Deloitte.

Ministry of Education Effectiveness & Efficiency Review

Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium

Phase 3 Review

November 2009

Final Report

Table of Contents

The English version is the official version of this report. In the situation where there are differences between the English and French versions of this report, the English version prevails.

À noter que la version anglaise est la version officielle du présent rapport. En cas de divergences entre les versions anglaise et française du rapport, la version anglaise l'emporte.

Executive Summary

This report details the findings and recommendations of an Effectiveness and Efficiency Review ("E&E Review") of the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium ("SCSTC" or "the Consortium") conducted by a review team selected by the Ministry of Education (hereafter the "Ministry"). The E&E Review evaluates four areas of performance – Consortium Management, Policies and Practices, Routing and Technology use and Contracting practices – to determine if current practices are reasonable and appropriate; to identify whether any best practices have been implemented; and to provide recommendations on areas of improvement. The evaluation of each area is then used to determine an overall rating for the Consortium that will be used by the Ministry to determine any in-year funding adjustments that may be provided.

While the Consortium is a separate legal entity, a number of the Consortium's administrative and managerial practices are still segregated by Member Board, and much of the decision making authority still rests with each respective Member Board management and governance. The Consortium's structure is therefore more akin to that of a joint transportation services department despite having a legal entity in place. The review of Consortium Management concludes that significant modifications are required to the Consortium's governance, organization, and management structures in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its overall operation. The most critical recommendation is the review of the efficiency of the Consortium's governance structure and an assessment of the delineation between, and delegation of, the Consortium's operational and governance responsibilities. This will then lay the groundwork for the effective implementation of other recommendations relating to the Consortium's human resources, planning, reporting and financial practices.

It is evident that the Consortium has invested a considerable amount of time and effort in the development of its Policies and Procedures, all of which will be incorporated into Administrative and Operations manuals. The Administrative and Operations manuals should be finalized in order to ensure that the desired levels of service are clearly established, understood and delivered. The Consortium should also complete the development of policies and/or procedures related to hazard transportation and reconcile potential inconsistencies and inaccuracies associated with the time lag between entry in *eSIS* and download onto *Edulog*.

The analysis of Routing and Technology indicates that, as evidenced by student ride times, a high level of service is being provided to all students served by the Consortium. A highly functional technology infrastructure and reporting scheme has also been established. Recommendations include an evaluation of the current transportation approval process and additional improvements in the use of technology, such as improved integration with the student database, the development of a separate Consortium website and a review of the bell time structure. By focusing on these recommendations, the Consortium will be able to provide a higher level of service through more effective routing and technology use.

The Consortium is recognized for the implementation of appropriate safety and service compliance procedures, although modifications to this process are recommended. In addition, significant changes are required in order to increase the clarity and effectiveness of the Consortium's Contracting practices. These include:

- The immediate execution of bus operator contracts for the 2009-10 school year and continued efforts to ensure that future contracts are in place before the commencement of the school year;

- Modifications to the non-monetary terms of the Consortium's bus operator contract as well as a change to the bus operator compensation formula;

- A transformation of the operator procurement process - including the development of plans for the implementation of competitive procurement processes; and

- The implementation of robust operator performance monitoring processes.

As a result of this review of current performance, the Consortium has been rated **Moderate-Low**. Based on this evaluation, the transportation funding gap for both the Simcoe County District School Board ("SCDSB") and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board ("SMCDSB") for 2009-10 school year will be narrowed. The detailed calculations of disbursements are outlined in section 7 of this report and summarized below.

Simcoe County District School Board	Nil
Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board	$7,873

(Numbers will be finalized once regulatory approval has been obtained)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Funding for student transportation in Ontario

The Ministry provides funding to Ontario's 72 School Boards for student transportation. Under Section 190 of the *Education Act* (Act), School Boards "may" provide transportation for pupils. If a School Board decides to provide transportation for pupils, the Ministry will provide funding to enable the School Boards to deliver the service. Although the Act does not require School Boards to provide transportation service, all School Boards in Ontario provide service to eligible elementary students and most provide service to eligible secondary students. It is a School Board's responsibility to develop and maintain its own transportation policies, including safety provisions.

In 1998-1999, a new education funding model was introduced in the Province of Ontario outlining a comprehensive approach to funding School Boards. However, a decision was made to hold funding for student transportation steady, on an interim basis, while the Ministry worked to develop and implement a new approach. From 1998-1999 to 2008-2009, an increase of over $247 million in funding has been provided to address increasing costs for student transportation, such as fuel price increases, despite a general decline in student enrolment.

1.1.2 Transportation reform

In 2006-07, the government began implementing reforms for student transportation. The objectives of the reforms are to build capacity to deliver safe, effective, and efficient student transportation services, achieve an equitable approach to funding, and reduce the administrative burden of delivering transportation, thus allowing School Boards to focus on student learning and achievement.

The reforms include a requirement for consortium delivery of student transportation services, effectiveness and efficiency reviews of transportation Consortia, and a study of the benchmark cost for a school bus incorporating standards for safe vehicles and trained drivers.

1.1.3 The formation of school transportation consortia

Ontario's 72 School Boards operate within four independent systems:

- English public;

- English separate;

- French public; and

- French separate.

As a result, a geographic area of the province can have as many as four coterminous School Boards (i.e. Boards that have overlapping geographic areas) operating schools and their respective transportation systems. Opportunities exist for coterminous School Boards to form consortia and therefore deliver transportation for two or more coterminous School Boards in a given region. The Ministry believes in the benefits of consortia as a viable business model to realize efficiencies. This belief was endorsed by the Education Improvement Commission in 2000 and has been proven by established consortia sites in the province. Currently, the majority of School Boards cooperate to some degree in delivering transportation services. Cooperation between School Boards occurs in various ways, including:

- One School Board purchasing transportation service from another in all or part of its jurisdiction;

- Two or more coterminous School Boards sharing transportation services on some or all of their routes; and

- Creation of a consortium to plan and deliver transportation service to students of all partner School Boards.

Approximately 99% of student transportation service in Ontario is provided through contracts between School Boards or transportation consortia and private transportation operators. The remaining 1% of service is provided using Board-owned vehicles to complement services acquired through contracted private transportation operators.

1.1.4   Effectiveness and Efficiency Review

According to the Ministry Consortium guidelines, once a consortium has met the requirements outlined in memorandum SB: 13, dated July 11, 2006, it will be eligible for an E&E review. This review will be conducted by the E&E Review Team who will assist the Ministry in evaluating Consortium Management, Policies and Practices, Routing and Technology, and Contracts. These reviews will identify best practices and opportunities for improvement, and provide valuable information that can be used to inform future funding decisions. The Ministry has established a multi-phase approach to review the performance of consortia (collectively the "E&E Reviews") across the province.

1.1.5   The E&E Review Team

To ensure that these reviews are conducted in an objective manner, the Ministry has formed a review team (see Figure 1) to perform the E&E Reviews. The E&E Review Team was designed to leverage the expertise of industry professionals and management consultants to evaluate specific aspects of each Consortium site. Management consultants were engaged to complete assessments on Consortium Management, and Contracts. Routing consultants were engaged to focus specifically on the acquisition, implementation, and use of routing software and related technologies and on policies and practices.

Figure 1: E&E Review Team
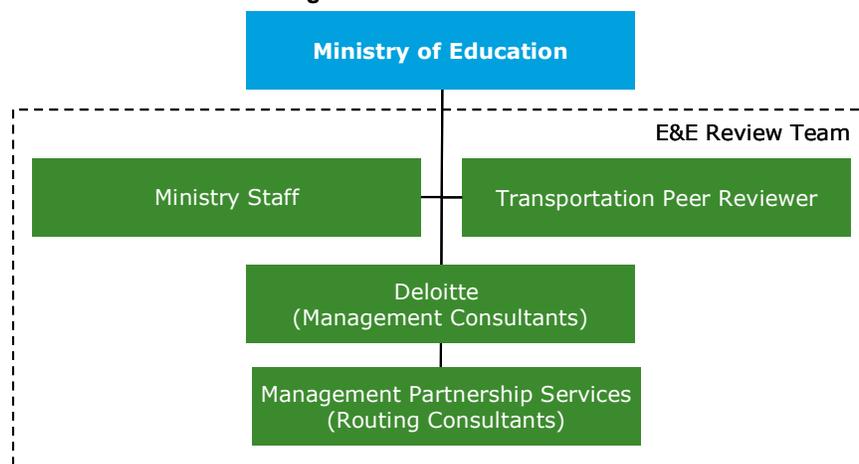
1.2   Scope of Deloitte Engagement

Deloitte was engaged to lead the Team and serve as the management consultants on the E&E Review Team. Deloitte's overall role is as follows:

- Lead the planning and execution of E&E Reviews for each of the 18 transportation consortia to be reviewed in Phases three and four (currently in phase 3C);

- At the beginning of each E&E Review, convene and moderate E&E Review Team planning meetings to determine data required and availability prior to the review;

- Review consortium arrangement, governance structures and contracting procedures;

- Incorporate the results of the routing and technology and policies and practices reviews completed by MPS into the final report; and

- Prepare a report for each consortium that has been subject to an E&E Review in Phases three and four. The target audience for the report will be the Ministry, the Consortium, and its Member School Boards. Once finalized, each report will be released to the Consortium and its Member School Boards.

1.3 Methodology Used to Complete E&E Review

The methodology for the E&E Review is based on the six step approach presented in Figure 2 and elaborated below:

Figure 2: E&E Review Methodology
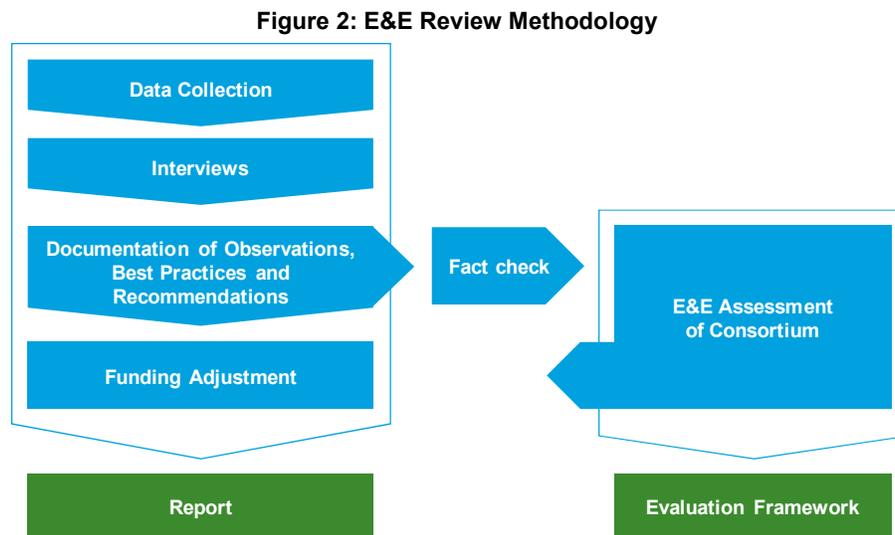
A site review report that documents the observations, assessments and recommendations is produced at the end of a site review. The Evaluation Framework has been developed to provide consistency and details on how the Assessment Guide was applied to reach an Overall Rating of each site.

1.3.1 Step 1 – Data collection

Each Consortium under review is provided with the E&E Guide from the Ministry of Education. This guide provides details on the information and data the E&E Review Team requires the Consortium to collect, organize and provide.

Data is collected in four main areas:

1. Consortium Management;

2. Policies and Practices;

3. Routing and Technology; and

4. Contracts.

1.3.2 Step 2 – Interviews

The E&E Review Team identifies key Consortium staff, outside stakeholders and key policy makers with whom interviews are conducted to further understand the operations and key issues impacting a Consortium's delivery of effective and efficient student transportation services.

1.3.3 Step 3 – Documentation of observations, Best Practices and Recommendations

Based on data collected and interviews conducted, the E&E Review Team documents their findings under three key areas:

•   Observations that involve fact based findings of the review, including current practices and policies;

•   Best Practices used by the Consortium under each area; and

- Recommendations for improvements based on the Assessment Guide. Figure 3 below provides a summary of the key criteria used in the Assessment Guide to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of each Consortium.

