



DSTS

Durham Student Transportation Services



Annual Report

2021-2022

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CAO and Governance Committee Update

The 2021-2022 Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) Annual Report highlights DSTS' successes and ongoing initiatives as it continually strives to fulfill its mandate and improve the level of service to all transported students in Durham Region. DSTS continues to focus on providing safe and customer-service-oriented services to and from school every day.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, DSTS' top priority remained focused on the safety of students, staff, and bus drivers creating a transportation environment focused on reducing the spread of COVID. DSTS continued to work closely with our member School Boards, Durham Regional Public Health, Bus Operators, and the Ministry of Education to mitigate health risks associated with COVID.

A few highlights from our 2021-2022 school year include:

- Routing and Technology continued to be a priority through the implementation of a Bus Planner Software update enhancing the efficiency in optimizing school bus routes.
- Ongoing enhancements to DSTS' IT platforms including upgraded telecommunication systems.
- Updated COVID transportation response plan that included secondary school bell time changes to accommodate an online/in-person transition if required.
- Ongoing initiatives to support staff training and development in a virtual workplace setting.
- Introduction of a virtual first-time rider program teaching younger children about the danger zones of the bus and how to ride the school bus safely.
- Continued emphasis on school bus safety including enhanced safety reviews of school bus stop locations including roadway conditions and assessments throughout the region.

Governance Committee Members

Chair of the Board, DDSB

Chair of the Board, DCDSB

Director of Education, DDSB

Director of Education, DCDSB

Mission Statement

The Durham Student Transportation Services is committed to supporting the education of students by providing safe, equitable, effective, and efficient transportation to its Member Boards.

Vision Statement

DSTS, with its partners, will enhance each student's school day by providing safe and customer service-oriented services to and from school every day.

2021-2022 Highlights

Route/Operator Statistics

DSTS has contract services with four bus operator companies. A total of 501 routes were contracted to the following bus operators:

- Century Transportation Ltd.
- Durhamway Bus Lines Inc.
- First Student Canada
- Stock Transportation Ltd.

Start-Up Communication

DSTS understands that today's stakeholders require many different communication options in order to stay informed of School Bus information for their students. DSTS offers the following communication tools to our schools and family community:

- Interactive Voice Relay System for both inbound and outbound communications.
- DSTS Website has undergone multiple improvements and integrations with our transportation routing solution. Parents can log in using student info to view transportation data.
- Subscription services for Route delays. Parents can choose to receive email notifications when their student's route is running late. Over 16,551 parents have taken advantage of this service to date.
- Twitter, all delays and cancelations are posted to our Twitter feed. DSTS currently has almost 6,200 followers and growing.

Student Safety Programs

Student Safety is a paramount priority for DSTS. In 2021-2022 DSTS provided the following safety programs in a virtual format.

- First Time Rider Program- Buzzy the Bee
- The Safe Rider Program – Buster the Bus (Grades JK-3)
- The Rider Role Model Program (Grades 4-8)
- School Bus Evacuation Program (Available to all schools/grades)

The safety of transported students is the highest priority for DSTS. In all aspects of school bus service, from route planning and design through daily operations, safety is always the first consideration. As an extension of the classroom, students play a large role in contributing to the safety of the bus. The same conduct expected by the school is also expected by the bus driver.



COVID Preparations for School Re-Opening

During the 2021-2022 school year, the Province of Ontario continued to make decisions on school re-opening and health and safety measures required by school boards and transportation consortia. In response, DSTS continuously planned and altered routes and operations to address all requirements.

DSTS with its' bus operators and bus drivers implemented all Durham Regional Public Health, School Board, and Ministry of Education pandemic mandates including- Personal protective equipment for all staff, vehicle cleaning requirements, bus capacity parameters, seating plans, and health and safety measures for students and bus drivers while on board the vehicle.

DSTS' route planning involved a full overhaul of all routes to address many of the pandemic mandates applied to school bus transportation.



