



# HSTS Operating Procedure

## Halton Student Transportation Services

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### Preamble

A procedure has been established for granting courtesy seat permission for students who are not eligible for transportation services, where there are specific or exceptional situations that need to be examined on an individual basis. Courtesy seats will only be granted for the benefit of the student and must not, under any circumstances, result in additional costs, and must not create precedents or penalize students who already ride the bus.

### Procedure

Upon the completion of the Courtesy Seat Request (*Form TF-1-004*), submitted by the parent or guardian, permission may be granted for a student who is not eligible for transportation to ride a bus to and/or from school providing all of the following conditions are met and understood:

1. a seat is available on the bus
2. the bus stop already exists
3. the parent or guardian accepts responsibility for accompanying the student to/from the existing bus stop
4. the bus route and the length of the trip are not affected
5. the need has been identified for the entire school year
6. permission is granted for the current school year only

If a bus provides services to two or more schools, the number of courtesy seats on the bus will be divided equitably between the schools.

The electronic courtesy seat application form will be available commencing May 1st annually for the following school year and will close September 30. The courtesy seat review and allocation process is completed by October 31 annually for the current school year. This timeline is not subject to the appeal process.

**Please Note:** No courtesy seat request will be considered in September. This month is set aside for implementing and coordinating transportation services for eligible students. Courtesy seat approvals will be communicated to parents/guardians as soon as criteria have been reviewed and seat availability is confirmed.

**It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to plan their schedules for the year in the event there is no courtesy seat available.**



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The Courtesy Seat loading factor is outlined below:

Grades JK-8            maximum 55 (including courtesy seat riders)

Grades 9-12            maximum 42 (including courtesy seat riders)

**During the school year, courtesy seat authorization may be revoked at any time, if this seat is required by a student who is eligible for transportation services in this school boundary.**

Requests for changes made on an ad hoc basis or for a limited time, such as switching buses to visit friends or go to a babysitter's house when parents are travelling or on holidays, shall not be considered as courtesy seat requests and shall not be approved.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **The parent/guardian shall:**

1. complete and submit a courtesy seat application form no earlier than May 1<sup>st</sup> annually for the following school year;
2. plan their schedules for the year in the event there is no courtesy seat available;
3. agree to abide by the parent responsibilities as outlined in *HS-2-003 Parent Responsibilities*; and,
4. acknowledge and agree to all the conditions upon which a courtesy seat may be granted.

#### **The student shall:**

1. abide by the student responsibilities outlined in *HS-2-002 Student Responsibilities*.

#### **The school principal shall:**

1. support the courtesy seat request application; and
2. communicate any concerns or issues that arise from the courtesy seat process

#### **HSTS shall:**

1. evaluate the request based on the following established criteria;
  - a) the need for equity between schools, if a bus is shared by two schools at the same time;



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- b) grade and/or distance (not first come, first served);
2. assign approved students to the bus stop closest to the address provided on the Courtesy Seat Request Form *TF-1-004*;
  3. keep an up-to-date list of students who have been granted a courtesy seat in BusPlanner and on BP Web; and,
  4. provide a list of students granted permission to ride the bus under the Courtesy Seat procedure to the schools.

Should the request for a courtesy seat be denied the appeal process shall not apply.