Link.



Highlights from the 2024-2025 school year include:

### Wayfinding Signs Program

Wayfinding signs show directions and walk/wheel times to school for pedestrians with the goal to boost visibility and encourage active travel. During the 2024-2025 school year STS was awarded \$7000 from the Ministry of Transportation RSCPP Grant (Road Safety Community Partnership Program) for the installation of Wayfinding Signs and creation of a Wayfinding Signs Toolkit.

Interested schools were requested to submit an application as well as contribute a portion of the costs to the signs. Applications were received from 26 elementary schools and wayfinding signs were installed at 12 elementary schools in total:

- Byron Northview PS
- St Jude London CES
- Arthur Ford PS
- St Anne CES
- Lord Nelson PS
- Mountsfield PS
- Rick Hansen PS
- Knollwood PS
- Parkview PS
- North Meadows PS
- Forest Park PS
- Algonquin PS



## School Travel Planning Program

The School Travel Planning (STP) program helps to create a safe environment and school culture that encourages and supports families to use active transportation to and from school, the bus stop, or if driving, park away from the school and walk the rest of the way. A STP manual is available to interested schools to assist in the implementation of the program. Schools involved for 2024-2025 school year include:

- Lord Nelson PS
- Parkview PS
- Algonquin PS
- Forest Park PS
- Rick Hansen PS

## CAA Safety Patrol Program

The School Safety Patrol Program (SSP) works to secure safer school zones across Ontario. CAA utilizes a 'train the trainer' model to allow a local delivery of the program. Four (4) STS staff members and two (2) ASRTS Steering Committee Members received training from CAA for the Safety Patrol Program. During the 2024-2025 school year two schools registered and received training for the SSP program – Mountsfield PS and Sir Arthur Currie PS.



## Active Travel Story Contest

ASRTS held their annual Active Travel Story Contest in October for International Walk to School Month. The theme for the story was "Tell us how your journey to school keeps you safe, keeps you active or is good for the environment." There were lots of outstanding submissions received from students including picture books, stories and videos on walking/wheeling to school. Lord Nelson PS had the winning entry this year and received a gift card as a prize for sports equipment!



