



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

Ontario Public School Boards' Association
439 University Avenue, 18th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 1Y8
Tel: (416) 340-2540
Fax: (416) 340-7571
webmaster@opsba.org
www.opsba.org

Cathy Abraham
President

W.R. (Rusty) Hick
Executive Director

May 26, 2020

Ministry of Transportation - Road Safety Policy Office, Safety Policy and Education Branch
SPEB@ontario.ca

Re: *Proposed amendments to Ontario's Highway Traffic Act to develop a regulatory framework that would allow for evidence from a school bus camera to be introduced in court without the need for a witness.*

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) has provided past [commentary](#) and support for the use of school bus cameras to target drivers who drive past school buses with their stop-arms out (equipped with a camera) and drivers who are speeding near schools.

We are also supportive of allowing school bus camera footage as evidence to be presented in courts without requiring school bus drivers to appear as witnesses. Our members feel that this could potentially be difficult for many drivers to accommodate for many reasons, including the location of the actual hearing, the length of time the legal process may take and the requirement for bus drivers to schedule an absence. A substitute driver would also have to be found. This does not, in any way, mean that the evidence is not important or valid, but that the presence of the school bus driver is not required. We would like clarification as to whether any written statement to authentic the footage would be required.

The safety of our students, staff and community is paramount and school bus drivers contribute to this by ensuring and following high safety standards. We believe the recent changes of using automated speed enforcement (photo radar) in school zones and the use of school bus cameras further supports a commitment to safety.

We would also support new and increased signage, public service announcements and other measures to increase transparency and inform the public about these changes that ultimately are to deter illegal school bus passing incidents and keep people safe.

Sincerely,

Cathy Abraham

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association represents English public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA is seen as the credible voice of public education in Ontario and is routinely called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions.