



## Media Release

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***Eastern Ontario transportation consortium earns high provincial rating for safe, efficient and effective student transportation. Ministry considers Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO) a model for consortia across the province.***

JOHNSTOWN — Eastern Ontario's student transportation consortium has achieved the province's highest rating for efficiency and effectiveness, just three years after its formation by the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB).

The Ministry of Education's Effectiveness and Efficiency Review of Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO) concentrated on such things as consortium management, policies and practices, routing and technology, and contracting. The goal of the review was not only to ensure students are safely transported to and from school each day, but to determine if the consortium is operated in an efficient and cost effective manner.

In March 2014, Deloitte, the firm leading the review for the Ministry of Education found that the consortium was functioning at an extremely high operational level.

"[STEO] has gone from two independently operated transportation departments to a highly effective and efficient integrated consortium," its June report stated.

In fact, it added, STEO "could be emulated by other transportation consortia across the province. The strategies, policies and processes STEO has developed are considered best practices in the industry," the report said.

The consortium operates as a legal corporation with a Board of Directors drawn from the two school boards — CDSBEO trustees Ron Eamer and Robin Reil and UCDSB trustees Jeff McMillan and David McDonald. The organization is led by Ron Cotnam, CAO.

Ron Eamer and Robin Reil have both remarked that the harmonizing of the transportation departments between the two boards has been a much better experience than they anticipated. "We have seen a dramatic improvement from the financial end, in student safety, and development of policies and procedures. Everything is done very professionally," Eamer said recently.

Jeff McMillan, who chairs STEO's Board of Directors, recently stated, "The consortium has shown the people of Eastern Ontario we have a great transportation system that takes students to and from school each day in the most efficient, effective and safest way possible. This should give peace of mind to parents when they put their children on the bus."

STEO employs a staff of 18 at its Commerce Drive headquarters in Johnstown to coordinate the school transportation network for students in the CDSBEO and UCDSB. STEO has 31 bus contractors using 800 vehicles on 1,200 routes. The fleet travels 120,000 km each day in the boards' 12,000 square kilometre service area, transporting 33,450 students, of which 2,250 have special transportation requirements.

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