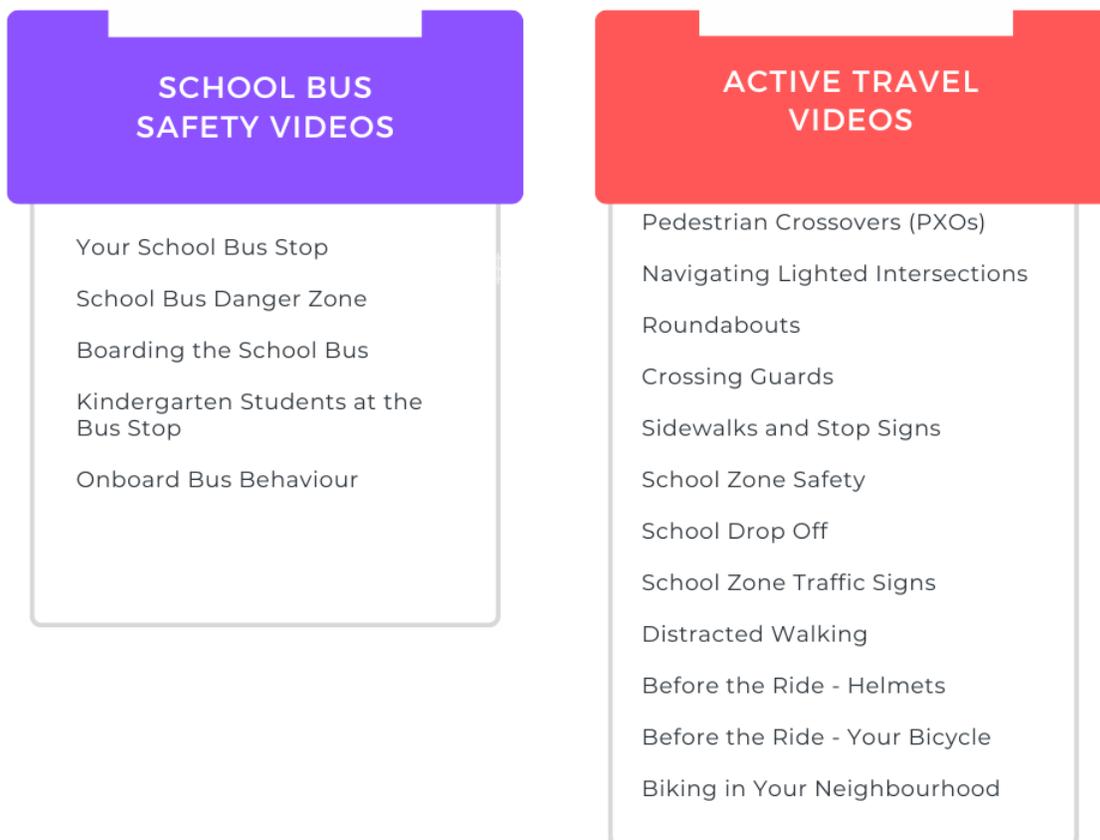
## Motor Free Monday Event

Westfield PS held a Motor Free Monday Event June 9, 2025. It was a fantastic morning of celebrating active, safe, and sustainable transportation in Tillsonburg. There were lots of students traveling to school actively and on the school bus.

This initiative encourages the school community to choose active and sustainable transportation on Mondays. The school does announcements, classroom competitions, prize giveaways etc. to increase engagement by families and school staff.

## School Bus Safety and Active Travel Videos

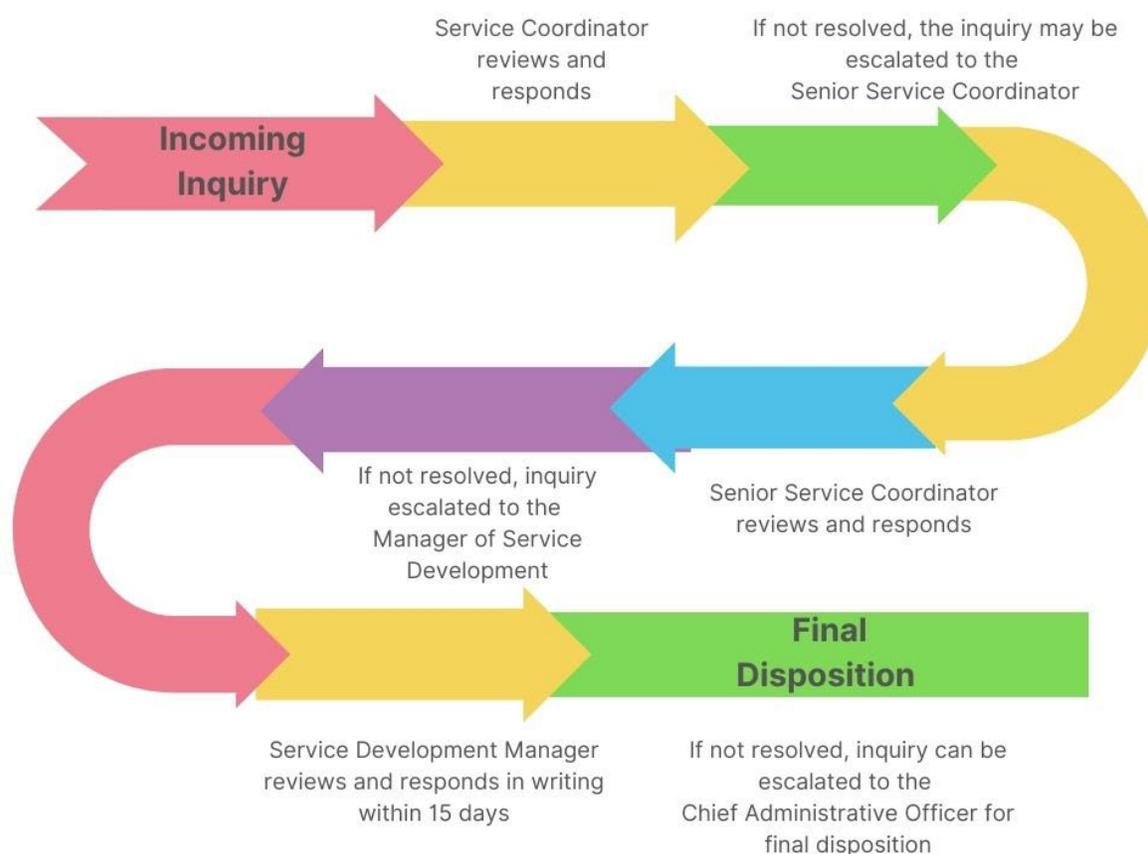
STS developed a series of safety videos for students, their families and schools covering a range of school bus safety and active travel topics. All videos are available on the STS website and are periodically posted on social media.