Rationale of Distance Measurement used by DSTS

Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) uses Durham Regional digital maps that are imported into our routing software “Bus Planner”. Distances are calculated through our routing software based on the walking properties set to each individual regional road segment. Walkability is managed by DSTS staff using geographic knowledge of the areas and database information obtained from the Region. The database shows all the sidewalks and pedestrian walkways within the Region. DSTS consistently reviews areas to ensure walkability and distance calculations are accurate. Accurate distance measurements are key to ensuring our walk policy is applied in a fair and consistent manner for all schools of the Durham District and Durham Catholic School Board students. In order to ensure consistency in distance measurement DSTS utilizes one measurement obtained from “Bus Planner”.



Request to Review Bus Stop Location

DSTS is responsible for selecting bus stop locations within the service area in accordance with the walk-to-stop distance procedures. DSTS is not responsible for providing door-to-door transportation. Whenever possible, community collector stops are used.

DSTS maintains an average walk-to-stop distance of 400 meters to a maximum walk-to-stop distance of 800 meters where possible. The distance is calculated on DSTS geometrics software between the place of residence and the bus stop based on the shortest distance on a road network and may include municipal walkways.

Generally, school bus stops will not be located in areas such as cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets. DSTS does not enter private property and roads, such as long rural driveways, gated communities, and townhouse/apartment complexes.

DSTS reserves the right to determine if the roadway is suitable for travel, given road conditions and necessary space requirements factoring in the turning radius of large school vehicles. Parents may request a review of bus stop location through the DSTS website at www.dsts.on.ca

Request to Reconsider Transportation Arrangements

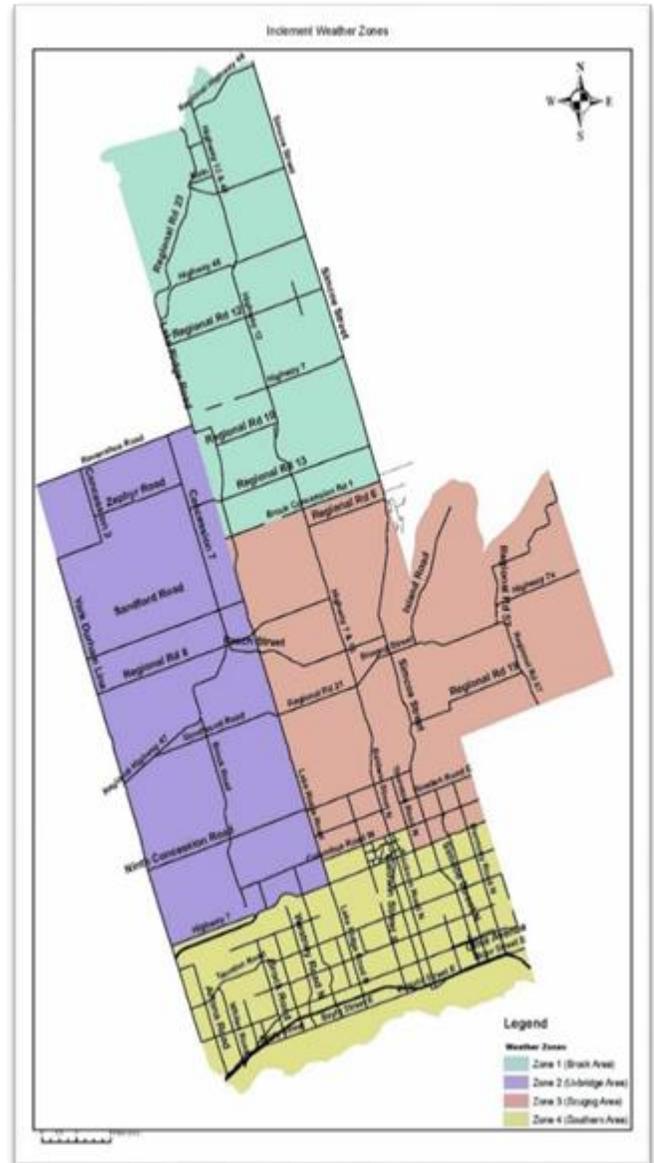
Parents or guardians who may disagree with an application of the Transportation Policy can request a reconsideration of transportation arrangements. The process by which to file a request for reconsideration is outlined on the Durham Student Transportation Services website at www.dsts.on.ca.