Figure 3: Criteria for an Effective and Efficient Consortium

Consortium management	Policies and Practices	Routing and Technology	Contracts
• Distinct entity focused on providing student transportation services for the partner boards • Well defined governance and organizational structure with clear roles and responsibilities • Oversight body exists with the mandate to provide strategic directions to the Consortium management on the provision of safe, effective and efficient transportation service to support student learning • Management has communicated clear goals and objectives of the Consortium and these are reflected in the operational plan • The Consortium takes a comprehensive approach to managing human resources • Well established accountability framework reflected in the set up and operation of the Consortium including documentation of terms in a Consortium Agreement • Operations are regularly monitored and performance continually improved • Financial processes ensure accountability and transparency to Partner Boards • A budgeting process is in place ensuring timely preparation and monitoring of expenses • All of the Consortium's key business relationships are defined and documented in contracts • Governance committee focuses only on high level decisions • Organizational structure is efficient and utilizes staff appropriately • Streamlined financial and business processes • Cost sharing mechanism is well defined and implemented	• Safety programs are established for all students using age appropriate training tools • Development of policies is based on well defined parameters dictates by the strategic goals of the governance structure and Consortium management operating plans • A mechanism is defined to allow for regular review and consideration of policy and practice changes to address environmental changes • Established procedures allow for regular feedback on the impact that current and proposed policy and procedures changes would have on costs and service levels • Regular monitoring and evaluation of policy expectations is conducted to ensure their continued relevancy and service impacts • Enforcement procedures are well defined, regularly executed, and follow up occurs in a timely manner • Harmonized transportation policies incorporate both operational and cost considerations • Authority is delegated to the lowest reasonable position in the organization to ensure efficiency of decision making • Operational alternatives to traditional practices are considered and implemented where reasonable and appropriate • Service levels are well defined, considerate of local conditions, and understood by all participating stakeholders • Policy and practice modifications for students with special needs are considered in terms of both the exceptionality and its service and cost impacts	• Transportation management software has been implemented and integrated into the operational environment • Key underlying data sets (e.g., student and map data) are regularly updated • Responsibility and accountability for the updates is clearly defined and performance is regularly reviewed • Coding structures are established to facilitate scenario modeling and operational analysis of designated subgroups of students, runs, schools, etc. • Procedures are in place to use software functionality to regularly evaluate operational performance and model alternatives to traditional practices • Disaster recovery plans and back up procedures are established, performed regularly, and tested • Operational performance is regularly monitored through KPI and reporting tools are used to distribute results to appropriate parties • Technology tools are used to reduce or eliminate manual production and distribution activities where possible in order to increase productivity • Training programs are established in order to increase proficiency with existing tools • Route planning activities utilize system functionality within the defined plan established by Consortium management	• Contracts exist for all service providers, including taxi, boat and/or municipal transit services providers and parent drivers • Contracts are structured to ensure accountability and transparency between contracted parties • All operator contracts are complete with respect to recommended clauses • Compensation formulae are clear and appropriately compensate operators for costs incurred • Operator contracts are in place prior to the start of the school year • Procurement processes are conducted in line with the Consortium's procurement policies and operator procurement calendar • The Consortium has laid the groundwork for, or is actively using, competitive procurement processes • Proactive efforts are made to ensure operator contract and legal compliance • The Consortium collects and verifies information required from operators in contracts • The Consortium actively monitors and follows up on operator on-the-road performance using random, documented route audits or their equivalent • The Consortium avoids using school board owned vehicles

1.3.4 Step 4 and 5 – E&E assessment of consortium and site report

The Assessment Guide was developed to enable the E&E Review Team to provide each Consortium that undergoes an E&E Review with a consistent, fair, and transparent method of assessment. The Assessment Guide is broken down along the four main components of review (i.e. Consortium Management, Policies and Practices, Routing and Technology, and Contracts) and, for each, illustrates what constitutes a specific level of effectiveness and efficiency (refer to Figure 4 for diagram of process).

Figure 4: Assessment of Consortium - Ratings Analysis and Assignment
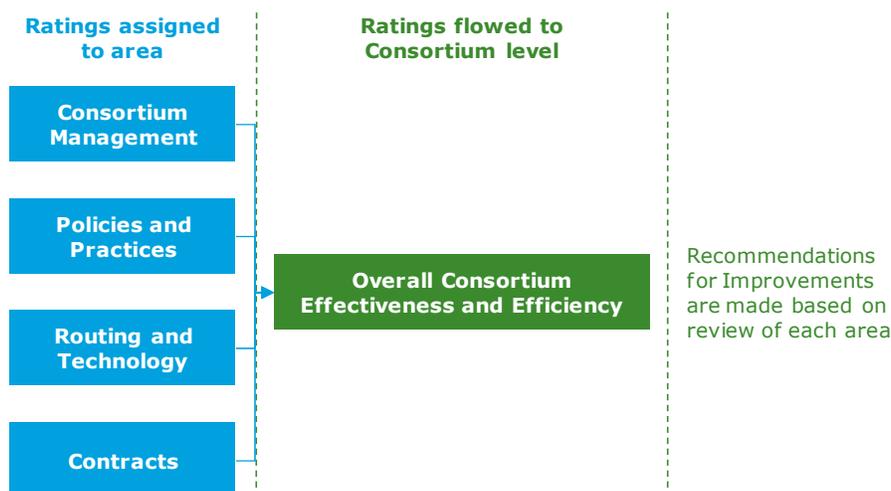
The Evaluation Framework provides details on how the Assessment Guide is to be applied, including the use of the Evaluation Work Sheets, to arrive at the final Overall Rating. The E&E Review Team then compiles all findings and recommendations into an E&E Review Report (i.e. this document).

1.3.5   Funding adjustment

The Ministry will use the results of the E&E Reviews and the cost benchmark study to inform any future funding adjustments. Only School Boards that have undergone E&E Reviews are eligible for a funding adjustment. Table 1 below illustrates how the Overall Rating will affect a Board's transportation expenditure-allocation gap.

Table 1: Funding Adjustment Formula

Overall Rating	Effect on deficit Boards[1]	Effect on surplus Boards[1]
High	Reduce the gap by 100% (i.e. eliminate the gap)	No in-year funding impact; out-year changes are to be determined
Moderate-High	Reduce the gap by 90%	Same as above
Moderate	Reduce the gap by 60%	Same as above
Moderate-Low	Reduce the gap by 30%	Same as above
Low	Reduce the gap by 0%	Same as above

The Ministry has announced, through memorandum 2009:B2 dated March 27, 2009, that effective from the 2009-10 school year, in addition to the funding adjustments made based on the overall E&E rating, for any consortium not achieving a high rating in Routing and Technology, a negative adjustment of one percent to a Board's transportation allocation will be made to recognize potential efficiencies through ongoing routing optimization and technology use. To acknowledge sites whose systems are already operating in an efficient manner, the adjustment will only apply to School Boards that have not achieved a "high" rating in Routing and Technology from the Effectiveness and Efficiency reviews. School Boards that achieve a "high" rating in the Routing and Technology area in future reviews will be exempt from the reduction in the subsequent year.

1.3.6   Purpose of report

This Report serves as the deliverable for the E&E Review conducted on the Consortium by the E&E Review Team during the week of November 9, 2009.

1.3.7   Material relied upon

Refer to Appendix 3 for a list of documents that the E&E Review Team relied upon for their review. These documents were used in conjunction with interviews with key Consortium staff, outside stakeholders, and key policy makers to arrive at the assessment and rating of the Consortium.

1.3.8   Limitations on the use of this report

The purpose of this Report is to document the results of the E&E Review of the Consortium. The E&E Review is not of the nature or scope so as to constitute an audit made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Therefore, as part of this E&E Review, Deloitte has not expressed an opinion on any financial statements, elements, or accounts to be referred to when reporting any findings to the Ministry. Additionally, procedures used by the E&E Review Team are not intended to disclose defalcations, system deficiencies, or other irregularities.

---

[1] This refers to Boards that have a deficit/surplus on student transportation (see Section 7 – Funding Adjustments)

2   Consortium Overview

2.1   Consortium Overview

The SCSTC provides transportation services for the Simcoe County District School Board ("SCDSB") and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board ("SMCDSB"). Transportation services are also purchased from the Consortium by the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. The Consortium provides transportation services to approximately 33,600 elementary and secondary students using 699 vehicles covering more than 88,000 kilometres each day. The service area covers approximately 4,920 square kilometres and covers Simcoe County as well as areas in Muskoka, Georgian Bay, Parry Sound and a number of municipalities surrounding Simcoe County. Transportation services are provided to 158 elementary and secondary schools, primarily using bus operators with a small number of students being transported using parent drivers.

The SCDSB and SMCDSB share a history of cooperation with respect to student transportation – the Consortium was first incorporated as a separate legal entity in 2002. While the Consortium is a legally separate entity, the structure of its operations do not currently reflect those of an independent student transportation organization and are more akin to that of a joint transportation services department.

The geographic area covered by the Consortium is predominately rural with a few urban and suburban areas. The service area stretches from Tiny Township in the north to Highway 9 in the south and from Collingwood in the west to Gambridge in the east.

Table 2 and Table 3 below provide a summary of key statistics and financial data of each Member Board:

Table 2: 2008-09 Transportation Survey Data[2]

	SCDSB	SMCDSB	Total Consortium
Number of schools served	108	52	160
Total general transported students	**21,896**	**10,977**	**32,873**
Total special needs[3] transported students	594	184	778
Total wheelchair accessible transportation	81	47	128
Total specialized program[4] transportation	140	-	140
Total courtesy riders	35	16	51
Total hazard riders	-	-	-
Total public transit riders	-	-	-
Total students transported daily	**22,746**	**11,224**	**33,969**
Total contracted full and mid-sized buses[5]	340	167	507
Total contracted mini buses	28	22	50
Total contracted school purpose vehicles[6]	76	26	102
Total contracted PDPV	26	17	43
Total contracted taxis	-	-	-
Total number of contracted vehicles	**469**	**232**	**701**

Table 3: 2008-09 Financial Data

	SCDSB	SMCDSB
Allocation	19,366,172	12,143,254
Net expenditures	18,292,665	12,176,060
Transportation surplus (deficit)	1,073,507	(32,806)
Percentage of transportation expenses allocated to the Consortium	100%	80%

---

[2] Data reported in this section of the report may be inconsistent with data presented in other sections due to the different timing of data collection

[3] Includes students requiring special transportation such as congregated and integrated special education students who require dedicated routes and/or vehicles; students who must ride alone; students who require an attendant on the vehicle

[4] Includes students transported to French Immersion, magnet and gifted programs, students with special needs who are transported to specialized programs are captured as special needs transported students.

[5] Includes full-sized buses, mid-sized buses, full-sized buses adapted for wheelchair use and mid-sized buses adapted for wheelchair use; all vehicle counts are rounded to the nearest whole number.

[6] Includes school-purposed vans, mini-vans, and sedans.

3 Consortium Management

3.1 Introduction

Consortium Management encompasses the management of the entire organization providing student transportation services. The analysis stems from a review of the four key components of Consortium Management:

- Governance;

- Organizational Structure;

- Consortium Management; and

- Financial Management.

Each component has been analyzed based on information provided by the Consortium, and from information collected during interviews. The analysis included an assessment of areas requiring improvement that were informed by a set of known best practices identified during previous E&E Reviews. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component. The E&E assessment of Consortium Management for the Consortium is as follows:

| Consortium Management – E&E Rating:	Low

3.2 Governance

Governance refers to the way in which an organization is directed and controlled. Establishing administrative structures and processes that facilitate, monitor, measure and improve effective business management are primary responsibilities of a governance structure. Three key principles for an effective governance structure are: accountability, transparency, and the recognition of stakeholders. In order to respect these three principles, it is important that the governance body of the organization be independent of the team responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization.

3.2.1 Observations

3.2.1.1 Governance structure

A governance structure for the Consortium is clearly defined in the Consortium Plan Submission to the Ministry (dated May 2007; "Consortium Plan"), the Consortium Membership Agreement, and By Law Number 1 - Relating Generally to the Conduct of the Affairs of the Consortium ("Bylaws"). However, discussions with Consortium management and members of the Consortium's governance committees indicated that the structure outlined in these documents only partially reflects the Consortium's actual governance structure. Illustrated below is the governance structure as noted by the E&E Review Team:

Figure 5: Consortium governance structure
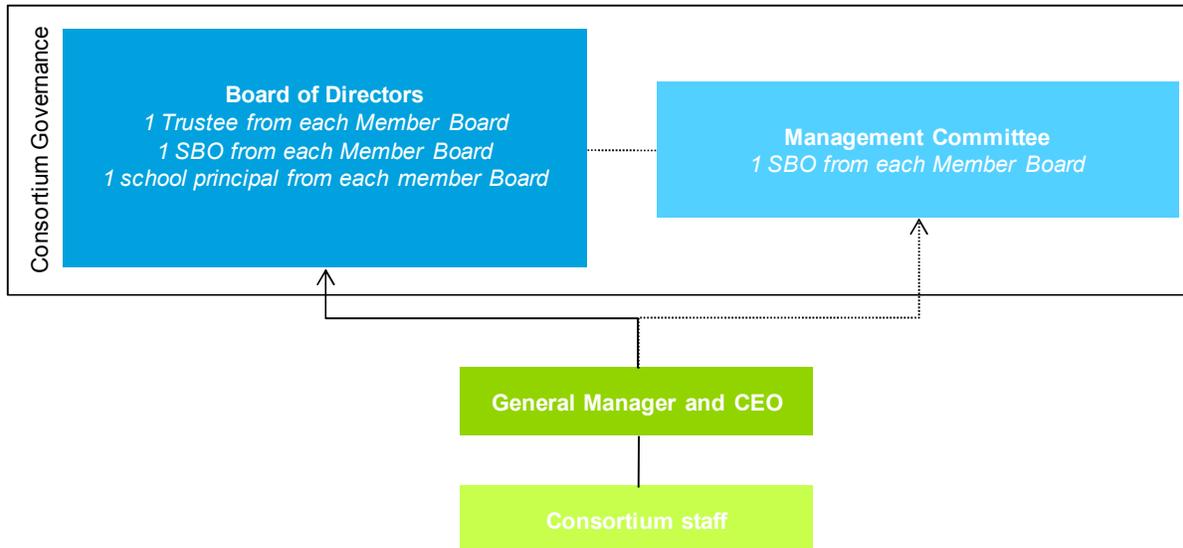
Explanatory note: Dotted lines indicate reporting structures that are currently undefined.

