Students With Disabilities Transport Program

9.5 Policy

Rationale:

The Students with Disabilities Transport Program (SDTP) provides transport for eligible students to and from school.

School principals must ensure SDTP services provided to students at their school are managed in accordance with this policy and the guidance.

Aims:

To ensure access to the SDTP for all eligible students.

Implementation:

Overview of school obligations

These requirements include:

1. ensuring their school supports the development of the route approval with each bus operator providing SDTP services, prior to the start of each year
2. assessing applications for use of SDTP services in accordance with the eligibility criteria. Applications for travel for the new school year should be received from families by the end of November of the previous year. Late applications may be accepted at the principal's discretion
3. coordinating pickup points with the bus company as new students enrol or current students change address. If students are directed to another family's address as their closest pickup point, the school is to ensure it is communicated to the family that another student/s will be accessing the bus from their address. It is suggested that a social story of these changes be written to support all students in this case
4. apply for change of route to the SDTP if the closest pick up points are not readily accessible. In these cases, once approval has been given, the change to the route will start from the Monday of the following week to allow time for changes to pick up and drop off times to be communicated by the school to all affected families
5. entering information from the travel application into CASES21 and retaining a copy of the application
6. ensuring each student accessing SDTP services has an individual travel plan, specific to the student's needs, and that steps are taken to prepare for foreseeable risks and any emergencies
7. ensuring bus operators have up-to-date information about students they are required to transport, including the students travel plans and drop off/pick up arrangements
8. developing an emergency management plan (EMP) that includes emergency procedures in the event of a bus breakdown, accident, bushfire or other emergency
9. application of the department's Risk Management Framework to identify and address risks
10. providing school specific training on roles and responsibilities, communication processes, student-specific requirements and other relevant information to school and bus operator staff, including through the online learning modules which school and bus staff must complete each year
11. checking bus operator and taxi invoices (which must be submitted to schools monthly) and confirming with the bus operator or taxi service, within 10 working days of month's end, if the invoice is accurate (so that the operator can provide invoices to the Student Transport Unit for payment)

12. advise the Student Transport Unit of any operational issues that may affect students or the provision of a transport service.

Principals may delegate the coordination of the transport services to a member of staff but must maintain oversight over the delivery of SDTP services to ensure compliance with this policy.
All school staff are responsible for ongoing assessment and mitigation of risks associated with SDTP services.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

This policy was developed in September 2024 and is scheduled to be reviewed in 2028