Requests for reconsideration must be made in writing by a parent or guardian directed to the Chief Administrative Officer of DSTS. The request should include a detailed description of the situation and/or events. If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response from the Chief Administrative Officer, he or she may request reconsideration of the decision in writing to the Administrative Committee of DSTS.

The Administrative Committee is responsible for ensuring that the school board-approved transportation policy is applied correctly and consistently for all families.

School Bus Weather Zones

For transportation purposes, the Durham Region has been divided into four zones outlined in the illustrated map. Depending on the location and type of weather occurrence, transportation may be cancelled for a specific zone. Any weather-related bus cancellations are announced in the early morning hours to local radio and TV stations. All cancellation information is also posted to the DSTS and School Board websites.

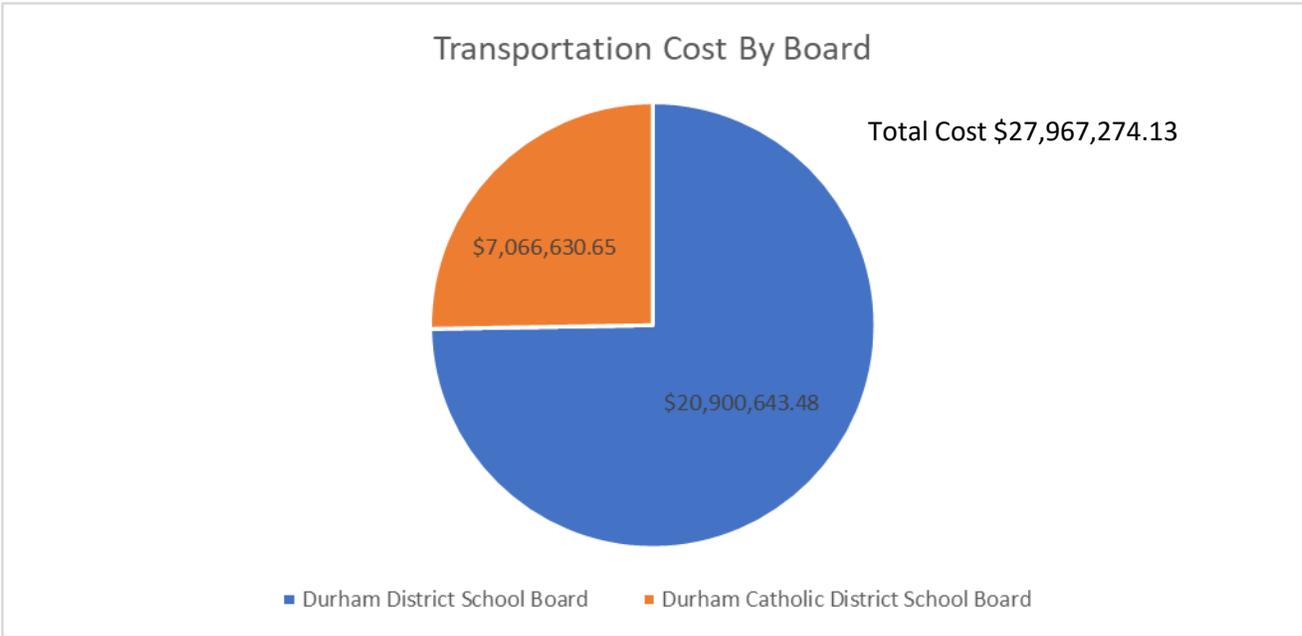


Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Transportation KPI's contained within the report are based on data exported as of March month-end from the DSTS student transportation routing software Bus Planner. Student data is provided to DSTS through regular downloads from each board's student information system, PowerSchool.