Consortium governance is comprised of a Board of Directors and a Management Committee. The Board of Directors is made up of six individuals – a Trustee, a Senior Business Official (SBO), and a school principal from each Member Board, with the Consortium's General Manager and CEO ("General Manager") reporting to the Board of Directors. A memorandum prepared by the General Manager outlines the legal powers and authorities of the Board of Directors as stated in the Consortium's Letters Patent and Bylaws. However, the roles identified are neither specific to the Consortium nor specific to a student transportation organization. Procedural rules related to the Board of Directors are also included in the Bylaws. Chairmanship rotates between the Member Boards on an annual basis. Discussions with members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that the governance structure is primarily responsible for approving budgets and policies.

Decisions are to be made by majority vote with each member holding one vote; however, discussions with members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that, in practice, decisions are usually made by consensus. Meetings of the Board of Directors are generally infrequent; the most recent meeting occurred in September 2009 and was preceded by a meeting in October 2008. There is currently no pre-established schedule of meetings and discussions with members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that this is primarily due to scheduling challenges. Minutes of these meetings are taken, signed and ratified.

Discussions with members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that the Management Committee was created primarily to aid in the development of the Consortium. It is currently deeply involved with decision making at the Consortium; however, there is currently no document that establishes the Management Committee and outlines its role, structure or the rules governing its meetings. There is also no schedule of meetings available for the Management Committee. Meeting minutes are currently not taken.

Eligibility appeals are managed by each Member Board's respective SBO. These appeals are first managed by the Transportation Officer responsible for the area and are then escalated to the Manager and General Manager prior to being sent to the appropriate SBO. Discussions with Consortium management and members of the Board of Directors indicated that the evaluation of eligibility appeals is not always consistent between the Member Boards and these inconsistencies can sometimes lead to inequities in the transportation service provided both between the two Member Boards and within each Member Board.

A clause related to the confidentiality of all information is currently included as part of the Membership Agreement.

3.2.1.2   Member Board level governance and arbitration clause

A Member Board level arbitration clause is provided in the Consortium's Bylaws. This states that disputes will first be escalated to a mutually agreed upon mediator and, failing agreement, will then be escalated to arbitration pursuant to the *Ontario Arbitration Act*.

3.2.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Structure of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has equal representation from each Member Board in terms of membership. Equal representation promotes fairness and equal participation in decision making and ensures the rights of each Member Board are considered equally. This is a key element in effective governance and management.

Dispute resolution

A Member Board level dispute clause is included in the Consortium's Bylaws. This is an effective mechanism to protect the rights of both Boards and ensures that decisions made represent the best interests of both Member Boards.

3.2.3   Recommendations

3.2.3.1   Document the Management Committee

Given that members of the Consortium's Board of Directors expect the Management Committee to play a critical role in the development of the Consortium, it is essential that the structure, role, responsibilities, and procedural elements of this committee's function be documented and approved by Member Boards. Such documentation will not only increase the clarity of decision making within the Consortium, it will also ensure that there is a clear delineation between the expected role of the Management Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Consortium. This documentation may be included as part of the Consortium Membership Agreement or Bylaws and should, at minimum, outline the following:

- The process and individuals involved with the selection of Management Committee members;

- The structure and composition of the Management Committee (consistent with best practices for consortium governance, the Management Committee should have equal representation from the Member Boards);

- The term of all individuals involved with the Management Committee;

- Decision making requirements (i.e. majority votes, consensus) and processes;

- Procedural aspects related to meetings (e.g., meetings should be scheduled in advance and should have formal agendas). Management Committee meetings should be formally documented using meeting minutes that are ratified and signed, with an 'original' copy stored with the Consortium;

- A dispute resolution process for Management Committee members; and

- The roles and responsibilities of the Management Committee and all individuals involved with it.

Additional detail regarding the documentation of roles and responsibilities is provided in the following recommendation.

3.2.3.2   Clarify and document the roles and responsibilities of the Consortium's governance structures

While the composition of the Board of Directors and some of the procedural elements related to its function are documented, there is currently no document that clearly outlines its roles and responsibilities. It is therefore recommended that the Consortium develop a Member Board-approved document that outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the Board of Directors and the Management Committee. The identified roles and responsibilities should:

- Ensure that there is no ambiguity with respect to the function of the Board of Directors and the Management Committee;

- Ensure that the Board of Directors and the Management Committee have sufficient decision making responsibility delegated to them in order to ensure comprehensive and efficient oversight; and

- Reflect a clear delineation between the oversight and strategic responsibilities of governance and the day-to-day activities of Consortium management. This distinction should also be reflected in the Consortium's practices.

3.2.3.3   Re-evaluate the Consortium's governance structure from an efficiency standpoint

In order to improve the efficiency of the Consortium's governance structure, it is recommended that both Member Boards work together to evaluate alternative governance structures that may provide for faster decision making for the Consortium without compromising effective oversight. In particular, Member Boards should discuss the delegation of decision making authority to the Consortium's governance structures and management, and the distinction between the types of items that need to be brought forward to the governance bodies for approval versus those that can be brought forward for information.

3.2.3.4   Document and formalize meetings of the Consortium's governance structures

There is currently no pre-established schedule of meetings for either the Board of Directors or the Management Committee. In addition, meetings of the Management Committee are currently not taken. It is therefore recommended that Consortium management work with members of its governance structures to establish a schedule of meetings and officially document decisions made at these meetings through signed and ratified meeting minutes.

3.3   Organizational structure

An optimized organizational structure can promote effective communication and coordination which will enable operations to run more efficiently. The roles and responsibilities within the organization should be well defined. This will lead to operational efficiencies by ensuring tasks are not being duplicated and issues raised can be addressed effectively by Consortium management. Ideally, the organization is divided functionally (by department and/or area); all core business functions are identified; and there is an appropriate allocation of general management and operational responsibility.

3.3.1   Observations

3.3.1.1   Entity Status

The Consortium was first incorporated as a separate legal entity in 2002 and attained Consortium plan approval from the Ministry in 2007. The Consortium's Membership Agreement was also signed in 2007.

While the Consortium is a separate legal entity, discussions with Consortium management and members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that the structure of its operations do not currently reflect those of an independent student transportation organization - a number of the Consortium's administrative and managerial practices are still segregated by Member Board, and much of the decision making authority still rests with Member Board management and governance. The Consortium's structure is therefore more akin to that of a joint transportation services department.

3.3.1.2   Consortium formation and agreement

The Consortium's Letters Patent, Membership Agreement and Bylaws constitute its founding documents. The following section describes the content of each of these documents.

Letters Patent

The Letters Patent, submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Government Services, establish the Consortium's status as a non-profit separate legal entity. The document describes the objectives of the organization and outlines specific provisions related to the Consortium's power to, among other things:

- Receive support from government organizations;

- Receive, hold and dispose of real property;

- Hire staff, issue checks, pay costs; and

- Co-operate, assist and make gifts or awards to other individuals, organizations, corporations and institutions.

Membership Agreement

The Membership Agreement (signed May 2007) establishes the relationship between the two Member Boards. It speaks to, among other things:

- The objectives of the Consortium, which are the same as those outlined in the Letters Patent;

- Consortium governance structures: the membership of the Board of Directors is defined; no additional information is provided;

- Services provided to the Consortium by each Member Board: the SMCDSB is to provide procurement and accounting services while the SCDSB provides IT services; no additional information is provided;

- Cost sharing: the Membership Agreement provided to the E&E Review references a cost sharing agreement but does not outline the formula to be used; and

- Other items related to the rights of Members, the term of the agreement, confidentiality, termination, and severability.

The Membership Agreement does not outline any insurance requirements or a dispute resolution process.

Consortium Bylaws

The Consortium bylaws provide additional detail with respect to the structure and operation of the Consortium. It outlines, among other things:

- Additional detail related to the structure, operational processes and membership requirements of the Board of Directors;

- Additional detail related to the membership of the Consortium; and

- Other terms related to dispute resolution; notices; execution of documents; banking arrangements; and borrowing.

3.3.1.3   Organization of entity

Consortium staff are currently employed by their respective Member Boards. While a secondment agreement is currently in place for SCDSB staff, these secondment agreements are between the individual staff members and their respective employer School Board. There is no secondment agreement in place between the Member Boards and the Consortium.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that while job descriptions for most staff positions are available, these job descriptions were developed by each Member Board and do not reflect current roles and responsibilities. Job descriptions provided to the E&E Review Team also show that the roles and responsibilities for the same staff positions are not consistent between the School Boards. These discussions also indicated that, in the opinion of Consortium management, the Consortium is currently right-sized. Confidentiality agreements have not been executed with all staff.

Outlined below is the organizational structure provided in the Consortium's Letters Patent:

Figure 6: Consortium organizational structure
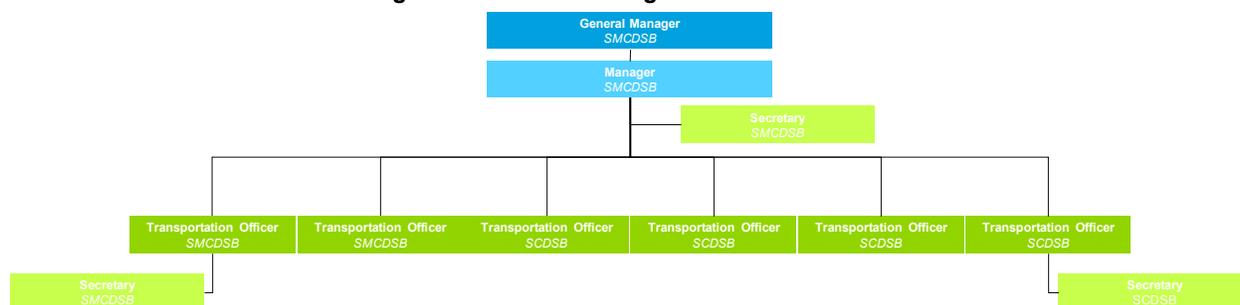
The Consortium is currently divided by function, with one Transportation Officer for each region served.

The position of General Manager and CEO is currently vacant and the Consortium's Manager has assumed some but not all of the responsibilities of this position in the interim. The General Manager is responsible for the Consortium's operations, financial management, and for managing the Consortium's relationship with each Member Board's HR department.

In order to manage temporary absences of the interim General Manager, the Consortium has developed a substitution document that identifies the Transportation Officer that is to assume leadership for the Consortium when the interim General Manager is not present. This document identifies the Transportation Officer in-charge, the date of the interim General Manager's absence, and the reason for the absence.

3.3.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Separate Legal Entity

Notwithstanding the recommendation below regarding the independence of the Consortium's operations, it is recognized that the Consortium has incorporated as a separate legal entity and is located in a different building from its Member Boards. As a separate legal entity, the Consortium can enter into binding legal contracts for all services purchased, and as such is limiting liability to the Consortium and, in turn, limiting liability to Member Boards.

Organization of Entity

The organizational structure reflects clear lines of reporting and the organization is divided functionally. This structure allows for increased specialization and encourages ownership of assigned tasks, thus increasing effectiveness and helping to create an appropriate system by which issues can be escalated to Consortium management.

3.3.3 Recommendations

3.3.3.1 Ensure the independence of Consortium operations from Member Boards

While the Consortium is incorporated as a separate legal entity and has all necessary incorporation documents in place, its governance and operations do not currently reflect those of an independent student transportation organization and are more akin to that of a joint transportation services department. As such, the Consortium is not realizing a number of the benefits of incorporation, including corporate continuity, planning, human resources and management benefits.

It is therefore recommended that the Member Boards work together to better define the governance, management and operational framework for the Consortium. In particular, this review should include a thorough review of the decision making authority delegated by Member Boards to the Consortium's governance bodies and management, as well as a review of the Consortium's HR, planning and management practices.

3.3.3.2 Include additional clauses in the Membership Agreement

It is recommended that the Consortium modify its Membership Agreement to include:

- A clause mandating the maintenance of adequate insurance. The Membership Agreement should require the Consortium to carry sufficient property and general liability insurance and should mandate a process for the regular review and assessment of insurance needs. This clause can be further supplemented with insurance related additions to the Consortium draft administration policies.

- A clause outlining a Member Board-level dispute resolution process. Such a clause will help to ensure that disputes between the Member Boards can be settled in a structured, mutually beneficial manner that protects the rights and interests of both Member Boards.

3.3.3.3 Create relevant, consistent job descriptions for all positions within the Consortium

Job descriptions provided to the E&E Review Team were developed by each Member Board and neither reflected actual operational responsibilities, nor the Consortium's actual organizational structure. The job descriptions were also not consistent between the two Member Boards. It is therefore recommended that the Consortium modify its job descriptions to reflect actual operational responsibilities and to facilitate the effective delegation of responsibilities within the Consortium. These modified job descriptions will then allow staff to efficiently execute on their daily duties and will also help to ensure a smooth transition in the event of staff turnover.

