

Ministry of Education

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Memorandum To: Directors of Education

From: George Zegarac
Deputy Minister

Date: January 28, 2016

Subject: Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report

I am writing to provide additional information on the release of the *Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report*.

The Ministry of Education commends the hard work that the review team – the Honourable Colin Campbell, Mr. Leo Gotlieb and Mr. Paul Emanuelli – Invested in this review and for fulfilling their mandate. The ministry also appreciates the support and participation of all stakeholders during the consultation sessions.

The *Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report*, attached here, and soon to be available on the ministry website, acknowledges that the use of Requests for Proposal (RFPs) is a viable option for acquiring student transportation services, and that exempting student transportation services from the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* (BPSPD) would not promote competition or transparency. The report does not identify an alternative BPSPD-compliant procurement option for school boards' consideration.

Prior to the submission of the final report to the Minister of Education, the Treasury Board Secretariat reviewed all opportunities related to the BPSPD and confirmed their compliance with the BPSPD (see Appendix A). As you are aware, school boards retain the responsibility to determine their own procurement policies and practices. The *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010* and the BPSPD are legislated requirements for all BPS organizations. School boards are required to comply with the BPSPD when selecting the procurement option that best suits their local needs.

This report will serve as a valuable resource for school boards as it provides a number of opportunities for improvements that can be realized through cross-sector collaboration. The ministry recognizes that some of the opportunities identified will require more time to address due to their complexity. School boards are encouraged to collaboratively review the opportunities detailed in the report and assess the merits, suitability and potential implementation implications. The ministry also expects that operators will play an important role in assisting and advising school boards as they move forward with addressing many of these opportunities.

The review team will be providing information sessions on their findings to the sector. This will be an opportunity for school board staff to ask questions and to seek clarification. Details on the information sessions will be provided shortly.

In addition, ministry staff will be connecting with the four trustee associations, the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO), the Ontario School Bus Association (OSBA) and the Independent School Bus Operators Association (ISBOA) to discuss their participation and involvement in addressing the opportunities identified. The ministry will communicate further details through a numbered memorandum to the sector shortly.

Lastly, the Auditor General of Ontario released the 2015 Annual Report, which includes student transportation. The ministry expects that school boards and consortia will work together to carefully review both the *Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report* and the Auditor General's report, and consider addressing, where appropriate, the opportunities they present at a provincial level.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



George Zegarac

c: Senior Business Officials
School Board Procurement Managers
Transportation Managers

Appendix A: Opportunities Related to the BPSPD and Confirmed to be Compliant

#	Opportunity
2	Develop strategies for route bundling that reflect opportunities offered by local markets
4	Under the auspices of the technical subcommittee of the Industry Committee (item 27 below), establish standardized requirements in terms of service, performance and capacity
5	Do not include operator cost structure as part of the evaluation
7	Implement a standing Independent Procurement Panel that could be a resource available to consortia to quickly address procurement issues that arise during and as a result of competitions, at least for the next procurement cycle
9	Align contract lengths to more closely reflect the allowable ages for the asset categories
20	Maintain clear distinctions between mandatory requirements, rated criteria, contract obligations, evidence and evaluations
21	Maintain clear distinctions between different categories of mandatory requirements
22	Disclose contract obligations clearly and transparently, and in the appropriate place
23	Articulate clear evaluation criteria directly linked to ability to perform the required service
24	Seek quantitative and objective evidence whenever possible
25	Where qualitative evidence is necessary, use a checklist method of evaluation
29	Establish an arbitration panel as a resource that consortia could employ to resolve arbitrations in a timely and efficient manner