## Stakeholder Inquiries

### Problem Resolution

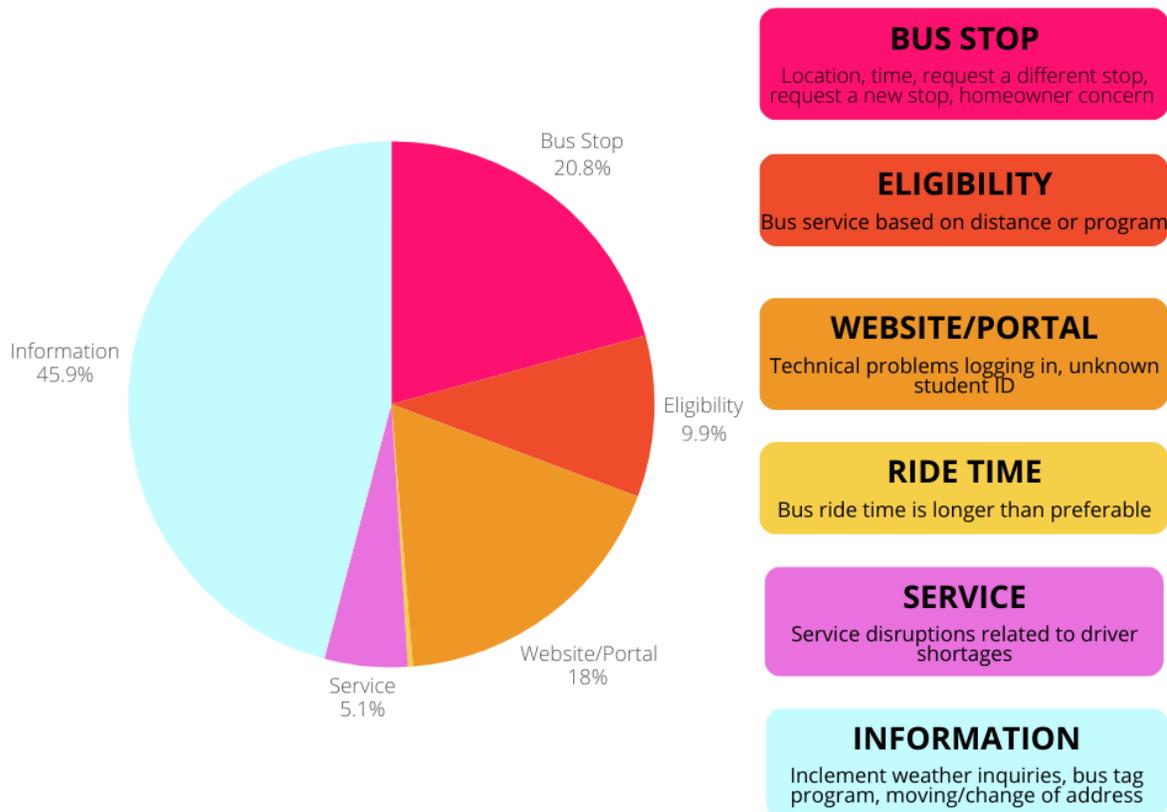
STS has a robust process for addressing inquiries. Parents/caregivers can contact STS by phone or can complete an online form on the website. STS response times are typically within 2 business days. During start-up (mid-August to the end of September) responses are provided within 5 business days due to the volume of inquiries.



STS uses a tracking system to log contacts received either by telephone or web submission. Generally, most inquiries fall into five broad categories. The most common inquiry received surrounds bus stop locations as most contacts would prefer a closer bus stop as a matter of preference. Other typical inquiries relate to eligibility, use of the online parent portal, address inquiries (alternate address, moving) and ride time.