3.3.3.4 Sign secondment agreements with the Member Boards

Consortium staff are currently employed by their respective Member Boards and have been seconded to the Consortium. However, there is currently no secondment agreement in place that documents this relationship. Pending decisions on a longer term human resources plan, it is recommended that the Consortium sign appropriate secondment agreements with its Member Boards in order to document this critical relationship and in order to provide additional clarity with respect to the terms on which Consortium staff are being seconded to the Consortium.

3.3.3.5 Sign confidentiality agreements with Consortium staff

The Consortium should ask its staff to sign confidentiality agreements in order to protect the confidentiality of information to which they have access. This is particularly important given that Consortium staff have access to student information.

3.4 Consortium Management

Consortium Management focuses on the operational aspects of the organization. This includes ensuring accountability of staff, focusing on continual improvement through operational planning, and risk management by having appropriate contracts and agreements in place to clearly define business relationships.

3.4.1 Observations

3.4.1.1 Cost sharing

There is no documented, formally approved cost sharing agreement between the Member Boards. A cost sharing mechanism is referenced in the Consortium's Membership Agreement, but no specific formula is outlined in the document. A cost sharing formula for transportation costs is outlined in the Consortium's draft administration policies, however, these policies have yet to be formally ratified by the Consortium's Board of Directors.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that transportation costs are allocated directly for runs that are not shared between the Member Boards, and on a weighted ridership basis for runs that are shared. Administration costs, including wage costs, are split equally (i.e. 50/50), although cash outlays associated with wages are paid directly by Member Boards for their respective employees. The cash outlays are then reconciled at year end.

Cash outlays associated with non-wage administration costs are initially incurred by the SMCDSB, which also provides the Consortium with accounting services. In turn, the SCDSB provides a fixed monthly cash flow to the SMCDSB with a reconciliation taking place at year end.

For non-Member school boards that purchase services from the Consortium, discussions with Consortium management indicated that transportation costs are allocated on a per pupil per board basis. In addition, the draft administration policy document states that a four percent administration charge is to be levied in addition to the transportation costs.

3.4.1.2   Transportation service agreements

The Consortium does not currently have transportation service agreements in place that outlines the service-level expectations of Member Boards with respect to student transportation. There is also no document that outlines the service-level relationship between the Consortium and the Trillium Lakelands District School Board.

3.4.1.3   Purchase of service agreements/support services

Member Board Services

The Consortium purchases IT services from the SCDSB and purchases accounting and procurement services from the SMCDSB. While the provision of these services is documented in the Membership Agreement, there are currently no purchase of service agreements in place that document the service-level expectations of the Consortium.

Bus operator auditing services

The Consortium recently engaged a third-party consultant to conduct audits of its bus operators' administrative and contractual compliance. The third party was selected subsequent to a formal proposal and this relationship is documented through a purchase order for the Consultant initiated by the Consortium.

Edulog

The Consortium purchases services from *Edulog* for its transportation software; this relationship is documented in a standard license and maintenance agreement with the software vendor.

Other goods and services

The Consortium rents its office space; purchases snow removal services; and purchases security alarm system monitoring, response, surveillance and guard services. The purchase of these services is documented in executed contracts.

3.4.1.4   Procurement policies

The Consortium neither has its own procurement policies, nor is there any documentation stating that it has adopted the procurement policies of one of its Member Boards. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium generally follows the procurement policies of the SMCDSB, since that Member Board provides it with procurement services. However, these discussions also indicated that the Consortium follows the procurement policies of the SCDSB with respect to the procurement of IT equipment, since IT services are purchased from that Member Board.

3.4.1.5   Banking

Banking for the Consortium is provided through the SMCDSB, which also provides the Consortium with accounting services.

3.4.1.6   Insurance

The Consortium has purchased property insurance from the Ontario School Boards' Insurance Exchange (OSBIE); however, discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium does not currently have insurance for general liabilities, crime or errors and omissions. These discussions also indicated that reviews of the sufficiency of the Consortium's insurance coverage are not regularly conducted by either Consortium management or the Board of Directors.

3.4.1.7   Staff performance evaluation, training and management

Staff performance evaluations are currently not conducted at either the Consortium or School Board level. The Consortium also does not have any policies, procedures or plans associated with the provision of staff training. The Consortium's goals and objectives are communicated to staff through formal monthly staff meetings for which minutes are taken.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that staff training is provided on an informal, ad-hoc basis and consists primarily of *Edulog* webinars and in-person training sessions. In addition, the Transportation Officers hold weekly meetings in which routing and *Edulog* training is sometimes provided. The Consortium has a draft staff training policy that states that the provision of training is encouraged; however, this policy primarily addresses the process related to staff attendance at conferences. Training provided to Consortium staff is not tracked.

Transportation Officers within the Consortium are cross trained since every Transportation Officer is allocated as a back-up resource to the Transportation Officer responsible for another area. The Consortium is also in the process of documenting all of its operational practices in order to facilitate additional cross training.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that succession planning is done on an informal basis and that a formal succession plan is currently being developed.

3.4.1.8   Long term and short term planning

The Consortium does not have a long term or short term plan or planning process. Discussions with Consortium management and members of the Consortium's Board of Directors indicated that the Consortium had a long term plan in 2007. However, these discussions also indicated that this plan is yet to be formally adopted or implemented.

In order to facilitate the annual planning process, the Consortium has developed an annual planning calendar that outlines the key tasks to be conducted by the Consortium on a month-by-month basis. The Consortium's current planning calendar has not been harmonized between the two Member Boards. However, a draft harmonized planning calendar has been included as part of the Consortium's draft administrative policies, which are yet to be ratified by the Consortium's Board of Directors.

There is no strategy for managing transportation costs in areas experiencing declining student enrolment. Included in the draft administrative policies is the implementation of efficiency reports that are to be submitted to the Board of Directors for review. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that these efficiency reports are produced by each Consortium staff member to identify routing or procedural efficiencies in their areas. As outlined in the administrative policies, these reports are to be produced between February and May of each year. These efficiency reports therefore form part of the Consortium's overall cost containment efforts, along with an ongoing review of all routes to create efficiencies in response to both increases and decreases in enrolment.

3.4.1.9   Key performance (service) indicators (KPIs)

The Consortium does not currently have a process in place to assess its own performance using KPIs. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that this has been done on an infrequent, informal, basis in the past, and that the Consortium is currently in the process of moving forward with the development of a documented and Board of Directors-approved process to assess its own performance.

A policy on the use and tracking of KPIs has been included in the Consortium's draft administrative policies, which are yet to be approved by Consortium governance. This draft policy states the purpose of the reviews, outlines a timeline over which the reviews are to be conducted, and mandates that the General Manager report issues, options, proposals and recommendations to the Board of Directors. A template for these reports is also included.

The draft policy identifies the KPIs that are to be tracked by the Consortium. This list includes:

Table 4: Draft list of tracked KPIs

Key Performance Indicator			
Bell times	School site summary	Transfers	Vehicle stats summary
Kilometer summary	School sites	Vehicle capacity summary	
Max ride time	School supervision windows	Vehicle capacity by run	
Operator summary	Student AM counts	Vehicle run summary	
School site summary	Student AM count summary	Vehicle stats summary - Midday	

The draft policy does not state the thresholds for changes in these KPIs over which additional review and/or investigation is mandated. In addition, the above list of KPIs does not include measures of transportation safety or internal organizational performance.

3.4.1.10   Information management

The Consortium does not have a policy that governs the collection, storage, use, access, distribution and/or destruction of information and data. The Consortium also does not have a Board of Directors-approved process in place for the review of the Consortium's compliance with *Freedom of Information and Privacy* legislation.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that video cameras are currently utilized on some of the Consortium's busses. However, there are currently no policies or procedures in place that provide oversight or establish rules with respect to Operators' and Consortiums use of these cameras.

3.4.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Staff meeting minutes

Consortium management communicates its goals and objectives to staff at scheduled monthly staff meetings. Minutes of these staff meetings are taken, thus helping to clarify delegated responsibilities, enhancing performance measurement and communication with Consortium governance, and promoting a culture of teamwork and cohesion.

3.4.3   Recommendations

3.4.3.1   Document and ratify the Consortium's cost sharing agreement

While a cost sharing methodology is outlined in the Consortium's draft administration policies, these policies have yet to be formally ratified by the Consortium's Board of Directors. In addition, while a cost sharing formula is referenced in the Consortium's membership agreement, no formula is currently outlined. It is therefore recommended that the Consortium either:

- Develop and document an equitable methodology for the sharing of transportation, operational and administrative costs between the Member Boards and include this as part of the Membership Agreement; or

- Modify the cost sharing mechanism outlined in the draft administration policies to address administration charges to be levied on Member Boards. This policy should then be formally ratified by the Consortium's governance structures.

Creating such a document will help to ensure accountability over costs; clarity and predictability during the budgeting process, and will also mitigate the risk of future disagreements arising between Member Boards due to misunderstandings or miscommunication. The Membership Agreement will need to be modified regardless of which of the above options is chosen.

3.4.3.2   Execute transportation service agreements with all client school boards

Membership Agreements are primarily agreements between Member Boards that establish the Consortium; they are over-arching agreements that specify the terms and structure of the Member Boards' joint venture. Distinct from the Membership Agreement is the transportation service agreement, which articulates the service relationship between the Member Boards and the Consortium as a separate legal entity. In order to make the above distinction clearer, it is recommended that the Consortium develop and execute a joint transportation service agreement with the Member Boards. The transportation service agreement should include clauses that specify the scope of services to be provided, fees, insurance/liabilities, quality of service, dispute resolution and other terms that the Member Boards deem to be appropriate. A similar contract should also be signed between the Consortium and the Trillium Lakelands District School Board.

3.4.3.3   Execute purchase of service agreements with all Member Boards

While the services to be provided to the Consortium by Member Boards are stated in the Membership Agreement, there are currently no contracts between the Consortium and its Member Boards providing additional details on the services that the Member Boards provide to the Consortium. Therefore, services are obtained by the Consortium without terms, conditions (including costs), and service levels normally associated with such arrangements. It is recommended that all of the services which the Consortium receives from its Member Boards be established via agreements or contracts where the mutual interests of the Consortium and each Member Board are documented and agreed upon.

3.4.3.4   Sign a contract with the audit consultant

While a formal proposal and purchase order are available, the Consortium does not currently have a formal contract in place with the consultant hired to conduct bus operator administrative and contractual compliance audits. Without a contract in place, there is a higher risk that disputes could arise over misunderstandings. Formal agreements should be established for all services purchased to ensure that key elements such as scope of services provided, performance expectations, fees, insurance/liabilities, quality of service, dispute resolution and term are clearly articulated and agreed upon prior to the delivery of service. This is particularly important since the work of this service provider impacts the Consortium's relationship with its most critical service providers - bus operators.

3.4.3.5   Develop procurement policies for the Consortium

An effective procurement policy will identify the type of procurement method to be used for a given value, type and complexity of good or service being purchased. The Consortium should establish formal procurement policies or adopt the policies of one of its Member Boards once reviewed for appropriateness in transportation purchasing decisions, internal controls and work processes. Particular attention should be paid to the purchasing thresholds associated with the initiation of a competitive procurement process.

Formalizing these policies will ensure standardization in the procurement methods of the Consortium and will also act as an accountability mechanism by providing clarity to the Consortium and the Member Boards. It will also allow the Consortium to harmonize each Board's purchasing policies while ensuring that these policies are adapted to the particular needs of the Consortium.

3.4.3.6   Review the applicability and sufficiency of insurance coverage

Documents submitted to the E&E Review Team indicate that the Consortium carries property insurance but does not carry additional, separate insurance for general liabilities, crime or errors and omissions. While Member Boards are protected from potential liabilities by the insurance purchased at the Board level, this insurance may be neither applicable nor sufficient for student transportation services provided in conjunction with another School Board. It is therefore recommended that the Consortium investigate, with its insurance carrier, the applicability of, and need for, additional, separate insurance coverage for the Consortium.

3.4.3.7   Implement a documented, formal staff performance evaluation, monitoring and training process

It is recommended that the Consortium develop, document and implement a process for staff evaluation so as to ensure an alignment between staff performance and the Consortium's goals and objectives. Effective staff evaluation processes establish clear performance evaluation criteria for each position; they

should be conducted regularly and should be fully documented. When implemented effectively, performance evaluations can be a powerful tool to guide and encourage employees to keep the goals and objectives of the overall Consortium in mind during day to day operations.

Stemming from the above, the Consortium should also develop, document and implement clear staff training/learning initiatives and plans to promote continuous learning. Effective staff training initiatives will help to develop skills and will ensure that staff are able to fully utilize available technological aids. All training provided (including cross-training) should be documented and tracked over time.

3.4.3.8   Develop a succession planning document

It is recommended that the Consortium develop a formal succession plan to ensure the continued smooth operation of the Consortium should key personnel leave or be absent from the Consortium.

3.4.3.9   Develop a formal, documented long term and short term planning process

It is recommended that the Consortium develop a process through which it can define its long term and short term goals and priorities. The goals and the process used to develop these goals should be specific, clear, documented, and governance approved. Developing such as document will help to inspire a culture of continuous, proactive self-improvement within the Consortium.

