

Our File/N/Réf. **25 RG1049-20**
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 29 April 1996

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator
Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Director, Mobility Services Division
Environment and Transportation Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **SAFETY CONCERNS DUE TO BUSING POLICY CHANGES
OF CARLETON BOARD OF EDUCATION - INQUIRY TC-12**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Transportation Committee receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

On 21 June 1995 at the Transportation Committee, Councillor Munter noted that the Carleton Board of Education's recent decision to change minimum distances for busing of students to school will result in increased pedestrian traffic on busy Regional roads like Eagleson Rd. He asked the Department to explore how the Board plans to make routes to/from school safer (ie. crossing guards, contribution for traffic signals, etc.).

DISCUSSION

Attached as Annex A is a letter received from the Safety, Health and Security Co-ordinator of the Carleton Board of Education that outlines the Board's direction.

The staff of Environment and Transportation Department have in the past and will continue in the future to work closely with the Co-ordinator for the Carleton Board of Education to resolve any and all problems that may arise to ensure that the safety of all students is addressed.

Approved by
Doug Brousseau
Attach. (1)



133 Greenbank Road • Nepean • Ontario • K2H 6L3 • (613) 721-1820 • FAX (613) 820-6968

04 March 1996

Denis Guibord, Director
Mobility Services
Transportation Department
Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton
111 Lisgar Street
Ottawa, Canada
K2P 2L7

Dear Mr. Guibord:

I apologize for taking so long to respond to your request for clarification of Carleton Board policy for walking students. The matter rests to some degree on complex legal issues which are not always easily interpretable across the variety of regulations within which the Board operates.

Our policies are derived in our Provincial mandate. Governing legislation precludes a school board from having jurisdiction outside of its property boundaries. In former years, when Provincial grant percentages for transporting students were high, busing was offered more generously. Sometimes the criteria were applied inconsistently, which tended to broaden the concept that transportation was an inclusive service. However, the busing of students is not mandated under the Education Act or regulations and, as grant funding began shrinking, many boards throughout the Province undertook to review their transportation policies.

Further, directives and interpretive communiqués from the Ministry of Education describe the responsibility for children on their way to and from school as being a parental one. Extending the walking distances for students is unfortunate, but not a decision Carleton Board Trustees have taken lightly.

My task is to review many of the proposed walking routes. In some instances the decision is based on information and input from municipalities, police agencies and the Region, using variables similar to those described in the 1992 Review of School Crossings produced by the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario. Like the Review the assessed factors rely on what accommodation has been established for pedestrian access and travel along streets and at intersections, taking into account any refuge rendered for risk where such would be encountered. If sufficient pedestrian controls exist and no additional risk is imposed along the walking route, the Board can be satisfied that it is acting reasonably within the bounds of community responsibility and its Provincial mandate by requiring longer walking distances.

This process includes the expectation that accommodation of pedestrians would have been encompassed as a part of any approved, planned development, which includes the location, design and construction of schools.

OTAWA-CARLETON
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
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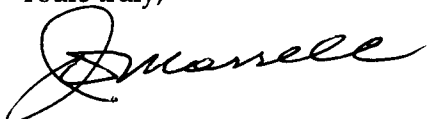
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Since 1988, Carleton Board policy has reflected the status permissible under our mandate with regard to adult crossing guards. In addition, consideration for implementing such as a resolution would be subject to the recommendations of the 1992 Review. This means that when and where a Board assessment finds significant risk resolvable by adult supervision, the Board would notify the municipality having jurisdiction and the respective community or school council of the conditions observed, requesting that these latter groups pursue the matter. If the findings of all parties agree, the municipality would be asked to create a position. Shared funding might then be applied for to offset the costs of this initiative.

However, the Board will maintain busing privileges where conditions of significant risk are found. Eagleson Road between Abbeyhill Road and Cadence Gate, for example, was recently assessed by Board staff. An exception to our policy has been recommended for all elementary students west of Eagleson travelling to Bridlewood Community Elementary School. A copy of the Report to Trustees is attached.

Some of our decisions may involve Regional redress. I am confident such instances will be few and without undue imposition for your department. In the meantime, I hope these comments will assist in clarifying the Carleton Board position. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at any time at 721-1820, extension 449.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J Morrell', written in black ink.

John Morrell, Co-ordinator
Safety, Health and Security