Transportation Costs by Board

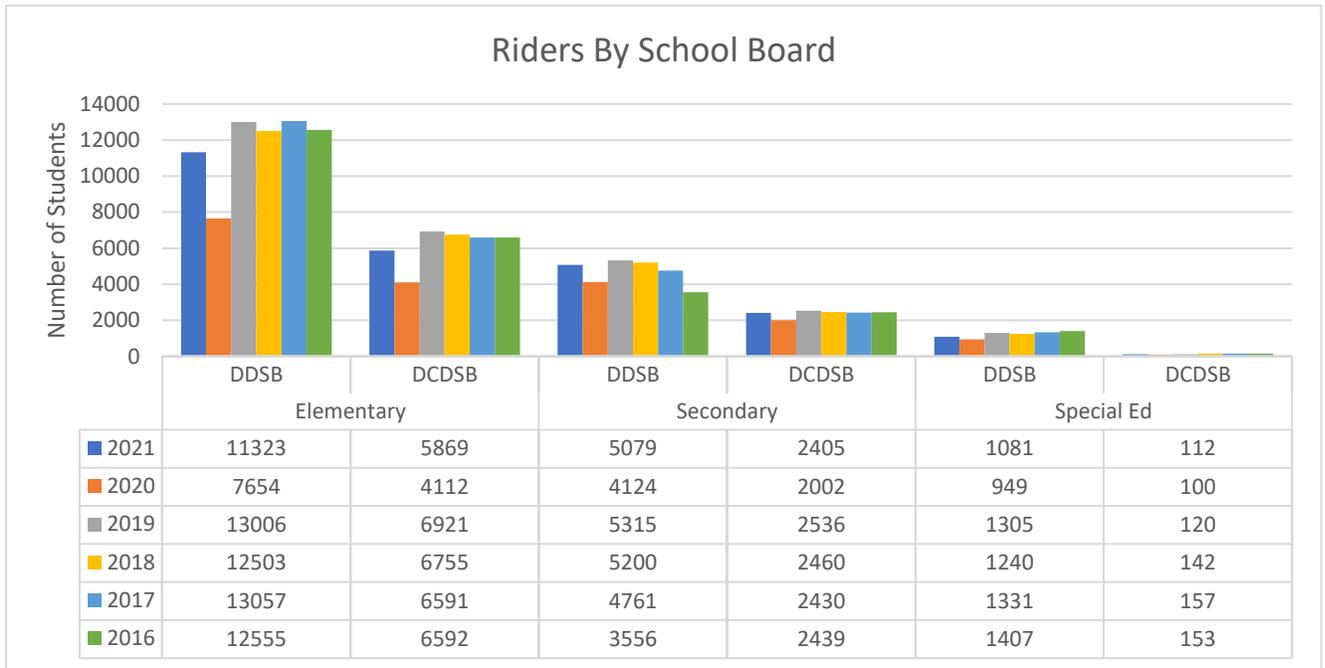
The chart below outlines the 2021-2022 transportation costs by member board:



