

School Transport

Ministry of Education

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Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education



Why the Ministry provides School Transport Assistance

To help parents overcome barriers to education and meet their responsibility to get their children to school. The Ministry may provide assistance where distance or a lack of suitable public transport present a barrier to education



Funding

Ministry of Education

- Ministry of Education provides fully funded transport assistance through Vote Education to ākonga who meet eligibility criteria.
- To meet our obligations under the Public Finance Act we are required to work within our school transport assistance policy settings
- Our policy settings are designed to help us make effective and efficient use of limited resources and help us maintain the integrity of local schooling networks across New Zealand
- No ability to transfer funding to other central or local government agencies

Regional Councils

- Partially funded through the Government via Waka Kotahi investment
- Balance funded by Council (rates, fares etc)
- Based on strategy and investment as defined in Transport Planning documents

Types of School Transport Assistance

Transport services which the Ministry contracts directly with transport providers:

- **Daily bus school services**
- **Technology buses** (transport between school & technology centres)
- **Special Education School Transport Assistance (SESTA)**

Ministry-funded school bus services operate almost exclusively in rural areas and are distinct from, but in some cases overlap with, public transport services delivered by public transport authorities



Types of School Transport Assistance

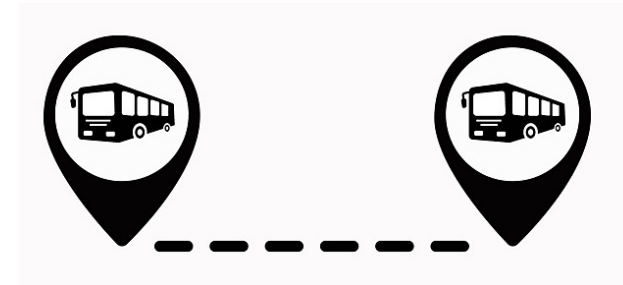
Transport services the Ministry directly funds school or caregiver:

- **Direct resourcing**
 - Bulk funding provided to schools (51 Waikato schools)
- **Te Kura Kaupapa – Māori Medium Schools**
 - Bulk funding provided to kura Māori
- **Conveyance Allowances**
 - Funding directly to caregivers to assist with transport costs where the Ministry cannot provide a vehicle service.



Direct Resource funding

- The amount of bulk funding a DR network receives is based on two factors:
 - the number and location of eligible students, and
 - the length of the bus routes that the Ministry has designed for these students.
- DR networks can choose not to run the routes the funding is based on and can instead run their own bus routes, as long as their eligible students continue to receive school transport assistance.



To be eligible for Ministry School Transport Assistance



A student must meet **all** of the following three criteria:

- They are attending the closest state or state-integrated school where they can enrol.
- They live more than a certain distance from school, depending on their year level:
 - 3.2 kms for Years 1-8
 - 4.8 kms for Years 9-13
- There is no suitable public transport available

Suitable Public Transport (SPT)

Suitable public transport must travel within:

- 2.4 kms of the roadside gate of the student's home.
- 2.4 kms of the closest appropriate school.

The student:

- will not require pick-up before 7am.
- can get to school before it starts.
- can be picked up no later than one hour after school finishes.
- will not require a change of buses more than once on a journey.



Ineligible students

A bus operator, or DR school, may transport ineligible students but they are not required to.

If a bus operator or DR school wants to transport ineligible students, it must meet the following conditions:

- prior written agreement obtained from any school bypassed by the student
- all students (eligible and ineligible) are seated
- for daily bus routes, the vehicle doesn't deviate from the contracted route to pick up ineligible students
- all ineligible students are advised of the conditions of transportation which must be signed by their caregivers

The bus operator or DR school may charge ineligible students a fare.



School Transport Reviews

Ministry regularly reviews funded bus services to ensure ongoing alignment with policy.



Planned/upcoming review projects:

- Ngaruawahia Group (Daily) – near completion

Other situations where a route review may be required:

- Schooling network changes
- School requests
- Changing demographics
- Public transport network development/changes

Working together – collaborative approach

- Creates an environment of trust and no surprises
- Helps to reduce disruption to school transport users
- Enables both of us to achieve our respective organisational objectives
- Greater ability to identify impacts and changes to our respective network operations
- Jointly develop and execute transition plans as appropriate



Opportunity to formalise this approach through an MoU



Questions?



Direct Resource funding

- Tuakau College is part of Franklin Transport Network Group (FTNG) which receives DR bulk funding.
- FTNG – made up of six schools in the south Auckland area of Port Waikato, Tuakau and Mangatāwhiri.
- Tuakau College – is the head school and administers the DR bulk funding for FTNG.

Direct Resource funding review

- Funding adjusted periodically to account for changes in eligible student numbers and input costs
- FTNG requested a funding review
- Review commenced – March 2023
- Initial outcome provided to FTNG – June 2023
- Feedback from FTNG received – beginning Aug 2023
- Final outcome provided to FTNG – end Aug 2023
- Funding change comes into effect – April 2024