Most contacts are informational in nature. To provide faster service, the website has been designed to provide answers to the most common inquiries. A tool is available on the website to determine if the address qualifies for bus service. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section addresses the other most common topics.

## Common Inquiries

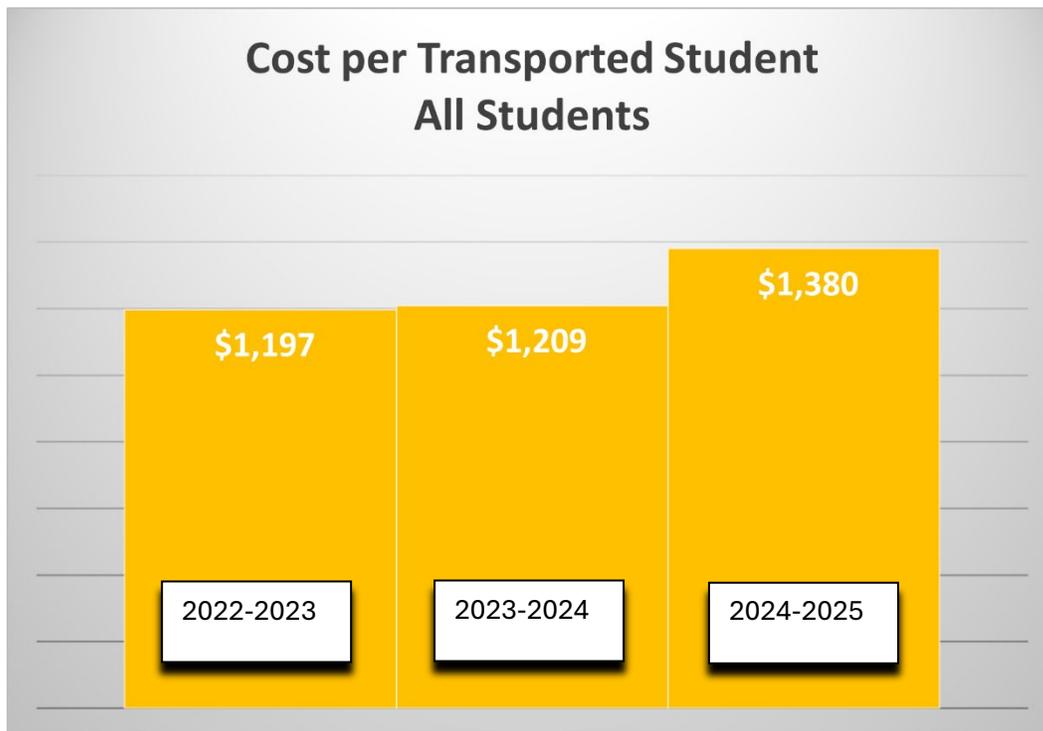


## Financial Performance

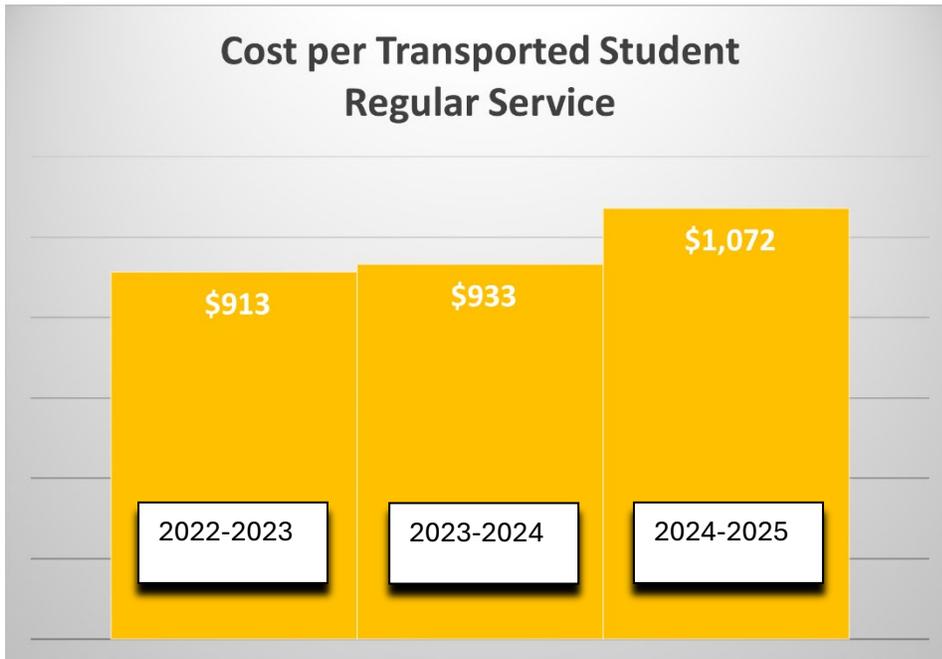
### Cost per Transported Student

During the 3-year period between the 2022-2023 and 2024-2025 school years the cost per transported student has increased by 15.2% as demonstrated in the chart below. Although the cost remained relatively constant between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 the largest increase occurred between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. This can be directly attributed to the extension of the contract with the bus operators and the increase in rates for the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

Cost per transported student is calculated based on actual payments and reflects all transported students on any classification of vehicle.

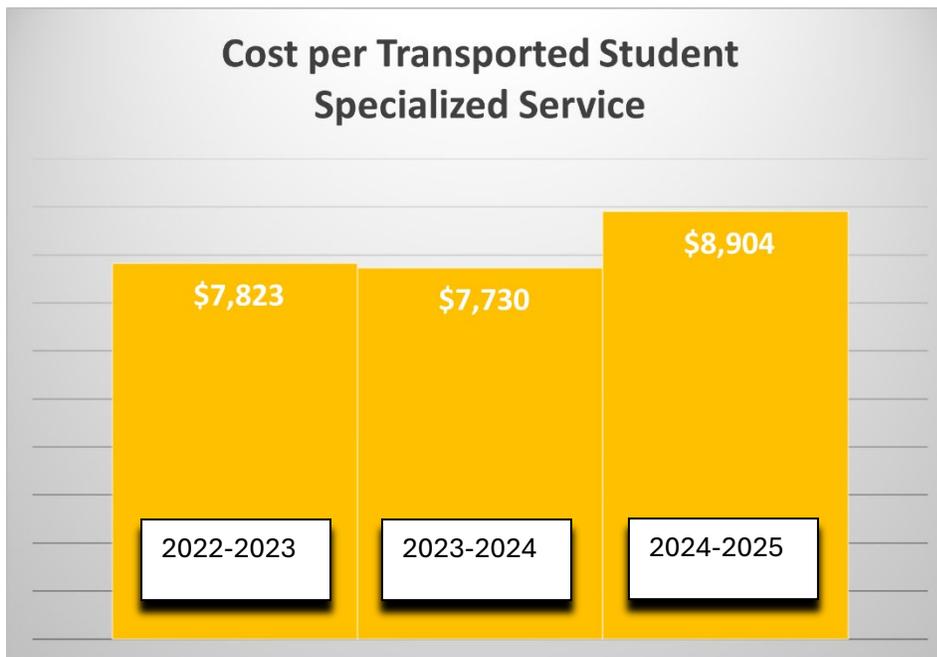


### Cost per Transported Student Regular Service



Regular service reflects students who are transported on chrome yellow bus service of any size.

### Cost per Transported Student Specialized Service



Specialized service reflects service provided to students on chrome yellow wheelchair equipped vehicles or white minivan service.

## Financial Statements

Attached are the audited Financial Statements for the 2024-2025 school year as prepared by KPMG. These were approved by the Board of Directors of STS in November 2025 and presented to the Directors of Education as voting members of the corporation in January of 2026.

# **Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services**

Financial Statements  
And Independent Auditor's Report thereon  
**August 31, 2025**



**KPMG LLP**  
140 Fullarton Street, Suite 1400  
London, ON N6A 5P2  
Canada  
Telephone 519 672 4880  
Fax 519 672 5684

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

To the Board of Directors of Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

### ***Opinion***

We have audited the financial statements of Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (the Entity), which comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at August 31, 2025
- the statement of operations for the year then ended
- the statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies

(Hereinafter referred to as the “financial statements”).