**Transportation costs only, administration costs are excluded.*

Transported Students by Board

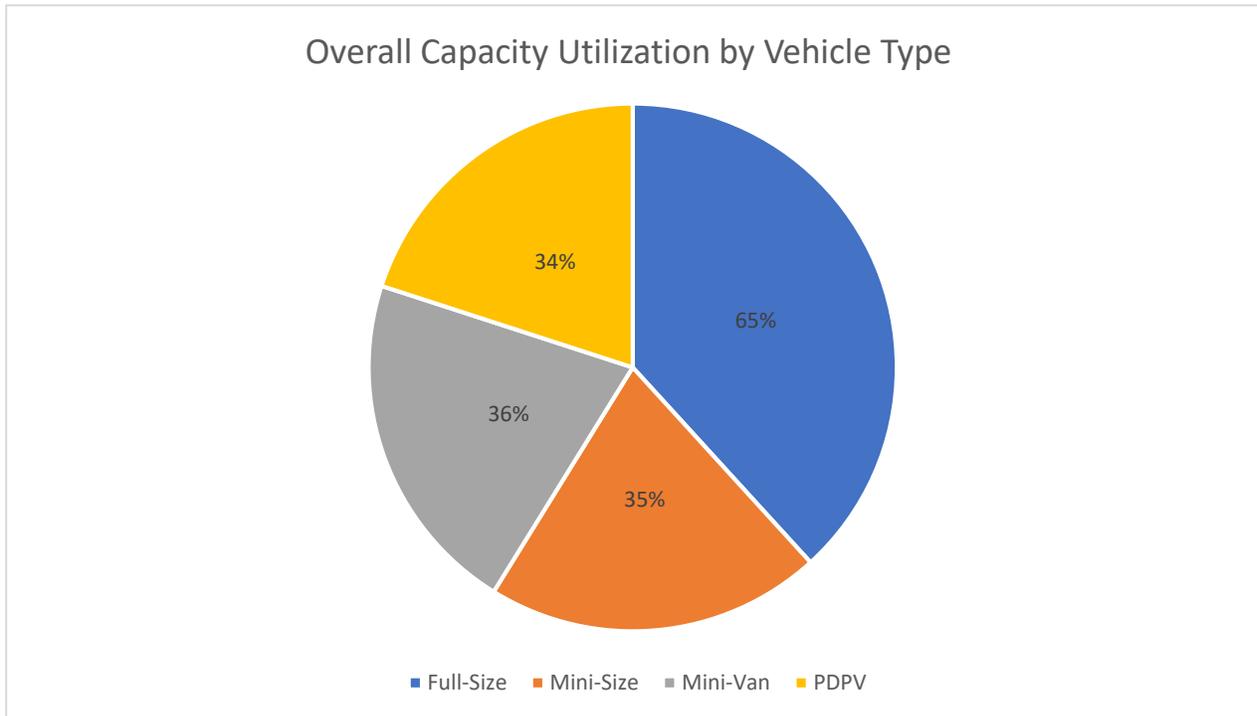
In the 2021-2022 school year, DSTS transported a total of 25,869 students. The chart below outlines the number of students transported by member board by panel.



Vehicle Utilization

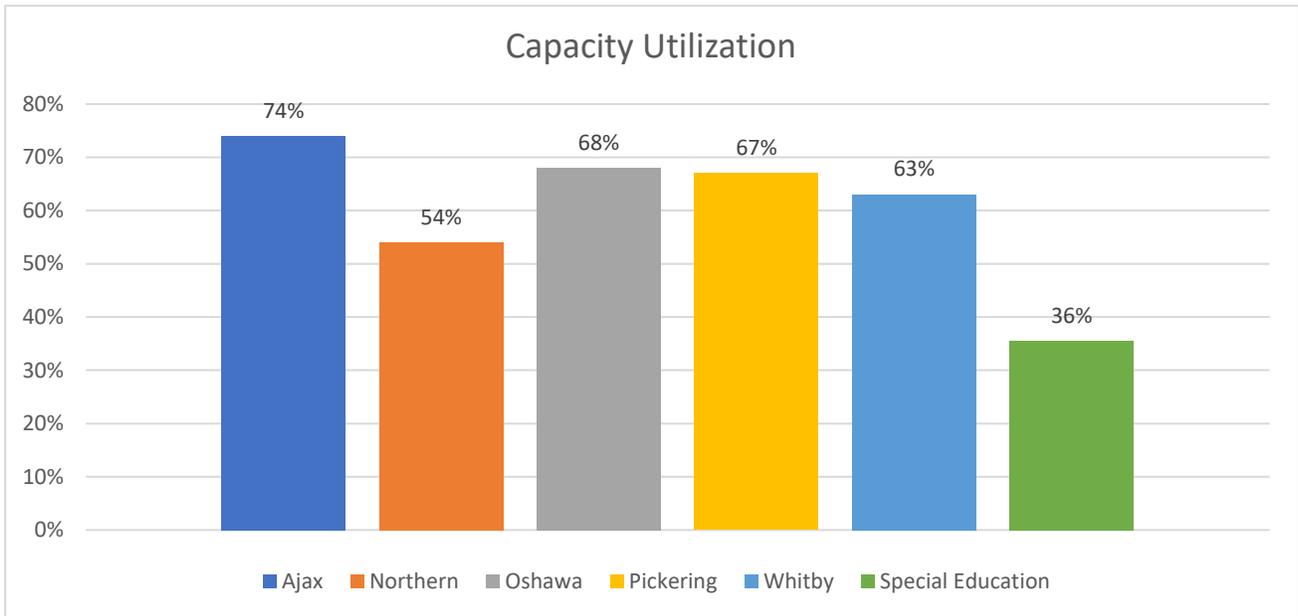
The vehicle utilization percentage indicates how efficiently each vehicle type is used. The calculation is based on the vehicle capacity divided by riders, total routes, and vehicle types. Below is a graph that illustrates the capacity utilization by the entire route taking an average load of all the tiers on a given bus throughout the day and dividing it by the total capacity of the vehicle. Smaller vehicles including the 18 passenger, 6 passenger, and wheelchair accessible provide service predominately for students with special needs and/or accommodation requirements. Given the specialized nature of this type of transportation, utilization rates are usually lower due to the distance travelled to the program and/or the needs of the students.