Additional detail regarding how the Consortium's goals are to be achieved should be included in an operational plan that highlights the specific tasks required to be implemented, with associated timelines, and the delegation of responsibility for these tasks. The development of such a process and document will allow the Consortium to measure its performance against tangible steps and will also allow it to allocate resources effectively to meet Consortium objectives.

The process used to develop the Consortium's long term and short term objectives should also include a documented procedure to monitor and report on progress against the Consortium's strategic goals and objectives at regular intervals.

3.4.3.10   Develop a strategy for declining enrolment

School enrolment across rural Ontario has been in steady decline for nearly a decade. Given that the Consortium predominantly serves rural areas, and given the Ministry's recent notice that transportation funding is to be reduced in line with declining enrolment, it is recommended that the Consortium incorporate a strategy for the management of transportation costs into its long term planning process. In particular, this strategy should focus on: the financial impact declining enrolment is expected to have on the Consortium; and on appropriate mitigation strategies. Developing such a strategy will provide the Consortium with a framework that will help it address not only the issue of funding, it will also signal a proactive approach to dealing with issues before they arise – a key element of effective long-term Consortium management.

3.4.3.11   Modify and ratify the KPI monitoring draft administration policy

It is recommended that the Consortium modify and then formally adopt the draft administration policy regarding the use and monitoring of KPIs. The policy should be modified to identify:

- Additional KPIs related to related to the Consortium's safety, internal and transportation performance. Examples of such KPIs could include:

  – Eligible Unassigned Student Lists;

  – Student Map Match Rates;

  – Calls per week; and

  – Average cost per student.

  The list of KPIs to be monitored should be consistent and kept to a manageable number in order to facilitate regular tracking and long-term trend analysis;

- The frequency with which the KPIs will be analyzed and reported; and

- Quantitative thresholds for changes in KPIs above which further action will be taken and reported to Consortium's governance structures.

3.4.3.12 Develop policies and procedures related to the treatment of confidential information

The Consortium should develop appropriate documented policies, procedures and confidentiality agreements to govern the use of confidential information (such as student data and in-bus camera footage) in order to ensure compliance with freedom of information and privacy legislation. These policies and procedures should address all issues related to the collection, storage, use, access, distribution and destruction of information, and should also require the Consortium's governance bodies and Member Boards to review and reflect on freedom of information and privacy legislation requirement on a regular basis. The Consortium is further encouraged to review the findings and recommendations contained in the OASBO Guidelines for Sharing Personal Student Information with Transportation Consortia.

3.5 Financial Management

Sound financial management ensures the optimal use of public funds and also ensures the integrity and accuracy of financial information. This includes appropriate internal controls and a robust budgeting process that has a clearly defined planning and review calendar that promotes accountability and sound decision making.

Financial management policies capture roles and responsibilities, authorization levels, and reporting requirements to ensure that a proper internal financial control system is in place for the Consortium. These policies should also clearly define the financial processes of the Consortium in a way that ensures appropriate oversight without impinging on efficiency.

3.5.1 Observations

3.5.1.1 Budget planning and monitoring

The Consortium's annual budgeting process begins in mid-February in line with the budgeting process taking place at the Member Board level. The Consortium's annual budgeting process must be completed by the end of June. The process used to develop and track budgets is neither documented nor approved by the Consortium's Board of Directors.

Budgeting is done primarily by Consortium staff, with some support provided by the financial management areas of both Member Boards. Non-wage administrative costs are projected based on historical amounts, with each cost being split evenly between the two Member Boards. Cash outlays associated with wage costs are paid directly by each Member Board for each respective employee and are then split 50/50 during the year end reconciliation. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the budgeting process does not project the cost of administrative services purchased from Member Boards, such as IT, procurement and accounting.

Transportation costs are budgeted in mid-March using data produced by the General Manager and high-level guidance from each Member Board's SBO. The production of the transportation budgets also includes the development of 'what-if' scenarios for varying kilometer rates, base fee rates and time rates. The results of these scenarios are then used during negotiations with operators.

Budget to actual tracking is done on an informal basis by the General Manager and SBOs. A summary of expenditures are sent to the General Manager on a monthly basis by the SMCDSB accounting department; however, there is no formal sign-off or tracking of this process. Tracking is done primarily from a 'bottom-line' perspective, i.e. monitoring takes place for aggregate amounts, not individual cost/revenue items.

3.5.1.2 Accounting practices and management

Accounting for the Consortium takes place at the SMCDSB with input and approval from the Consortium. The Consortium's accounting policies and practices are not documented, although discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium follows the SMCDSB's accounting policies in practice.

Operator payments are currently made by the SMCDSB's accounting department, although costs are allocated on a Board-by-Board basis. Information sent by the operators on the October 31st deadline is corroborated with *Edulog* and past submissions and then inputted to a spreadsheet that includes all

components of the current operator compensation formula. Using this information, the Consortium calculates the amount to be paid to the operators on a Board-by-Board basis. These statements, once approved by the General Manager, are then sent to the SMCDSB accounting department for payment and are reconciled with the operators on the 5th of each month. Operators do not invoice the Consortium directly.

The Consortium does not have access to the SMCDSB's accounting system due to technical issues; although a separate chart of accounts has been set up for the Consortium within the system. Payments between the Member Board's take place on a monthly basis based on historical amounts, with reconciliations taking place in March and August of each year. Neither the SMCDSB nor the SCDSB directly charge the Consortium for the IT, procurement and accounting services they provide. However, these costs are reflected through fixed annual charges to the Consortium's general ledger (G/L).

Payments from non-Member service purchasing Boards do not differentiate between administration and transportation charges being incurred; these payments are therefore applied on a 'top line' basis to reduce the overall amount that must be paid for by the Member Boards.

Responsibility for approving entries to the Consortium's G/L rests with the Manager and interim General Manager, although there is currently no documentation stating that the Manager has signing authority for the Consortium.

A policy related to expenses is documented in the Consortium's draft administrative policies, which are yet to be approved by Consortium governance. This states that approvals for expenses are to be made by an individual's immediate supervisor or higher. This document also states that the General Manager's expenses are to be approved by the Management Committee, although discussions with Consortium management indicate that, in practice, this approval is usually provided by the Chair of the Consortium's Board.

3.5.1.3   Audit

Minutes from meetings of the Board of Directors indicate that the Consortium last reviewed its audit requirements in June 2008. These minutes indicate that the Consortium is audited through the services provided by the Member Boards; and that the Board of Directors does not believe that an additional audit of the Consortium's financial results is required.

3.5.2   Recommendations

3.5.2.1   Modify the annual budgeting and monitoring processes

It is recommended that the following modifications be made the Consortium's budgeting process:

- In line with the implementation of recommendation 3.4.3.3 regarding the execution of purchase of service agreements, it is recommended that the Consortium modify the budgeting process to include the projection of administration costs for services provided by Member Boards.

- The budgeting process for the Consortium should be documented and formally approved by the Consortium's governance structures. This process should also mandate the regular, documented review of budget-to-actual variances by the General Manager and the regular presentation of this analysis to the Consortium's governance structures.

3.5.2.2   Modify the operator payment process

Currently, the Consortium develops statements for bus operator payments that are then sent to the SMCDSB for payment. The Consortium does not receive invoices from bus operators. It is recommended that this process be modified to ensure that bus operators are submitting invoices to the Consortium for verification prior to them being sent to the Member Boards for payment.

3.5.2.3   Document the Consortium's financial management policies and practices

It is recommended that the accounting policies and procedures currently being used by the Consortium be formalized and documented. The documentation of these procedures is critical as it will help to ensure that appropriate checks are in place and that the financial stability of the Consortium will not be impacted due to employee turnover.

3.6   Results of E&E Review

This Consortium has been assessed as **Low.** The Consortium has established itself as a separate legal entity; however, significant modifications are required to the Consortium's governance, organization, and management structures in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its overall operation.

The most critical recommendation arising from the review of Consortium Management is the review of the efficiency of the Consortium's governance structure and an assessment of the delineation between, and delegation of, the Consortium's operational and governance responsibilities. This will then lay the groundwork for the effective implementation of other recommendations relating to the Consortium's HR, planning, reporting and financial practices.

4   Policies and Practices

4.1   Introduction

Policies and practices examine and evaluate the established policies, operational procedures, and the documented daily practices that determine the standards of student transportation services. The analysis for this area focused on the following three key areas:

- General Transportation Policies & Practices;

- Special Needs and Specialized Programs; and

- Safety and Training Programs.

The observations, findings, and recommendations found in this section of the report are based on onsite interviews with the Superintendent of Business and Area Transportation Officers, and on an analysis of presented documents, extracted data, and information available on the Consortium's website. Best practices, as established by the E&E process, provided the source of comparison for each of these key areas. The results were used to develop an E&E assessment for each of the key components and to determine the overall effectiveness of the Consortium's Policies and Practices as shown below:

Policies and Practices – E&E Rating:	Moderate

4.2   Transportation Policies & Practices

The goal of any transportation operation is to provide safe, effective and efficient services. For transportation consortia, it is equally important that service to each of the Member Boards is provided in a fair and equitable manner. To support this goal, it is essential that well defined policies, procedures, and daily practices are documented and supported. Well defined policies ensure that the levels of services to be provided are clearly established while documented procedures and consistent practices determine how services will actually be delivered within the constraints of each policy. To the degree that policies are harmonized, the consistent application of all policies, procedures, and practices ensures that service will be delivered safely and equitably to each of the Member Boards. This section examines and evaluates the policies, operational procedures, daily practices, and their impact on the delivery of effective and efficient transportation services.

4.2.1   Observations

4.2.1.1   General policy guidelines

Currently, the direction for planning and guidance for operational decisions is based on a combination of each of the Member Board's separate policy statements, approved common policies or procedures developed by the Consortium, and established common practices. The policy statement for SCDSB provides greater definition on typical service parameters such as walking distances, travel time, alternative stop arrangements, courtesy transportation, special needs eligibility, and student behaviour expectations. While the policy statement for SMCDSB is silent on many of the basic service parameters, it clearly defines the walking distances by grade level and that shared services with other school authorities will be actively pursued. Neither of these documents clearly define the conditions under which services may be provided for other types of transportation such as transportation eligibility based on the presence of hazardous conditions.

To ensure equitable service and a common understanding of services that can be provided and how they are to be delivered, the Consortium is in the process of compiling the various policy, process, and procedural documents into comprehensive and harmonized *Operations and Administrative Manuals*. In their current editions, these manuals consist of both formally adopted processes and not yet adopted current practices. As currently constructed, these manuals provide both the Consortium staff with the majority of the necessary parameters needed for both planning and operational decision making. Notable

exceptions include fully defining eligibility for hazardous conditions and policies specific to the provision of special needs transportation.

Furthermore, the Consortium reported that they are working on a draft to document service parameters that will further serve to ensure consistency in the support of effective and efficient service delivery.

4.2.1.2 Eligibility

As one of the fundamental planning parameters, determining and understanding the conditions under which any group of students are eligible for transportation is a key planning parameter that must be established and consistently applied to ensure that equitable, effective, and efficient service is provided.

Home to school distances and walk to stop distances are harmonized as shown in the following table:

Table 5: Eligibility Criteria

Distance to School	
Grades JK-8	Greater than 1.6 km
Grades 9-12	Greater than 3.2 km
Walk to Stop Distances	
Grades JK-8	0.8 km
Grades 9-12	1.6 km

It should be noted that the walk to stop distances notes above follow the current SCDSB policy. A joint Consortium developed policy was in draft and pending approval at the time of the review.

In addition to determining initial eligibility based on school attendance zones and walking distances, criteria for eligibility based on exceptions such as special needs transportation; hazard transportation; alternate address for day care and dual custody arrangements; and out of zone and out of boundary transportation must also be developed. The development of such criteria will help to ensure that any exceptions to the basic criteria for transportation are documented and consistently applied.

4.2.1.3 Special needs eligibility

While neither of the Member Board's separate policy statements expressly defines the eligibility criteria or the process for requesting transportation for special needs students, an approved process within the *Operations Manual* describes both the process for submitting a transportation request and the procedure for assigning the student to a run and route.

The identification and assignment of students is done using a hierarchal coding structure that provides for the extraction of data for special needs transportation. Examples of codes in use include Section 23 (23), autistic (AU), and students with behavioural (BE) issues. Special equipment or medical conditions are also identified including wheelchair (WC), booster seat (BS), and diabetes (DI). Once students are identified they are assigned to bus runs. The process clearly states that, where appropriate, both regular and special needs students may be fully integrated on both regular and special needs buses and that both runs and routes may be shared between the Member Boards. These mainstreaming efforts have the dual benefit of increasing operational efficiency and benefiting the educational experience of the child.

4.2.1.4 Hazard transportation criteria

Local hazardous conditions, whether they are due to the lack of a safe walking path or the crossing of natural or man-made obstacles (such as railroad tracks) create special situations that necessitate the transportation of students who would otherwise not meet the eligibility requirements. Similar to the process for the transportation of special needs students, the provision of services should be based on clearly established and understood criteria to ensure that each potential hazardous area is considered against documented parameters, ensuring consistency across the entire service area.

