



## EMSB TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

### Covid-19 - Questions and Answers concerning Transportation Services

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our goal is, and always will remain, to ensure the health and safety of our students. We will continue to put forward our best efforts to accommodate and provide transportation services to as many students as possible, while remaining in line with our policies and procedures.

**Q: When will my child be receiving his/her bus pass?**

**A:** If your child is eligible for transportation (see criteria below), your child will be receiving by Post Canada a bus package during the week of August 24.

**\*Criteria for Eligibility for Transportation (EMSB Transportation)**

- **Pre-Kindergarten** and **Kindergarten** students residing more than **0.6** km from the school in their distinct boundary offering the French program (bilingual or immersion), or at the school in the assigned core program boundary;
- **Elementary students** residing more than **1.4** km from the school in their distinct boundary offering the French program (bilingual or immersion), or at the school in the assigned core program boundary;

**Q: Will the government be increasing the school board's transportation budget in order to provide busing to all of the students?**

**A:** No, the government will not be increasing the school board's transportation budget.

Even if the government did increase the budget, right now there is a shortage of bus drivers in Quebec. Busing companies are already having a difficult time assigning drivers to the regular routes that are in place.

**Q: What happens if my child never receives an accommodation bus pass? How will he/she get to school?**

**A:** Here are some solutions:

- 1) Drive your child to school
- 2) Walk with your school to school
- 3) Make arrangements with a neighbor or older student to walk with your child to school
- 4) Register your child in daycare.
- 5) Within your community, organize a **“Walking School Bus”**  
(see web site: <https://www.trottibus.ca/>)

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## SCHOOL BUS!

The Trottibus is a walking school bus project that allows elementary school children to walk to school together in the morning, accompanied by volunteers.

***Please take note that in order to register your school, you must register on the French web site. The English web site is reserved for Ontario families.***

**Q: Why can't the school board provide busing accommodation to all the students who have submitted a request?**

**R:** The school board's transportation budget has always been based on the number of students that are eligible for transportation. The government does not allocate a special budget for accommodation students.

As mentioned in ***EMSB's Transportation Policy***, if there is available space on the bus, we can assign accommodation bus passes to students who reside less than 1.4 km from their school or to students who reside on former territories.

Priority for transportation services must be given to all students that are eligible for these services, if extra spaces become available on the bus, only then can the school board assign accommodation bus passes to students.

**Q: Why must we wait until October to assign busing accommodation bus passes?**

**A:** Due to the Covid-19 situation, spaces are limited on the bus.

- On a 72 passenger bus: The capacity will be 44 students (2 students *per bench*)
- On a 24 passenger mini-bus: The capacity will be 16 students (2 students *per bench*)
- On a 6 passenger Berlin: The capacity will be 4 students (2 students *in both the back and middle row*)

In order to respect the ***EMSB Transportation Policy***, our responsibility is first and foremost to assign transportation services to students who are eligible for transportation.

During the months of August and September, the Transportation Division will carefully evaluate all of the bus routes and determine if there are available spaces left on these routes. The Transportation Division will need to review over 300 bus routes; reviewing these bus routes will take some time. Once this exercise is complete, accommodation passes will be assigned to students.

Also, some parents who did not require transportation in July are now requiring transportation services because their working situation has changed since July, therefore the school board must wait until after school has started to identify the number of eligible students on the bus.

**Q: Can we register our child(ren) in Daycare during the school year?**

**A:** Daycare services will always be available throughout the year. If you require daycare services, you must contact your school's daycare technician. (For her/his contact information, you may visit your school's web site or contact your school's secretary)

**Q: How will accommodation bus passes be assigned? What will be the criteria of selection?**

**A:** Accommodation requests will be assigned to students according to the following criteria:

- 1) If the child already has a sibling (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten) on the bus who is eligible
- 2) chronological age, from the youngest to the oldest

**Q: Why did I receive different emails for my children?**

**A:** Two different emails were sent to parents depending on your child's status:

1. An email/survey was sent out to all parents whose children are eligible for transportation services according to the criteria\* identified in the EMSB Transportation Policy. A survey was included with the email asking parents if they will be requiring transportation services for the 2020-2021 school year. Depending on how many spaces are available on the bus, **these students should be receiving transportation in August.**

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  - **Elementary students** residing more than **1.4** km from the school in their distinct boundary offering the French program (bilingual or immersion), or at the school in the assigned core program boundary;
2. Another email was sent to parents whose children are not eligible for busing but receive accommodation busing. These students **will not be receiving a bus pass at the beginning of the school year due to the limited number of spaces available on the school bus.** Accommodation requests will only be looked at once all eligible students have receive transportation.

**Q: When will my child be receiving an accommodation bus pass for the 2020-2021 school year?**

**A:** On August 24, a second email was sent to parents whose children usually receives accommodation. In the email, parents had the opportunity to submit a request for accommodation for their child (ren) for the 2020-2021 school year. These requests will only be processed in October.

***Please take note that due to the limited number of spaces on the bus, there is a possibility that your child (ren) may not receive an accommodation bus pass for the 2020-2021 school year.***

**Q: Why are my children not all getting a bus pass in August?**

**A:** The transportation criteria for eligibility is not the same for all students.

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Therefore one child might will be eligible to receive transportation services, while the sibling may not.

**Q: Why is my child not eligible for transportation when Google map indicates that I live at 1.5 km from my child's school?**

**A:** In order to standardize our process, EMSB uses "GEOBUS" to calculate the distance from a child's residence to the child's school. This program is recommended by the Ministry. Therefore, all decisions are based on the information provided from this computer program.

***Please take note that the computer program identifies the fastest walking distance from the child's home to school.***

**Q: Why is my child not eligible for transportation when I have driven with my car from my house to the school and it indicates that we reside 1.5 km from school?**

**A:** In order to standardize our process, EMSB uses "GEOBUS" to calculate the distance from a child's residence to the child's school. This program is recommended by the Ministry. Therefore, all decisions are based on the information provided from this computer program.

***Please take note that the computer program identifies the fastest walking distance from the child's home to school.***

**Q: Can I go to my child's school to make a request for accommodation?**

**A:** Exceptionally this year, due to the Covid-19 situation, all accommodation requests will be processed at the EMSB Head office. As such, schools will not be accepting accommodation requests from parents.

**Q: Why did I not receive an email for my child who is eligible for transportation?**

A: If your child is eligible for transportation services but have not received an email, please contact the Transportation Division by sending an email to the following address [schoolorg@emsb.qc.ca](mailto:schoolorg@emsb.qc.ca).

*\*\*\* Please make sure to indicate your **child's name** and the **school** he/she attends.*

**Q: I have received an email but the link to the survey is not working?**

A: Please contact the Transportation Division by sending an email to the following address: [schoolorg@emsb.qc.ca](mailto:schoolorg@emsb.qc.ca).

*\*\*\* Please make to include your **child's name** and **school** he/she attends.*