

Procedure Title	Specialized Equipment – Safety Equipment for Transportation		
Date of Issue	March 9, 2016	Related Policy	BP 6802
Revision Dates	March 2, 2022	Related Forms	AF 6925; AF 6926; AF 6927; AF 6930
Review Date		Originator	Administrative Council
References			
AP 6915-D “Specialized Equipment – Hearing and Central Auditory Processing Disorder; AP 6916-D “Specialized Equipment – Technology; AP 6914-D “Specialized Equipment – Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech-Language Pathology, and Vision”; TCP-B006 “Car Seats and Restraints”; Ontario Highway Traffic Act; Canadian Motor Vehicle and Safety Standards (CMVSS) Regulations 213.3 and 213.5			

1.0 RATIONALE

- 1.1 On behalf of Bluewater District School Board, the Student Transportation Services Consortium of Grey-Bruce provides home-to-school busing for all eligible students of the board.
- 1.2 The use of seat belts and car seats is regulated by the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, Section 106(8). Bluewater District School Board supports the use of car seats and harnesses where their use will increase the safety of all students being transported on the vehicle.

2.0 PROCEDURE

- 2.1 If it is identified by school staff, parents/guardians, transportation staff, and/or other agency staff that specialized equipment is required to support safe transportation, it must be determined whether the need is due to a physical limitation or due to a cognitive/developmental impairment:
 - a) If the equipment is required due to a physical need (e.g., tone, posture, specific physical medical condition, etc.) a referral should be made to the appropriate professional (e.g., physiotherapist, occupational therapist, physician/nurse practitioner) to evaluate the student’s need and determine if equipment is essential. Harnesses may be available in the Learning Services Trial Cupboard to support this evaluation and can be requested by the appropriate therapist if required. If there is a need for a site visit to review the equipment on the vehicle, the school team will work with the transportation provider to determine how this can be arranged.
 - b) If the equipment is required due to cognitive or other developmental limitations (e.g. Autism Spectrum) that would present a safety risk, the principal will initiate a school-based action plan for the student. The transportation provider may be involved in this planning process. School staff would be expected to share a “Strategies for a Successful Day” document with the transportation provider. Consultation may also occur with Learning Services staff (e.g., system special education lead teacher). If equipment is essential for safety, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to consult with an appropriate health care provider (e.g., family physician, pediatrician, nurse practitioner) to acquire a note/prescription indicating equipment is essential. Administrative form AF 6930 “Specialized Equipment for Transportation – Information for Health Care Providers” will be completed by school staff and given to parent(s)/guardian(s) for their health care provider. This form will give the healthcare provider the information necessary (e.g., type of vehicle the student will be accessing) to write the required prescription, which must include the child’s height and weight.

Trial equipment may be available in the Learning Services Trial Cupboard to support evaluation of the effectiveness of the equipment and can be requested if required.

2.2 Types of Equipment that will be Considered to Support Transportation

- a) If a student is on a school bus or other vehicle without seat belts, the first choice of equipment will be a harness that meets the federal standards for governing alternative harnesses.
- b) If a student is on a taxi or public vehicle equipped with seat belts, then the following may be recommended depending on the student-specific need: a booster seat, rear or forwarding facing car seat, a harness, or a buckle guard.
- c) The procurement of a booster seat or a rear or forward-facing car seat will be coordinated between the school and parent/guardian. Specialized equipment will not cover the cost of car seats or booster seats.

2.3 Process to Request Equipment to Support Transportation

If a recommendation is made that equipment is essential, school staff should follow the steps listed in procedure AP 6914-D “Specialized Equipment – Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech-Language Pathology, and Vision” to complete a claim. Items that are approved for central funding will be ordered and shipped to the school. School staff will provide the equipment to the transportation provider, who will arrange for installation.

2.4 Maintenance and Inspection of Equipment used to Support Transportation

Semi-annual inspection of the equipment for safety and size will be completed by the transportation provider, who will report to the school if there are any issues. Annually, school staff should review the student's needs to determine if the student still requires the equipment for safe transportation.

APPENDIX A: SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSPORTATION FLOW CHART

