

CLASS Business Unit:	Student Transportation
Operating Procedure:	Service Designs Review Requests
Reference:	STS-PRA-010-07
Adopted:	July 25, 2007
Revised:	September 26, 2022

Scope

The member Boards and CLASS value the safety of its students and employees as our utmost priority. CLASS operates under the premise that parents/guardians share in the safety and responsibility of their children, from home to school or home to bus stop and that routes/stop locations are not considered unsafe because of dangers that may arise if a student is unaccompanied.

The following review process is practiced as part of yearly route planning or as concerns are reported by any of our stakeholders:

1.0 Walkway/Pathway Use

1.1. Responsibilities

- a. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of students who are not eligible for transportation to determine the route their children will take while travelling to/from school.
- b. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to determine if their child needs to be accompanied to/from school.
- c. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or school to contact CLASS if they believe a walkway / pathway is unsuitable for the students to use.
- d. It is the responsibility of the local Municipality to determine and implement the maintenance protocol for walkways / pathways.

- e. It is the responsibility of CLASS to review concerns regarding walkway / pathways as they are brought forward and to provide a timely assessment and or response.
- f. It is the responsibility of CLASS to periodically assess a change in use of walkways / pathways for the purposes of walk distance calculations for schools.
- g. It is the responsibility of CLASS to proactively communicate with the Boards any changes in walkway / pathway use for the purposes of walk distance calculations to any school.

1.2. Assessment Criteria

There are several factors which will be taken into consideration in assessing the suitability of including walkways and/or pathways as part of the walking path for distance calculation purposes. CLASS will include a walkway and/or pathway for the purposes of determining the distance from home to school based on the following:

- a. The walkway / pathway is a designated Municipal and/or Regional Conservation Authority walkway / pathway for which no restriction for pedestrian use has been established.
- b. The walkway / pathway shall start and finish with a direct connection to a Municipal/Regional roadway, sidewalk, pathway, or school property.
- c. The walkway / pathway consists of an engineered surface (i.e. paved, gravel/limestone screening, concrete);
- d. The walkway / pathway does not contain extended sections of covered or confined space.
- e. The walkway / pathway is maintained in all the months in which the schools are operational.
- f. The walkway / pathway is not located in an identified floodplain that is regularly active and uncontrolled.
- g. CLASS shall not add a walkway / pathway mid-year; additions shall only be implemented as part of the annual start up service plan.

1.3 Communications

Prior to implementing any new walkway / pathway for the purposes of walk distance calculations for a school, CLASS shall notify the affected School Board(s) and School Administrator(s) and determine the appropriate communication plan for impacted student(s).

1.4 Appendices

Walkway/Pathway Review Form

Walkway / Pathway Review

Date: _____

Reviewer: _____

Walkway / Pathway Location Description:

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Source of Review:

CLASS		Parent / Guardian		Police Service	
School / Board		Municipality		Other	

Schools Impacted:

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Assessment Criteria:

Designated by Municipality or Conservation Authority with no pedestrian use restrictions	YES	NO
Direct connection at start and finish to a roadway, sidewalk, pathway or school property	YES	NO
Consists of an engineered surface (i.e. paved, gravel/limestone screening, concrete)	YES	NO
Extended sections with covered or confined space	YES	NO
Will be maintained during all months schools are operational	YES	NO
Located on a identified floodplain that is regularly active and uncontrolled	YES	NO

Rationale / Observations / Comments:

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Rollout Details:

Approved for Use?	YES	NO
Planned Implementation	mm/dd/yyyy	
Communication	mm/dd/yyyy	

2.0 Walk Distance Hazard Designation Review

An identified hazard is a geographic area that CLASS does not expect students to use as part of the walking path to school. Identified hazard areas will not be used by CLASS when measuring a student's distance to their catchment school. The resulting modified walk path may change a student's walk to school distance and thus could impact their transportation eligibility.

Such designations are at the sole discretion of CLASS in accordance with the provisions of this operating procedure, whose decision is final.

2.1 Responsibility

- a. It is the responsibility of CLASS to review community concerns regarding the walkability of a route to school.
- b. It is the responsibility of CLASS to ensure the appropriate hazard designations are in place throughout the district in accordance with this procedure.
- c. It is the responsibility of CLASS to utilize the tools and guidelines in this operating procedure when reviewing walking routes.
- d. It is the responsibility of CLASS to conduct a review in accordance with the tools and guidelines of this operating procedure of walking routes that present as potential hazards.
- e. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of students who are not eligible for transportation to determine the route their children will take while travelling to/from school.
- f. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to determine if their child needs to be accompanied to/from school. The parent/guardian shares in the safety and responsibility of their children while walking between home and school.
- g. Pedestrian safety is the responsibility of the local Municipality. In situations where a hazard has been identified, and the Municipality at the request of CLASS has not been able to resolve through prevention strategies, a hazard designation may be warranted.
- h. It is the responsibility of the local Municipality to provide pedestrian facilities or services for walking, which includes road, sidewalk and walkway/pathway installation and maintenance, as well as the placement of adult crossing guards and pedestrian crossovers (PXO's).