Currently, hazard transportation is planned under the *Geographic Circumstances* practice within the *Operations Manual*. Local conditions considered hazardous include roads where right side pickup or drop

offs are required, roads with unsafe walking paths, temporary conditions such as construction or flooding, intersection visibility, visibility due to hills or curves, and unprotected railroad crossings.

To further define the elements that constitute hazardous conditions, the Consortium has drafted a *Hazardous Eligibility* policy which expands the description of hazards to include traffic volume and speed zones, physical barriers, and crossings or intersections without the benefit of pedestrian crossing signals.

While interviews with Consortium staff indicate that there is a common understanding of "what" is considered to be a hazardous condition, the criteria are neither thoroughly documented nor are they fully integrated into *Edulog*, resulting in a reliance on the knowledge of areas by each of the Officers. Although the coding structure within the *Edulog* routing program allows for the identification of the specific reason that a student may be granted transportation based on the presence of hazardous conditions, only 22 of approximately 35,000 student records are coded with a hazardous designation. This is a clear indication that while transportation for hazardous conditions is being appropriately provided in the support of student safety, the identification of which students are actually receiving this service is inconsistent, resulting in the potential inaccurate reporting of this service offering.

4.2.1.5 Alternate addresses

For students attending schools outside of their attendance boundary, SCDSB's policy states that students may use existing routes to attend out of attendance schools provided there is sufficient space on the bus. As SMCDSB does not provide transportation to out of boundary students, cost for the service is born by SCDSB based on the head count of the students using the service. This is an appropriate method of allocating costs to ensure that each Board pays for the services that it receives. The Consortium has drafted a policy that reflects the current practice to ensure consistent application and understanding.

In addition to out of boundary students, there are other options available to students to be transported from an alternate address. Childcare and dual custody arrangements are allowed provided that there is consistency Monday through Friday, both pick-up and drop-off locations are within the student's attendance area, and that there is room on the bus using an established route.

4.2.1.6 Courtesy Transportation

For SCDSB students, courtesy transportation is allowed on commuter and special needs buses (providing they are on buses *not* shared with SMCDSB students). A commuter run is a short run that takes students from a designated collection point to a destination school in the morning and from that school to a designated collection point in the afternoon. As only a small number of students (approximately 28 for SCDSB) are coded with a "courtesy" designation, the review and consistent use of the coding structure will help to ensure that all students receiving this service are easily identified for both planning and cost allocation purposes.

The granting of courtesy transportation may be approved (by the school principal) on commuter buses provided that there is space on the bus and that there is no additional cost to the School Board. The SCDSB policy defines which groups of students are eligible for transportation and establishes a priority for those students as follows:

Table 6: Courtesy Criteria - SCDSB Courtesy Transportation

Eligible for Commuter Buses	Eligible for Special Education Buses
• Extended French Language students • Students attending designated specialized programs • Special Education Students	• Special Education Students
Courtesy for Commuter Buses: • OYAP/Alternative Education/Leap/Careers 2000 • Students who have moved mid-year • Siblings of eligible riders • Local considerations	**Courtesy for Special Education Buses:** • EFSL Students • Elementary students (dropped at their school) • OYAP/Alternative Education/Leap/Careers 2000 • Students who have moved mid-year • Siblings of eligible riders • Local considerations

For a request to be considered, a form must be submitted to the school principal who is responsible for the evaluation of the request based on the established priority and seat availability. Once the principal has made the determination, they are able to allocate seats on regular routes provided that there is space available. As transportation is approved, school staff are responsible for entering the student's information into the *eSIS* student information database. The approval for courtesy seating on special needs buses is the responsibility of Consortium staff.

A process for "bumping" is also documented in the event that there is a change in the number of available seats for courtesy riders. The principal is responsible for applying the priority schedule in the reverse order resulting in the last rider approved being the first to have their courtesy privileges revoked.

While the process for the approval of courtesy seating by documented priorities and the subsequent "bumping" process are both excellent components of the overall procedure, the localized approval process (by each school principal) may introduce the potential for inaccurate rider lists as the information is first to be entered into *eSIS* (by school staff), which is downloaded as part of the normal bi-weekly download schedule into the *Edulog* routing software. Consequently, it is possible that during the two week period, the list of student riders in *Edulog* and in *eSIS* will be different if a courtesy student has been added, removed, or has changed buses. Completeness, accuracy, and consistency between the student and transportation databases is imperative to ensure that accurate rider information is available for first responders and to support timely communications with parents and the Member Boards. Equally concerning is the potential for overloading an individual bus as each school principal makes their determination independent of other schools and the Consortium. Finally, while giving the schools the ability to approve transportation and allocate services promotes a high level of "customer service", it may hinder the overall planning process and confuse the role of the Consortium as each Board is designated authority for the provision of transportation services.

4.2.1.7 Bus stop placement

The Consortium has adopted a process for the review of new stops to determine that the stop location meets with safety standards and ensure student safety. All new stop requests must be submitted to the Consortium on a standard form. When a new stop is requested, the Transportation Officer responsible for that particular geographical area is allotted some time each week to conduct onsite evaluations to determine if the stop is acceptable or to identify an alternative location. Interviews with staff indicate a common understanding of the criteria under which a stop is considered safe with the *Geographic Circumstances* document serving as the main source for guidance.

To ensure that stops are not changed by a driver or at the request of a parent, the Consortium has implemented an excellent practice that clearly communicates the restriction by requiring a posting to be attached at the entry door of each bus.

4.2.1.8 Student Ride Times

The analysis of student ride times provides an overall indication of the level of service provided by any transportation operation. SCDSB's policy states that "bus routes will be organized in the most efficient and economical manner" and will correspond, as practical, to the planning parameters that limits travel for elementary students to 32 kilometres or 50 minutes, and a maximum for secondary students at 48 kilometres or 75 minutes. The *Operations Manual* states that ride times are to be within 60 minutes when possible, although geographic areas and population density may require ride times that exceed the desired maximum. Based on the analysis of both run and individual student ride times, average ride times are well within the desired maximums with nearly 100 percent of SCDSB regular education ride times at 60 minutes or less and approximately 98 percent of SMCDSB students also under the 60 minute guideline.

4.2.1.9 Responsibilities

The clear definition of student behaviour expectations and the establishment of parents, guardians, drivers, operators, Consortium and school staff responsibilities are imperative in the support of safe and efficient operations. While neither of the Board's separate policy statements clearly defines the responsibilities of each of the stakeholders, the Consortium provides a *Transportation Information Package* and information pamphlet to the schools for the start of each new academic year. These documents serve to establish and communicate the responsibilities specific to students, parents, and drivers. The Consortium is in the process of further defining the stakeholder responsibilities which will be included within the *Operations Manual*.

4.2.1.10 Disciplinary action

Along with clearly defining responsibilities, a consistent disciplinary action process should also be established that supports student safety and works to deter unacceptable behaviour. While the SMCDSB *Transportation Information Package* describes the process for reporting student behaviour incidents and the resulting conference with parents, it lacks clear hierarchy-based consequences for specific levels of infractions.

4.2.1.11 Decision appeal process

While not documented, an appeal process was described by the Transportation Officer involved in the original determination of the first appeal. In the event that it is not resolved at this level, it is then reviewed by the Manager of Transportation and ultimately heard by the individual Board superintendant. Although interviews indicated a level of consistency in application of the informal process, a formal process including the provision for a final decision (to be made joint by the Consortium's Management Committee) would help to ensure that each situation and the resulting decisions are consistent regardless of the student's Board affiliation.

4.2.1.12 Planning schedules

The Consortium has developed manuals for the daily, monthly, and annual operational processes and an *Administrative Guide* to assist in the planning management of the Consortium. Planning activities include a description of the month to month activities such as student information downloads, run/route reviews, stop checks, and route audits. Daily tasks are also detailed including communication priorities and the maintenance of *Edulog*.

These efforts provide consistency to annual planning efforts and allow managers to analyze the tasks to ensure that all efforts are adequately identified and addressed at a time during the annual cycle that is most appropriate. However, the lack of any indicative level of effort required (i.e. the number of hours or days required to complete a task) or designated task dependencies (i.e., the tasks that have to be completed before another designated task can be begin or finish), limits the usefulness of the current planning schedule for determining the appropriateness of staff size or task sequencing. Adding these elements to the current planning schedule would enhance their usefulness in future planning.

4.2.1.13 Route planning strategies

Interviews with staff indicates an appropriate level of understanding of the importance of using multiple route planning strategies to design routing solutions to best achieve the goal of providing a high level of service. In support of effective route planning practices, the Consortium's *Process Reference Manual*, Section *Standards/Processes-Routing,* states that it is "common practice" to share runs between Boards

where efficiencies and or service levels can be maximized. SMCDSB policy further supports this direction stating that shared services will be actively fostered. Interviews with staff indicates that while no restrictions are in place, time and distance constraints prohibit the sharing of runs in many areas, although integration is common at the route level. Where feasible, a "one road/one bus" strategy is employed which fully integrates students of both Member Boards at the run level.

Based on the analysis of regular education run data, approximately 32,000 students are transported on 520 routes with 803[7] runs. Approximately 65 percent of the routes have 2 or more runs while almost 9 percent of the routes are integrated between the Member Boards. Additionally, approximately 21 percent of the runs are "combination" runs serving more than one school. This will be discussed in further detail in the *Routing and Technology* section.

4.2.1.14 Bell time management

The strategic management of bell times is imperative to support the effective and efficient route planning and service delivery. The ability to shift bell times present opportunities to maximize the use of the fleet resulting in the potential for a reduction in the number of required buses and or service improvements.

Within the *Administration Guide*, the process for bell time verification is described with the stated purpose of providing guidance for staff to allow for the appropriate arrival and departure windows. A *Bell Time Spread Process* explains a process for requesting a change by either the school or the Consortium. Interviews with the Transportation Officers and the Manager of Transportation (now the interim General Manager) indicate an understanding of both the importance of bell time management (and its impact on efficient and effective operations) and the importance of regular consideration of shifting of bell times though the planning process. Although the Consortium is able to request a change of bell times (based on an "efficiency" study), final decisions rest with the trustees of each of the Member Boards.

Examples of several bell time changes submitted for consideration were presented for review by the E&E Team and included studies for the Orillia Park Street Collegiate, Orillia District Collegiate and Vocational Instructional areas. The approval of these two recommendations resulted in the reduction of four buses and approximately $168,000 in savings. These changes are good examples of best practices that analyze route data to identify routing efficiencies that either improves service and/or results in cost savings.

In addition to the studies that resulted in a change in bell times, several other studies were presented that have not yet been approved. While this is an example of an individual Member Board's right to decide on the level of service that best meets their educational programming needs, it is important that each of the stakeholders understands how decisions can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire routing network.

4.2.1.15 Inclement weather procedures

An inclement weather procedure is described and documented within the *Operations Manual*. These procedures provides for regular education students to be notified through web-based and media sources while parents of special needs students are informed of the process by letters that are generated by Edulog to be sent on an annual basis. Weather zones for both the students' stop locations and the school of attendance are entered into a "zone" field within the *Edulog* database. This ensures that students are informed of the procedures specific to the unique weather patterns of both their school of attendance and stop locations.

4.2.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

---

[7] All data reported in this section of the report refers to data collected while the E&E team was on site. There may be inconsistencies with some previously reported Ministry data due to the different timing of the data collection.

Integration of routes and runs

Supported by both policy and practice, and regardless of the student's school of attendance, the Consortium's ability to plan both routes and runs in the most efficient and effective manner is a best practice. The potential integration of students across the service area supports and promotes both efficient route planning and the effective delivery of service.

Route planning strategies

In addition to the integration of routes and runs, the Consortium is using a variety of strategies to promote efficient service including combination and multiple runs per bus. This seeks to use the fleet on as many trips per day as possible, resulting in the need for fewer buses. Acceptable ride times provide an indication that these strategies promote both effective and efficient services.

4.2.3 Recommendations

4.2.3.1 Approve and finalize both the Operations and Administrative manuals

It is evident that a great deal of effort and staff time has been dedicated to the development of the Operation and Administrative manuals. When completed and fully approved, these two manuals will provide the necessary direction for both daily operational and annual planning decisions. Equally important, the full approval of these documents will help to further establish the Consortium has the operational authority (under the auspices of the Member Boards) to determine how transportation will be provided.

4.2.3.2 Review and approve the criteria for hazard transportation and post within *Edulog*

While interviews with staff indicate a consistent understanding of what constitutes hazardous conditions, the Consortium has recognized the need to have an approved policy and has submitted a draft policy for consideration. Subsequent to the approval of the policy, it is recommended that comprehensive boundaries should be posted in *Edulog* to ensure that eligible students (based on hazardous criteria) are provided with transportation and that the data is accurate and readily available for analysis and reporting.

4.2.3.3 Review the process for the approval and run assignment for courtesy students

The current "external" process for the approval of courtesy transportation should become a Consortium responsibility to ensure consistency in the approval process and accurate rider lists in the event of an accident or incident.

4.2.3.4 Document and formalize the appeal process to ensure consistency and equity

The appeal process should be formally adopted and documented, and should ensure that appeals are heard and decisions made within the Consortium's operational and governance structures. This will ensure that all appeals are handled in a fair, equitable and consistent manner regardless of a student's school or Board of attendance.