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at August 31, 2025, and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards

### ***Basis for Opinion***

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the “***Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***” section of our auditor’s report.

We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.



## ***Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

## ***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.



Page 3

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'KPMG LLP'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a horizontal line that starts under the 'K' and ends under the 'P'.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

London, Canada

November 12, 2025

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Statement of Financial Position

As at August 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Petty cash	1,000	1,000
Due from related parties (note 3)	108,486	162,532
	<u>109,486</u>	<u>163,532</u>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>		
Prepaid expenses	7,833	7,833
Tangible capital assets (note 4)	15,666	20,141
	<u>132,985</u>	<u>191,506</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 5)	117,319	171,365
Deferred capital contributions (note 6)	15,666	20,141
	<u>132,985</u>	<u>191,506</u>
<b>Contractual obligations and contingencies (note 7)</b>		
<b>Contractual rights (note 8)</b>		

Approved by the Board of Directors



Director



Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Statement of Operations

For the year ended August 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Thames Valley District School Board	55,969,288	52,758,850
London District Catholic School Board	23,549,893	20,777,798
Other revenue	7,000	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (note 6)	4,475	4,475
	<hr/> 79,530,656	<hr/> 73,541,123
<b>Expenses</b>		
Transportation services	76,853,315	70,994,675
Administrative		
Salaries and benefits	2,122,559	2,031,712
Contract services	170,172	170,198
Software fees and licenses	131,507	132,307
Office supplies and services	72,080	54,964
Occupancy costs (note 7)	68,122	83,673
Safety program materials	26,468	15,797
Furniture and equipment	24,053	10,819
Professional fee	16,146	6,677
Professional development	14,298	13,305
Telephone	13,347	15,380
Printing	6,488	6,109
Maintenance	6,195	-
Amortization	4,475	4,475
Travel and meetings	1,431	1,032
	<hr/> 79,530,656	<hr/> 73,541,123
<b>Annual surplus</b>	<hr/> -	<hr/> -

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended August 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>Cash provided by (used in)</b>		
<b>Operating activities</b>		
Annual surplus	-	-
Non-cash items		
Amortization expense of tangible capital assets	4,475	4,475
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	(4,475)	(4,475)
Changes in non-cash working capital components		
Decrease in due to/from related parties	54,046	221,024
Decrease in accounts payable	(54,046)	(221,024)
<b>Net change in cash</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Cash – Beginning of year</b>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
<b>Cash – End of year</b>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Notes to Financial Statements

August 31, 2025

### 1 Significant accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian public-sector accounting standards plus *PS 4200 Standards for Government Not-for-Profit Organizations*, and reflect the following policies:

#### Reporting entity

The Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (the Consortium) is an incorporated Not-for-Profit organization established in 2008 by London and area school boards to provide transportation services.

The current member school boards are Thames Valley District School Board and London District Catholic School Board. Under the formal agreement, decisions related to the financial and operating activities are shared. No Board is in a position to exercise unilateral control.

#### Basis of accounting

Revenues and expenditures are reported on an accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis of accounting recognizes revenues when transportation services have been provided in accordance with the cost sharing agreement and when collection is reasonably assured; expenditures are the cost of goods and services acquired in the period whether payment has been made or invoices received.

#### Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian public-sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the year. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

#### Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, less accumulated amortization. During the current and previous years, purchases of furniture and equipment are considered immaterial and have not been capitalized. Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Computer software	5 years
Leasehold improvements	10 years

Amortization is charged at half the annual rate in the year of acquisition.

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Notes to Financial Statements

August 31, 2025

### 1 Significant accounting policies (continued)

#### Deferred capital contributions

Contributions received or receivable for the purpose of acquiring or developing a depreciable tangible capital asset for use in providing services, or any contributions in the form of depreciable tangible assets received, or receivable for use in providing services, shall be recognized as deferred capital contribution. These amounts are recognized as revenue at the same rate as the related tangible capital asset is amortized.

#### Deferred revenue

Certain revenue amounts are received pursuant to legislation, regulation or agreement and may only be used in the conduct of certain programs or in the delivery of specific services and transactions. These amounts are recognized as revenue in the fiscal year that the related expenditures are incurred, or services performed.