2.2 Procedure

CLASS uses several criteria to determine whether a hazard exists along the walking path to school. Each item in and by itself does not specifically warrant a hazard designation, however, a combination of factors may result in CLASS determining that a hazard exists.

- a) **Volume of Traffic:** the volume of traffic during the time when students will be walking to and from school is taken into consideration for students that must cross streets/roads. The Provincial Warrants, developed by the Ontario Traffic Conference with the Ministry of Transportation, determines if the crossing is a hazard, or can be managed with crossing support (guard/patrols) or requires no intervention.

If the speed limit is 70km/h or less and students would be required to cross at an uncontrolled intersection:

TRAFFIC CLASSIFICATION	OBSERVED TRAFFIC VOLUME	INTERVENTION REQUIRED?
<i>Low Traffic</i>	<i>Up to 3 cars per minute</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Medium Traffic</i>	<i>4 to 30 cars per minute with a minimum of one 15 second gap in traffic per 5 minutes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Medium Traffic</i>	<i>4 to 30 cars per minute without traffic gaps outlined above</i>	<i>May be Required</i>
<i>High Traffic</i>	<i>More than 30 cars per minute</i>	<i>Yes</i>

- b) **Number of Travelled Lanes:** CLASS takes into consideration the number of lanes a student must cross. In many cases, the number of regular lanes on a road is an indicator of traffic volume.
Students in JK to grade 8 are not expected to cross a multi-lane road of four (4) travelled lanes or greater without the presence of an adult crossing guard, traffic signal, crosswalk, or other traffic calming devices.
- c) **Posted Speed Limits:** CLASS takes into consideration the posted speed limits of a street/road. Consideration will be given for roads that have speed limits of 80km/h or greater.
- d) **Sidewalks:** CLASS does not take into consideration the presence of sidewalks in and by itself. Many communities that CLASS provides student transportation for do not have sidewalks.

- e) Snow removal: CLASS does not take into consideration the expedience of removal of snow from roads or sidewalks as this is a homeowner / municipal responsibility.
- f) Grade Level of Students: CLASS takes into consideration the grade level of a student that must walk to school. In some situations, CLASS will, in combination with other criteria, designate an alternate walking route for specific grades.
- g) Historical Designations: CLASS takes into consideration pre-existing hazard designations. CLASS may periodically review existing hazard designations to determine if the appropriate designation is in place.
- h) Crossing of Bridges: CLASS takes into consideration the crossing of bridges. Students in grades 9-12 are expected to cross bridges that have a dedicated sidewalk. Students grades JK-8 are expected to cross bridges that have a physical barrier separating the sidewalk from the travelled lanes.
- i) Crossing of Train Tracks: CLASS takes into consideration the crossing of train tracks. Students are expected to cross train tracks that are protected by a warning system (arm and/or bell and/or lights).
- j) Construction Areas: CLASS takes into consideration the presence of construction areas. Students in grade JK-8 are not typically expected to walk through active construction zones, unless they live in the active construction zone, and/or they live on a road not assumed by the local municipality.
- k) Sidewalk Along Major Roads: CLASS takes into consideration the presence of sidewalks along major roads. Sidewalks must be present along roads with 4 travelled lanes or more that meet the high traffic volume criteria.
- l) Crossing at a Corner: CLASS takes into consideration the need to cross at a corner. Students are not expected to cross a street mid-block. Walk to school distance will be calculated by crossing at corners.

2.3 Communication

- a) CLASS staff will use the tools and guidelines in this section to determine whether a hazard has been identified in consultation with the Manager of Transportation Services.
- b) CLASS staff will communicate with affected families in the event of a change in transportation eligibility with an appropriate notice period.

- c) Students may not automatically qualify for transportation when a hazard is identified. There may be a suitable walking route that would avoid the hazard.
- d) CLASS has the sole discretion to determine if a walking route is hazardous for students. CLASS decision is final.


