

Media Release

For Immediate Release

Transportation Update – HWSTS set to cancel routes on a rotating basis

Hamilton, Ontario – September 23, 2020: Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS) will begin planned rotations of cancelled bus routes, effective September 28, 2020. The cancellation rotations are part of mitigation efforts by the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board and Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to address this year's critical shortage of school bus drivers, which led to the cancellation of 15-18 bus routes last week. The cancellation affected transportation services for students at 11 HWCDSB and 17 HWDSB schools.

The rotating cancellations will address the 17 cancelled routes, rotate service on routes delayed more than 60 minutes, and move high school runs that are experiencing delays of 30 minutes to a regular rotation to ensure that students are on time for their face-to-face learning. The strategy will cancel routes on a prescheduled rotating basis, allowing families to make alternate transportation plans for their children during their route rotation.

"We understand that this will cause considerable inconvenience and disruption to families at different points in the route rotations. As much as we regret having to cancel any of our routes, this measure is necessary to assure a higher level of service, albeit on a rotating basis," said Patrick Daly, Chairperson of the HWCDSB.

"This is our regrettable reality this year, and we apologize to all our impacted families," said Alex Johnstone, Chair of HWDSB. "We foresaw a situation like this happening, and even with our increased funding to transportation, we need the support of the provincial government. This is an issue that I have been, and continue to raise with the Ministry of Education since July."

A cancellation schedule for routes/schools involved in the rotation is being finalized and will be shared with families along with more details later this week. HWSTS continues to investigate other options to address the ongoing bus driver shortage, including driver incentives and driver recruitment programs.

Transportation services are provided to approximately 9,500 students from the HWCDSB and 14,500 students from the HWDSB.

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