

From: Durham Student Transportation Services

Re: Transporting Large Equipment or Large Personal Effects on the School Bus

Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) provides transportation based on the school board approved Student Transportation Policy listed on our website at [www.dsts.on.ca](http://www.dsts.on.ca). Section 2.2 refers to Transporting Large Equipment or Large Personal Effects on the School Bus:

2.2 In the interest of safety, and keeping aisles clear in the bus for emergency evacuations only certain equipment is allowed on school vehicles, under the following conditions:

- a) Musical instruments must be housed in cases and is of a size that can be stowed completely under a seat; Loose large objects on a seat or child's lap may become a projectile if there is a sudden stop or accident;
- b) Ice skates or other sports equipment must be carried in a sports bag, and stowed completely under a seat.

For the safety of all on the bus, parents are expected to provide transportation for their children when bulky or large items such as projects and large sports equipment must be taken to and from school.

DSTS is responsible to ensure that all material transported in a school bus does not interfere with the safety of the driver and passengers or the safe expedient evacuation of the vehicle. In the event of an accident such as a rollover or sudden deceleration objects that are not stored properly can become projectiles causing additional injuries to occupants. Objects stored within the aisle interfere in the event of an evacuation due to an accident or fire on the bus. For consistency and equity amongst all schools throughout Durham Region the following approach for transporting large equipment or personal effects on the school buses needs to be applied regularly.

**Musical Instruments:**

The only musical instruments that should be on the bus are instruments that are small in size, housed in a case and can fit in the student's backpack or safely under part of a seat. As a reminder with two to three students per seat, all students need require room for their personal items. We do not allow instruments to take up a seat or fill the entire bottom of a seat. Large musical instruments such as guitars, tubas, saxophones, French horns, snare drums and baritones are prohibited on the school bus. Smaller instruments such as flutes, or clarinets for example can be stored safely with the student on board the bus. DSTS would encourage every school to communicate with parents or guardians regarding musical instruments and transportation.

**Sports Equipment:**

Similar to musical instruments, only smaller sports equipment housed in a sports bag and can fit in the student's backpack, or safely under part of a seat are authorized to be transported on the school bus. Large equipment such as skis/ski poles, hockey equipment including hockey sticks, scooters, long boards and golf clubs are prohibited, while ice skates, rollerblades and smaller skateboards carried in a sports bag are appropriate.

**Personal Effects:**

Large pieces of luggage or large school projects are prohibited.

**Field Trips and Overnight Events:**

If you are booking a field trip that involves larger luggage, sports equipment and/or musical instruments please notify your carrier at time of booking so that they may make the appropriate vehicle arrangements to transport the equipment separately and in a safe manner.

School Responsibilities with applying the Transportation policy and large prohibited items on board the bus

Please ensure that you communicate with parents regarding making alternate arrangements to transport the prohibited items to school prior to the day of the event. Empty seats on school buses are not to be used to store large items as they are not secure in the event of an accident and/or an evacuation.

Please do not allow students to attempt to board the school buses in the afternoon with large items.

**Medical Equipment:**

Students who require crutches, strollers or walkers are not permitted to bring these items on the school bus, alternate transportation arrangements are required. Students who cannot independently navigate the bus steps or put weight on their extremity due to a medical condition cannot board school buses. Students with medical equipment with proper medical documentation may qualify for alternate transportation. Please contact DSTS directly to let us know if you have a student in this situation.