2.4 Definitions

Term	Definition
Hazard	A hazard is an area which CLASS has identified as "not safe" for students to walk through as part of the walking path for determining transportation eligibility. Hazard designations are established in accordance with the tools and guidelines in this operating procedure.
Bridge	A bridge is a vehicle crossing structure with travelled lanes spanning a gap such as a waterway, roadway, railway or other obstacle. The crossing structure shall be at least 12 meters (length of one full size school bus) in length and two travelled lanes in width. Culverts are not considered bridges.
Uncontrolled Intersection	An uncontrolled intersection is an intersection without any traffic calming devices such as traffic signals, signs, crosswalks, crossing guards etc.
Travelled Lanes	A travelled lane is a portion of the roadway intended for regular vehicle traffic use. Paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, turning lanes and medians are not considered travelled lanes.

2.5 Appendices

APPENDIX A – Hazard Assessment Form

APPENDIX A

Walk Hazard Assessment Worksheet				
Date Submitted:		Submitted By:		
Nature of Concern:				
Traffic Volume Rating (3/min=low, 4-30/min=mid, 31/min=high)	LOW	MID	HIGH	NOT APPLICABLE
Criteria		PASS	FAIL	NOT APPLICABLE
Travelled lanes exceeds 4 w/o crosswalk/traffic signal (jk-8)				
Posted speed limit 80km/h or greater				
Bridge has separate sidewalk / divider from roadway (jk-8)				
Train crossing with warning system				
Construction area w/o alternate route (jk-8)				
Sidewalk along major roads w/o alternate route				
Crossing mid-block w/o crossing guard or traffic control dev				
Comments:				
Results:				
Investigated By:		Date:		

3.0 Bus Stop Location Review

School bus stop locations are assigned by CLASS and reviewed annually during route planning for the upcoming school year. CLASS is committed to providing safe, centralized bus stop locations within the parameter guidelines set out in the Service Design Standard Procedure.

The following review process will be conducted as bus stop location concerns are received by any of our stakeholders:

3.1 Responsibility

- a. It is the responsibility of CLASS to review bus stop location concerns as they arise.
- b. It is the responsibility of CLASS to utilize the tools and guidelines in this section when reviewing bus stop locations.
- c. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to determine if their child needs to be accompanied to/from school. The parent/guardian shares in the safety and responsibility of their children while walking between home and stop.

3.2 Procedure

Bus stop location concerns are raised by many parties and are managed by CLASS depending on the source of the concern:

3.2.1 RESIDENT CONCERN

When a homeowner initiates contact with CLASS regarding the behaviour of students located on their property; the following process has been put in place:

1st Offence

- CLASS will contact the school principal/designate and request that they address the concerns raised with the students assigned to the stop.
- CLASS will provide the school principal/designate with a list of all students assigned to the stop.

2nd Offence

- CLASS will reassign the stop to another location

- CLASS will provide letters to the school for distribution for the affected students.
- Five days' notice will be provided for implementation.
- Updated route descriptions will be provided to the school bus operator within their portal.

3.2.2 PARENT CONCERN

In the event where CLASS would receive a concern from a parent/guardian of an eligible rider regarding their bus stop location the following process would be followed:

- CLASS may review the request and make the decision to adjust the bus stop location to better accommodate the affected students.
- CLASS may review the request internally. Once the review is complete CLASS would notify the parent/guardian of the decision.
- CLASS has the sole discretion to determine if a bus stop is unsafe. CLASS decision is final.

3.2.3 BUS DRIVER/OPERATOR CONCERN

If CLASS is notified of a bus stop safety concern via the school bus driver/operator the following process would be followed:

- CLASS would review the request in consultation with the school bus operator.
- If a change of bus stop is supported by CLASS, letters would be provided to the school for distribution for the affected students.
- Five days' notice will be provided for implementation.

3.3 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Stop Location Review form

Stop Location Review



Section 1

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____ Contact number: _____
Served by: Operator: _____ Route: _____ Run: _____

Nature of concern: _____

Section 2

Posted Speed Limit: _____ km/h

Visibility: _____ meters (approaching stop) x _____ meters (oncoming to stop)

Road make-up:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paved	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravel	
Area type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban	
Road Width:	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-lanes	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-lanes	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Road Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Dead-end	<input type="checkbox"/> Through	<input type="checkbox"/> Crescent
Conditions:	<input type="checkbox"/> Hill	<input type="checkbox"/> Curve	<input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk <input type="checkbox"/> Shoulder <input type="checkbox"/> Curb

Obstructions: _____

Sketch of area if necessary:

Outcome:

Investigated By: _____ Date: ____/____/20____