The following graph outlines the capacity ratio by all vehicle types:



*Due to COVID, the 2021/2022 school year is an exception where standard routing practices were not possible.

The next graph shows the breakdown by the municipality for students:

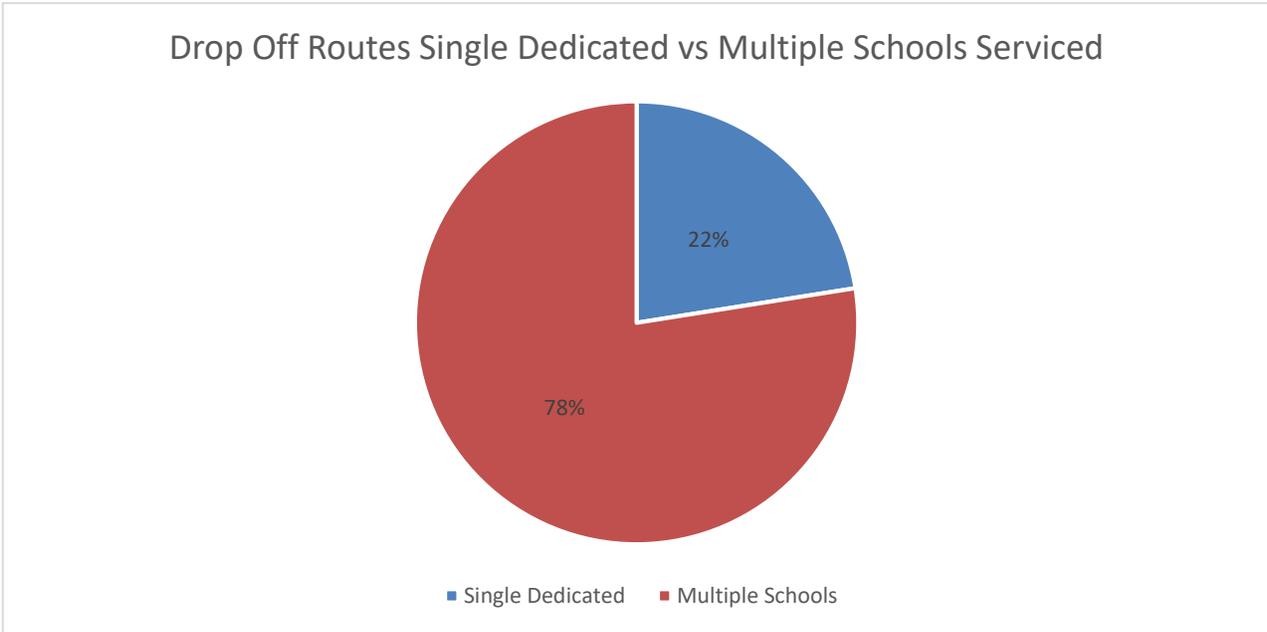
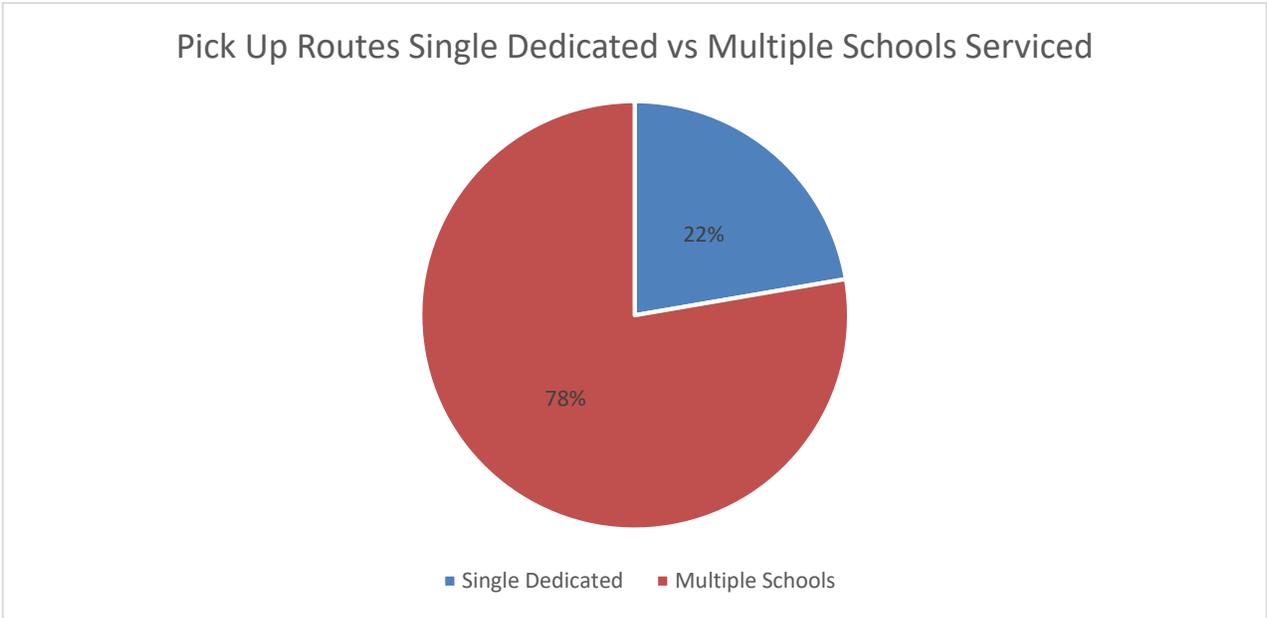