4.2.3.5 Establish responsibilities and timelines for planning

While the Consortium has established a planning calendar that documents the critical planning tasks, further refinement is necessary to understand the level of effort required and critical task dependencies to fully derive the benefits of a planning schedule. These enhancements will help to ensure that each of the critical tasks has the necessary staff support and time allotted to support successful planning and task completion.

4.3 Special Needs Transportation

4.3.1 Observations

Special needs transportation must consider a student's individual emotional and physical needs which may require special equipment such as lifts or restraints. Additional factors that must be considered include each student's time and distance constraints, medical conditions, and medication administration. Currently the planning for special needs transportation is shared by and between the Transportation Officers who are responsible for planning within their own geographic areas. Interviews indicate that while there is an appropriate level of cooperation and communication between the Consortium and the schools, the Consortium does not have direct involvement in determining or in the decision making process of where to locate special needs programs. While the Consortium provides cost information as locations are considered, this is by request only and is not part of a required practice or procedure.

4.3.1.1 Special needs policies

Neither of the Boards' separate policy statements nor the *Operations Manual* specifically addresses the many factors that impact and affect the transportation of special needs students. Typical examples of the parameters described include:

- Safe wheelchair loading, unloading and lift procedures;

- The use of securing devices and restraints;

- Emergency procedures specific to students with special needs;

- Specific driver training needs to meet both the emotional and medical needs of the students, and

- The use and administration of medicines for conditions such as diabetes and anaphylaxis.

While these procedures are not specifically documented, interviews with staff indicate an appropriate level of understanding of the complexities of providing safe transportation to special needs students. The creation of a specific section within the *Operations Manual* which provides the necessary operational parameters of providing special would further support both safe and effective special needs transportation.

4.3.1.2 Special needs planning guidelines

The Consortium has implemented a process that requires, by June 5th of each year, that each school inform the Consortium of all (known) students with physical disabilities or IRPC students that will require special needs transportation. Each school is responsible for providing the Consortium with specific student information which is to be submitted to the Consortium on a standardized form. Information provided includes basic student information, school assigned, emergency contact information, and specific equipment needs. Route planning is not constrained or limited by any policy or practice restrictions, which allows for the placement of students on the most efficient mode of transportation including both regular and special needs buses. While instances of integration were found in the review of student data, it is primarily composed of students with a "gifted" designation riding on special needs buses. While it is difficult to determine if greater levels of integration could occur, it is clear from the data that while no formal constraints exist on integrating regular and special needs students, there is a limited use of this as a strategy.

4.3.1.3 Driver Training

Per the operator contact, the operators are responsible for providing the minimum of six hours of training in CPR and first aid to the drivers which include the recognition and treatment of anaphylactic shock.

4.3.2 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Mainstreaming of special needs students

The integration of special needs students, to the extent feasible given a student's requirements, is a useful strategy to promote the effective use of the fleet and control total transportation costs. SCSTS has established policies and operating procedures that promote this effort.

4.3.3 Recommendations

4.3.3.1 Develop comprehensive policies specific to the transportation of special needs students

As the Consortium continues to review and document its operational and administrative procedures, it is recommended that particular attention be expended on developing the policies and training needs specific to the transportation of special needs students. At a minimum, policies should describe desired service parameters such as maximum rides times, vehicle type, and the responsibilities of each of the stakeholders i.e. parents, operators, drivers, school, special education staff, and the Consortium. Examples of responsibilities to consider include:

- Who secures the student at home and at school for the return trip?

- How long will a driver wait at a stop for a student?

- What students must be met at a stop?

- How are disciplinary issues resolved and at what level?

Training requirements should be documented to include student management techniques, special equipment use, emotional and medical awareness training, medicine administration, and bus evacuation procedures.

4.3.3.2   Inclusion of SCSTS in the determination locations for special needs programs

While it is understood that the educational and program needs of the students must be considered first, it is recommended that Consortium staff be included in discussions on the placement of special needs programs and that the service and financial impacts to the overall routing network be considered along with the educational needs of the students.

4.4   Safety policy

4.4.1   Observations

The safe transportation of students is the paramount goal of any transportation operation. In support of providing safe transportation, it is imperative that clear and concise policies, procedures, and contractual agreements are developed, documented, monitored, and enforced to ensure that safety standards are understood and followed without exception.

Operators are contractually required to provide driver training programs and are also responsible for providing the First Rider program to all early elementary students. The Consortium has facilitated Autistic Spectrum Disorder training in conjunction with operator safety staff. No other Consortium or operator safety programs are currently being provided to either drivers or students.

In support of safe operations, the Consortium has developed a proactive auditing approach to ensure operator compliance. These procedures are described in more detail in the *Contracts* section of this report.

4.4.1.1   Student training

The First Time Rider program is contractually required to be provided by the operators. No other formal programs are currently provided. The Consortium provides both the annual start-up packages and informational pamphlets, both of which have references to expected behaviours that support transportation safety.

4.4.1.2   Driver training

The operators are contractually required to provide a minimum of a six (6) hour safety training that includes both CPR and First Aid Training. Additional topics include:

- Emergency principles;

- Emergency Site Management, and

- Anaphylactic shock recognition/treatment

No other policies or contractual requirements mandate additional training such as bus evacuations for both regular and special needs buses, driving skills improvement training, student management training, and additional training specific to the needs of special needs students. An independent auditor helps to ensure compliance to Ministry of Transportation regulations as discussed below.

4.4.1.3   Auditing procedures

The Consortium has contracted for the auditing of operators to ensure compliance to all Ministry of Transportation regulations. In addition to the compliance audit, the auditor has also been tasked with the review and subsequent reporting of reported accidents and incidents to help operators improve driver training, in particular training for new drivers. In addition to the third party audits, Consortium staff is also required to audit 10 percent of their routes on an annual basis. The focus of these audits includes the observation of route paths and stop compliance, student behaviour, condition of the busses, and general actions of the driver.

4.4.1.4   Use of cameras

Currently a limited number of cameras are in use by the operators with no cameras currently owned or provided by the Consortium. As there is currently no policy that specifically describes and limits how cameras can be used, the Consortium would follow current Member Board policies for the use of cameras within school facilities. In the event that the use of cameras becomes either desired or mandated on school buses, a specific use policy would be essential to ensure that the video data is used and stored correctly and that privacy standards are met.

4.4.1.5   Accident and incident procedures

A process has been adopted that describes the responsibilities of staff and the processes to be followed in the event of a vehicle accident or incident on the bus. This includes communication protocols to be followed by both Consortium staff and the operator involved. A similar process is in place in the event of missing child.

4.4.1.6   Community involvement

The involvement of the Consortium within the greater community can be of great benefit as it helps to promote the "communities" role in providing safe student transportation. Interviews indicate that while the Consortium has worked to foster and maintain good working relations with local municipalities many of the local organizations are no longer active. The Consortium is notified by the local planning agencies of impending changes or new developments and actively conveys transportation related concerns or suggestions. The creation or participation in transportation safety awareness programs would further enhance the communities' understanding of their role in helping to ensure the safe transportation of students.

4.4.1.7   Maximum age of vehicles

Limiting the age of vehicles supports safe and efficient operations since newer buses are typically more fuel and environmentally efficient, reliable, and have improved comfort and safety features. By operator contract, the age of buses is limited to 12 years with an 8 year age limit for all other vehicles. An analysis of vehicle information finds that 100 percent of 713 active buses comply with the maximum age requirements. Bus age distribution is illustrated in the following chart:

Figure 7: Number of Buses by Age Range
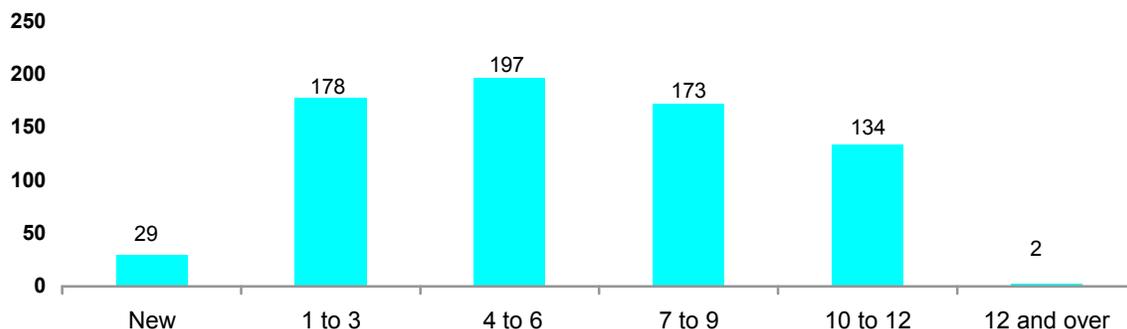
Explanatory note: the two buses identified as 12 years or older will be non-compliant when they become 13 years old in the following year

4.4.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Auditing of contractual requirements in the promotion of safety

Notwithstanding recommendation 6.4.2.1 regarding additions to the scope of work, the Consortium's third party auditing contract and the internal audit procedures work to ensure operator compliance in a number of areas. These processes provide a good example of an approach that supports both transportation safety and effective services.

4.4.3   Recommendations

4.4.3.1   Expand student bus safety programs to include upper elementary, older students, and the community

While the First Rider program is contractually required to be provided to elementary students, no other safety programs are currently targeted for upper elementary or older students. It is recommended that Consortium sponsored safety and training programs be developed or provided to older students as a reinforcement and reminder of their responsibility and role in safety of transportation being provided. An example of training that benefits all students regardless of age are safe bus loading/unloading procedures and emergency and bus evacuation drills. Community awareness programs help to remind parents and other drivers of their role in helping to promote safety by observing traffic regulations and driving behaviours in and around bus stops and school zones.

4.4.3.2   Implement additional driver training programs

In addition to the driver training recommendations in the Special Needs section, it is recommend that the Consortium establish expectations for driver training that include, but are not limited to, driving skills improvement training, student management training, and training specific to special needs students.

4.4.3.3   Develop policies on the use of cameras

While the use of cameras is currently limited and not mandated or supported by the Consortium, the development of a camera use policy is recommended to ensure that the use of cameras meets the privacy and use standards of the Member Boards. At a minimum, procedures should be established that describes who can view the video data,, and retention and deletion timelines.

4.5   Results of E&E Review

Policies and Procedures development and implementation has been rated as **Moderate**. It is evident that the Consortium has invested a considerable amount of time and effort in the development of policies, procedures, and processes all of which will be incorporated into the Administrative and Operations manuals. Many of these are currently in draft form. Their finalization will help to ensure that the desired levels of service are clearly established and delivered.

Efforts should also be made to complete the development of policies and/or procedures related to the granting of transportation to students to avoid localized hazardous conditions. In addition, a reconciliation of potential inconsistencies and inaccuracies associated with the time lag between entry in *eSIS* and the download of courtesy rider data into *Edulog* for should be completed.

5   Routing and Technology

5.1   Introduction

Routing and Technology encompasses the management, administration, and use of technology for the purpose of student transportation management. The following analysis stems from a review of the four key components of:

- Software and Technology Setup and Use;

- Digital Map and Student Database Management;

- System Reporting; and

- Regular and Special Needs Transportation Planning and Routing.

Each component has been analysed based on observations from fact (including interviews) together with an assessment of best practices leading to a set of recommendations. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component, which is then summarized to determine an E&E assessment of Routing and Technical efficiency as shown below:

Routing and Technology – E&E Rating:	Moderate

5.2   Software and technology setup and use

Any large and complex transportation organization requires the use of a modern routing and student data management system to support effective and efficient route planning. Effective route planning not only ensures that services are delivered within established parameters; it also helps to predict and control operational costs. Modern software systems have the ability to integrate and synchronize with student accounting, communications, and productivity software. The integration of these software systems allows for more effective use of staff time and supports timely communication, data analysis and reporting. Web-based communication tools in particular can provide stakeholders with real time and current information regarding their student's transportation including service or weather delays, the cancellation of transportation, or school closings. To derive the greatest benefit from these systems, it is imperative that the implementation include an examination of the desired expectations and outputs of the system to support comprehensive analysis and reporting. This section of the evaluation assesses the acquisition, setup, installation, and management of transportation related software.

5.2.1   Observations

5.2.1.1   Routing & related software

The Consortium has been a long-term user of *Edulog* routing software, which was first implemented in January, 1993, with a subsequent update to *Edulog NT*. While each Member Board utilizes the *eSIS* student information system, the Consortium follows different procedures regarding the transfer of data back to the student information systems as detailed in Section 5.3.1.4. The long history of continued use of the product has provided SCSTS with a solid foundation of institutional knowledge regarding system management and use.

Although each of the Member Board's websites provides a link to a transportation section, the Consortium does not have its own separate and unique web site. While the information on each of the Board's web pages is similar, it does vary in the way it is presented as shown in the following table:

SCDSB	SMCDSB
• Brief description of the role of the Consortium including contact information • An explanation of Weather Zones and cancellation procedures • Walk and bus zones • Process for requesting a bus stop • School, student, and parent responsibilities	• Brief description of the role of the Consortium including contact information • An explanation of Weather Zones and cancellation procedures • The role of the school as the "point of contact for all transportation related questions or concerns".

