

Dear Parents,

By now you will have received a message from the School Boards about the potential for a service disruption in September. Sharp Bus Lines is ready and willing to provide service in September and we wanted to let you know what we are doing to resolve the current situation.

The region's seven school bus operators have come together to form an association and we have been trying to negotiate with the School Boards since April. There is currently no contract in place for September, but our focus has been and continues to be on ensuring there is no disruption in service. We have asked that the School Boards engage in good faith negotiations with us over rates, contract term, and other issues. In particular, we have asked for a fair and consistent driver wage. The School Boards need to recognize the valuable services our drivers perform and set a wage rate consistent with what other School Boards are paying, both in southwestern Ontario and across the province.

The operators are not trying to impose terms on the School Boards. We are willing to open our books so the School Boards can see the true cost of providing service, and then have a good faith negotiation on that basis. If those negotiations are unsuccessful, the operators have suggested that both sides attend a mediation with a neutral third party and, ultimately, that the neutral third party be able to set a contract that is fair and reasonable for everyone. Several school boards and operator associations across the province have used this approach and it is fair to everyone.

We are ready and willing to be on the road in September. Our drivers are looking forward to seeing their students and we are continuing with our ordinary startup activities, including safety checks and dry runs. All we are asking is that a contract be put in place, or at least that there be a process for setting a contract down the road. We sincerely hope the School Boards will agree to this, so that we can get back to what we do best – making sure students get to and from school safely and on time, every day.

Regards,

Sharp Bus Lines Limited