#### Financial instruments

Financial instruments are classified in one of the following categories: (i) fair value; (ii) cost or amortized cost. The Entity determines the classification of its financial instruments at initial recognition.

Petty cash, due to/from related parties, and accounts payable are initially recorded at their fair value and are subsequently measured at cost, net of any provisions for impairment.

The fair value of a financial instrument is the amount of consideration that would be agreed upon in an arm's length transaction between knowledgeable, willing parties who are under no compulsion to act. The fair value of a financial instrument on initial recognition is the transaction price at the trade date, which is the fair value of the consideration given or received. After initial recognition, the fair values of financial instruments that are quoted in active markets are based on bid prices for financial assets held and offer prices for financial liabilities. When independent prices are not available, fair values are determined by using valuation techniques that refer to observable market data. These include comparisons with similar instruments where market observable prices exist, discounted cash flow analysis, option pricing models and other valuation techniques commonly used by market participants.

Transaction costs incurred on the acquisition of financial instruments measured subsequently at fair value are expensed as incurred. All other financial instruments are adjusted by transaction costs incurred on acquisition and financing costs, which are amortized using the straight-line method.

All financial assets are assessed for impairment on an annual basis. When a decline is determined to be other than temporary, the amount of the loss is reported in the statement of operations, and any unrealized gain is adjusted through the statement of remeasurement gains and losses.

### 2 Economic dependence

The Consortium's operations consist exclusively of supplying services to school boards located in the same geographic area.

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Notes to Financial Statements

August 31, 2025

### 3 Due to/from related parties

The amounts are due to/from members of the Consortium. They are non-interest bearing and will be repaid within the year.

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>Due from related parties</b>		
Thames Valley District School Board	224,776	149,210
<b>Due to related parties</b>		
London District Catholic School Board	(116,290)	13,322
	108,486	162,532

### 4 Tangible capital assets

	Balance at August 31, 2024 \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Transfers \$	Cost Balance at August 31, 2025 \$
Computer software	319,880	—	—	—	319,880
Leasehold improvements	44,753	—	—	—	44,753
	364,633	—	—	—	364,633

	Balance at August 31, 2024 \$	Amortization \$	Disposals, write offs and adjustments \$	Accumulated amortization Balance at August 31, 2025 \$
Computer software	319,880	—	—	319,880
Leasehold improvements	24,612	4,475	—	29,087
	344,492	4,475	—	348,967

	August 31, 2025 \$	August 31, 2024 \$
<b>Net book value</b>		
Computer software	—	—
Leasehold improvements	15,666	20,141
	15,666	20,141

# Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

## Notes to Financial Statements

August 31, 2025

### 5 Government remittances payable

In respect of government remittances payable, \$46,571 (2024 – \$37,132) is included within accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

### 6 Deferred capital contributions

Deferred capital contributions represent the unamortized amount of contributions received for the purchase of tangible capital assets. The amortization of capital contributions is recorded as revenue in the statement of operations. The changes in the balance of deferred capital contribution are as follows:

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Opening balance	20,141	24,616
Revenue recognized in the period	(4,475)	(4,475)
Closing balance	<u>15,666</u>	<u>20,141</u>

### 7 Contractual obligations and contingencies

The Consortium leases its head office under an operating lease which runs from March 1, 2019 to February 28, 2029.

The sum of \$272,566 is payable with respect to the property lease during the remaining term.

	\$
2025 – 26	77,876
2026 – 27	77,876
2027 – 28	77,876
2028 – 29	38,938

The Consortium has entered contracts with bus operators to supply services to school boards for the period of September 2024 to June 2029. The amount to be paid over this term is dependent on the number of routes throughout the year, paid kilometres per route, which includes a maintenance and fuel component, as well as additional time for the driver and attendant beyond agreed upon time minimums.

# **Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services**

Notes to Financial Statements

**August 31, 2025**

## **8 Contractual rights**

The Consortium's current membership agreement is from September 2025 to August 2028. The agreement determines amounts receivable from each board based on a cost sharing formula. Transportation expenditures vary from year to year and therefore no estimated future receivables have been disclosed, as they are unknown at this time.