*Utilization for special education is lower due to the distance travelled and the specialized needs of students.



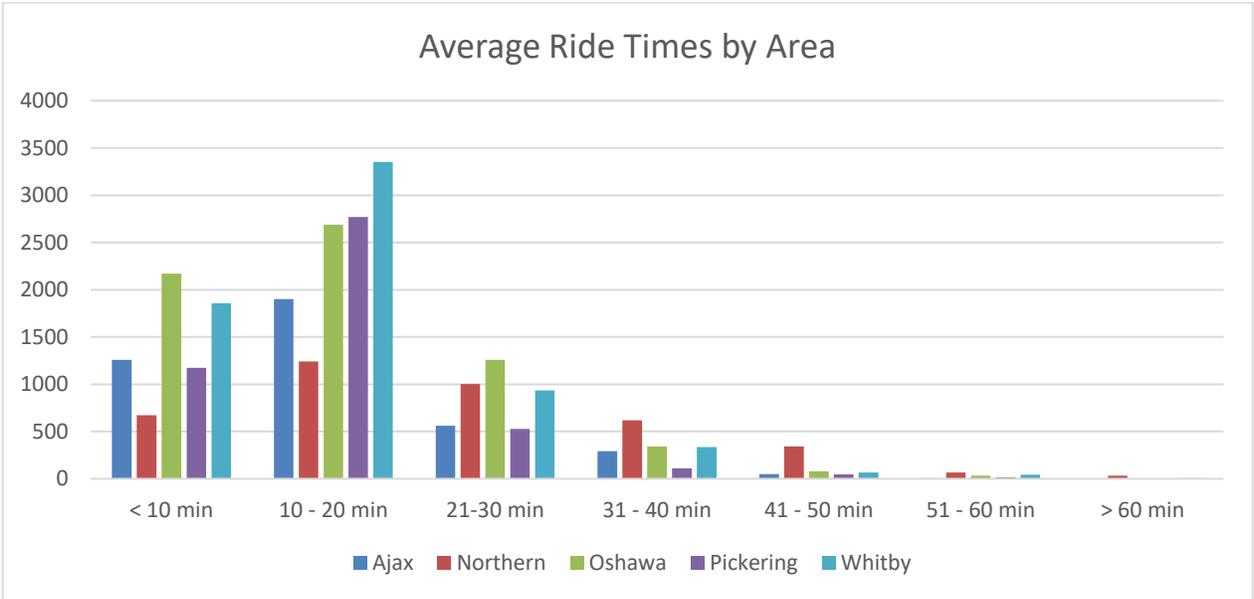
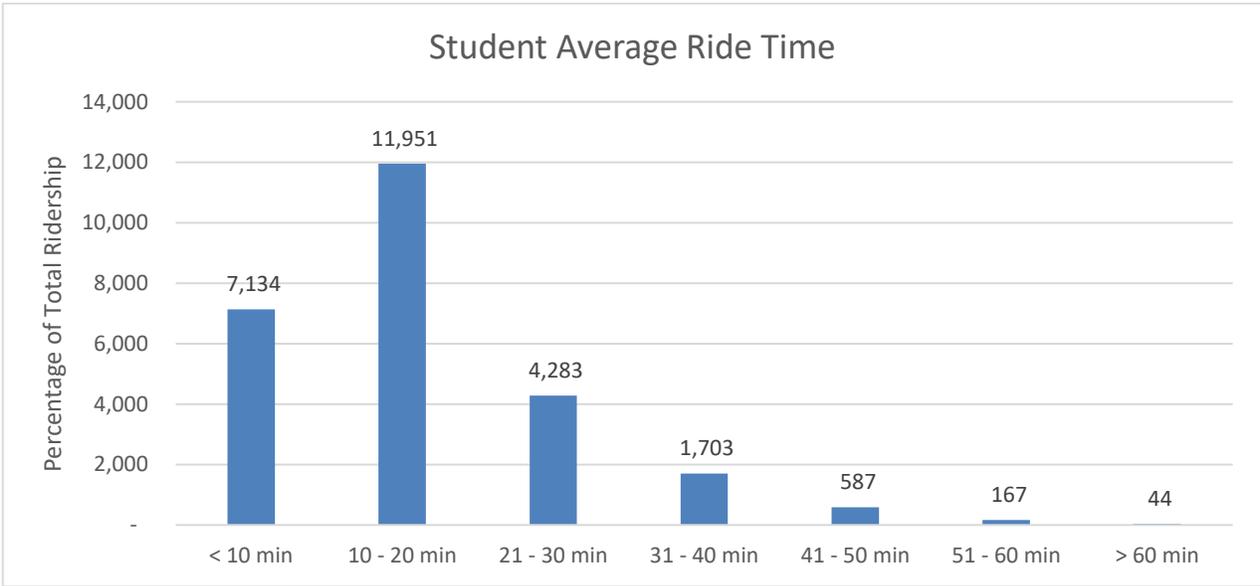
Route Sharing and Vehicle Tiering

Tiering and route sharing are approaches taken to maximize the usage of a vehicle by sending a vehicle out on multiple runs or sharing the vehicle for multiple school locations. The following graphs illustrate the percentage of tiered or shared routes.



Average Ride Time

DSTS operates under a maximum one-way ride time of 60 minutes wherever possible. Below is a breakdown of the average ride time for DSTS students. Most of the students ride for less than thirty (30) minutes, many of the longer rides are due to the location of the program from the residential address. Ride times for most students during the 21/22 school year were shorter due to reduced COVID-related capacity on all vehicles.





Durham Student Transportation Services



Contact DSTS:

24-Hour Automated Info Line:

1-866-908-6578 or 905-666-6979

Office Line:

905-666-6395

Follow us on Twitter @DurhamSTS