While this information is similar, and while having access is critical, the lack of a designated site for the Consortium can result in inconsistent presentation of similar data or information. Additionally, establishing a unique site reinforces the Consortium's role as the transportation service provider to each of the Member Boards.

5.2.1.2   Maintenance and service agreements

Ongoing annual support for *Edulog* includes standard phone and email assistance, software upgrades, and updates to user guides. Server back-up services are provided by the IT staff of the SCDSB, which includes scheduled incremental daily, weekly, and monthly back-ups and data retention protocols as discussed in further detail below.

5.2.1.3   System backup and disaster recovery

A detailed procedure is documented that describes the process for daily incremental backups scheduled at 8:00 PM Monday through Thursday with a full back-up performed each Friday and also on a monthly basis. The procedure also provides an excellent description of retention times for each type of back-up media used and that backed-up data is stored in three separate locations to ensure restoration of the system in the event of a catastrophic event. These procedures provide for the necessary protection of data and redundancy in the event of an emergency or technology failures.

5.2.1.4   Staff training

To support the most effective use of any complex routing or software application, it is imperative that each staff member receives training that is appropriate to their responsibilities in the organization. Equally important is that there is sufficient redundancy and cross training to ensure a seamless transition as changes in duties, responsibilities, or staffing occur. Currently, training has primarily been provided in-house by senior staff members utilizing a detailed practice of documenting each process for reference by staff. The processes have been included as sections within the *Operations Manual*. Recently, staff have started to participate in webinars presented by *Edulog* with onsite training scheduled for November, 2010 on map calibrations and routing optimization. While each of the Transportation Officers and office clerical staff have assigned responsibilities, there is a systematic approach to cross-training that ensures that route planning and daily route maintenance occurs regardless of the availability to the assigned staff member.

As the Consortium continues to evaluate their approach to training, providing staff members with greater access to vendor provided training such as the webinars and on-site programs should be considered. These additional opportunities will help to ensure that both current and future staff members receive regular training to fully utilize the functionality of the routing software.

5.2.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Data management and backup procedures

The establishment of multiple backup procedures, off-site storage, and data retention requirements are excellent examples of well designed procedures that ensure the continuance of service in the event of a catastrophic occurrence.

Procedure documentation

The Consortium's comprehensive documentation of operational processes is an excellent practice that, when combined with additional training opportunities, will ensure that services are delivered consistently across the entire service area.

5.2.3   Recommendations

5.2.3.1   Establish a formal staff training program

While the Consortium has established an excellent practice of documenting its procedures and has recently begun to offer additional training opportunities, the development of a formalized training program is recommended. A formalized training program will help to ensure that each staff member receives a level of training that meets both their current level of expertise, and progressive training as their skills and responsibilities increase.

5.2.3.2   Establish a separate and distinct Consortium web site

The creation of a separate Consortium web site is recommended not only for its value in providing parents, school communities, drivers, and operators with readily available and current transportation information, but it will also reinforce the role of the Consortium as the independent provider of transportation to each of its Member Boards. The site should focus on delivering high value information using a unified theme and approach targeted to all interested stakeholders including parents, students, operators, Member Board staff, and Consortium staff.

5.3   Digital map and student database management

An accurate digital map is paramount to support effective route planning and also the effectiveness of the staff and the efficient use of the fleet. This aspect of the E&E Review was designed to evaluate the processes and procedures in place to update and maintain the map and student data that forms the foundation of any student transportation routing system.

5.3.1   Observations

5.3.1.1   Digital map

One digital map is used for the entire service area. The Consortium has developed co-operative relationships with local municipalities and Member Board planning departments and is on the master notification list from each of the municipalities, which helps support the maintaining of map accuracy. Detailed procedures are documented for the maintenance of the map, including the maintenance of street layers, street segments, and road speeds. Each Transportation Officer is responsible for the identification of "good" or "bad" road segments[8], turnaround segments, and bad stop locations. The overall maintenance of the map is assigned to a single Transportation Officer (with an assigned back-up) which is an appropriate strategy that ensures map accuracy and eliminates the possibility of changes made by one officer impacting the accuracy of the entire base map.

5.3.1.2   Map accuracy

Interviews with staff and primarily with the Transportation Officer responsible for the maintenance of the map indicates that while the base map is generally accurate and adequately supports route planning, planned road speed calibrations and the posting of all hazardous boundaries will improve the overall accuracy of the map. Significant effort has recently been invested in both the gross and fine calibration of the digital map. The Consortium has contracted with *Edulog* (scheduled for November 23, 2009) to conduct a full calibration of road speeds. Operators report that map times are generally accurate and have improved recently. The Simcoe County GIS department is the main source for map updates and supports the Consortium with regular quarterly and as-requested updates. This process for map

---

[8] Bad segments indicate road segments where buses should not travel

maintenance and updating is consistent with best practices, which helps ensure complete and accurate student eligibility and supports effective route planning.

5.3.1.3 Default values

The responsibility for map and system maintenance rests with the Transportation Officer responsible for route planning. Individual Transportation Officers are responsible for the identification of needed changes or adjustments to the base map but cannot make changes. Road speeds can only be adjusted by the Transportation Officer responsible for the maintenance of the map. Assignment of this responsibility to a single individual promotes consistency of management and accountability for accuracy. However, SCSTS may need to evaluate its staffing complement to determine whether the activities necessary to manage the routing software and the related default values requires a dedicated individual versus the current ancillary nature of the duties.

5.3.1.4 Student data management

A bi-monthly download of student data is scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesday of each month into a single *Edulog* database. After the download, *Edulog* data is uploaded to SCDSB. A similar uploading of student data is not currently available into *eSIS* for SMCDSB students. Significant automation in the batch assignment of students to stops has been developed by SCSTS staff. A high level of accuracy is reported in the match of student data between *Edulog* and each of the Board's *eSIS* student information systems resulting in minimal time spent on the correction of student data. As was mentioned in Section 4.2.1.6, a process should be considered that ensures that students entered or changed in the period between downloads are accurately reflected in both the student and transportation databases.

5.3.1.5 Coding structures

To achieve the greatest possible benefit from sophisticated routing software systems, it is imperative that thoughtful consideration be given to the design of the coding structure. A well designed coding structure first serves to accurately identify the students that are truly eligible for transportation based on documented walking distance policies and those students with special needs. Correct coding at this level provides the foundation for effective planning. Additional subsets of codes should clearly identify those groups of students that also will be provided service based on approved and documented exceptions. Examples of these exceptions include, safety and hazard transportation, courtesy eligibility, and out of boundary or out of zone transportation. In addition to the coding of students, both runs and routes should also have a logical coding structure that supports the easy identification of the purpose of the run such as special needs, combination runs, and which schools and Boards are served.

The Consortium uses both basic eligibility codes within *Edulog* and has developed an extensive subset of program, equipment, and disability codes. Examples of these additional codes includes behavioural, autistic spectrum disorder, gifted, courtesy, location (hazard), visually impaired and codes to identify equipment needs such as wheelchairs, booster and car seats, harnesses and seat belts.

Runs and stops are also coded to facilitate the easy extraction of data with SCDSB designated with route numbers ranging from 001 to 650 and SMCDSB routes numbered from 651 to 999. Out of Area stops are in the "900" series. Boards are identified as "P" for SCDSB and "RC" for SMCDSB. This structure supports the extraction of data for performance analysis and expenditure tracking system-wide and specific to each Board.

While this system of coding is well designed overall and supports the effective analysis of data, the Consortium has recognized that several refinements are necessary to achieve full accuracy of the number of students being transported for hazard or courtesy transportation. As discussed earlier in the *Policy and Practices* section, although there is a common understanding of "what" is considered to be a hazardous condition, hazardous boundaries are neither fully posted nor integrated into *Edulog*, which results in the potential inaccurate reporting of students who receive these types of services.

An additional concern is the level of detail and the potential confusion that increasing granularity can cause. For example, there are approximately 90 program, equipment, and handicap codes available for the designation of ride types. While each available code in the database is utilized at least once, there is a concern regarding a lack of distinction between the codes and redundancy in the structure. For example, there appears to be a redundancy in the structure related to autistic students. Currently, there

are 14 rider codes that can be used for students with autism with several of the codes appearing to denote a similar type of need (e.g. Life Skills Autistic -LS AU- and Autistic Life Skills -AU LS). Therefore, in order to report the total number of students with autism attending life skills programs it would be necessary to ensure that both of these groups were included otherwise the totals would be inaccurate. The primary concern is the a lack of distinction between or redundancy in the codes, such as the example above, could result in inconsistent and potentially inaccurate use of the structure. Additionally, a number of program and equipment codes should be periodically reviewed to reduce any redundancies and the potential for confusion or inconsistency in how similar groups of student are identified.

5.3.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Map management

As the management and periodic updating of the map is imperative to support effective route planning, the Consortium has adopted several best practices including the assignment of map and attribute maintenance to a single Transportation Officer, the use of available resources such as the GIS map updates provided by Simcoe County, and the use of contracted resources (*Edulog*) for the periodic overall calibration of the map.

Coding structure

SCSTS has clearly recognized the usefulness and value of a well structured coding system that allows for proper identification of students. This structure is logical and well considered. As was mentioned, there is a need to ensure that the usefulness is not undermined by complexity in the design of the structure. As a result, SCSTS should review the approximately 90 equipment, program, and handicap codes currently available for student ride identification, and determine if these can reasonably be consolidated without losing the functionality or flexibility of the system.

5.4   System reporting

A key benefit of modern routing software is the ability to quickly gather, collate and analyze large data sets. These data sets can then be used to communicate a wide variety of operational and administrative performance indicators to all stakeholders. Actively using transportation data to identify trends that may negatively impact either costs or service and the subsequent communication of both expectations and performance is a key component of a continuous improvement model. This section will review and evaluate how data is used to evaluate and communicate performance and assess organizational competencies in maximizing the use of data retained in the routing software and related systems.

5.4.1   Observations

5.4.1.1   Reporting and data analysis

Historically, reporting had been limited to one or two Transportation Officers due to a lack of available training and expertise in utilizing the report writing functions offered in *Edulog*. SCSTS has begun a concerted effort to increase both the knowledge of report availability and skill levels with report development. Interviews indicate that both the training and the report availability are still being finalized, but it is expected that the availability of reports will assist Transportation Officers in their planning responsibilities and increase their ability to identify cost or service improvements within their areas.

Currently, the *Administrative Manual* describes the procedure for the creation of various key performance indicator reports including bell time reviews, kilometre per run summaries, maximum ride times, operator summary, vehicle capacity summary, and vehicle capacity by run. Route timeline reports are used to identify opportunities for run paring both during the planning phase and throughout the course of the school year. Regular and special needs route reports are produced daily as routes and runs are changed and updated. Portable Document Format (PDF) copies are electronically transmitted to both the schools and operators. An automated process has been developed that automatically prints a run with either new or changed stops.

5.4.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Data analysis and reporting

The Consortium's ability to extensively use the reporting function of *Edulog* for the analysis of performance, the identification of routing efficiencies, and for communication to stakeholders is a best practice. The plan to expand the use of the reporting function by the Transportation Officers will further support ongoing efforts to identify potential routing efficiencies.

5.5 Regular and special needs transportation planning and routing

Effective route planning is a key function of any high performing transportation operation. This section of the report evaluates the processes, strategies, and procedures that are used to maximise the use of the fleet, control costs while delivering a high level of service to students using each mode of transportation.

5.5.1 Observations

5.5.1.1 Bus route management

The Transportation Officers are responsible for the investigation of safe stop locations, the creation of stops, and the resulting communication back to the school and operator for stop and run assignments. The process varies as some of the Transportation Officers perform the entire stop creation/notification process while others receive assistance from their supporting clerical staff member. While this variance in responsibilities and duties between the Transportation Officers and between the clerical staff members appears to be operationally functional, it also presents an opportunity to streamline and standardize processes, reduce redundancy and potentially increase efficiency. Part of the reassessment should include a process review to determine if opportunities exist to eliminate any instances of redundant work efforts.

The responsibility for route planning is divided by geographic area among the six Transportation Officers, who are assisted by three clerical staff members. Depending on the specific area, the Transportation Officer may be responsible for the management of both regular and special needs route planning. The Consortium has established a process that retains both active and inactive stops in the database. The inactive stops are kept in a separate data table and can be activated in the event that a student moves into an area that had been previously served but is now inactive. This process reduces the turnaround time associated with stop change requests and with new student assignments by ensuring that the bus stops used have been reviewed and verified by Transportation Officers for their compliance with safety and policy guidelines.

As a new regular education student is enrolled, the secretaries are able to assign (within *eSIS*) the student to the nearest stop. If this change occurs in the interim between student data downloads, the Consortium may not immediately be aware of the change. If there is the need to create a new stop for the student, a written request is received by the area Transportation Officer and the student information is entered in *Edulog* and will be updated at the time of the next download from the student information system. This is another effort to improve the turnaround time from request to bus stop assignment. The only concern with this strategy is that the school secretaries are assigning students to bus runs in the absence of information about the remaining seating capacity available.

All special needs students are assigned to runs and routes by the Transportation Officers. The schools are required to submit student names by June 5th of each year to facilitate the planning process. Planning is not constrained or limited by policy, which allows for the integration of special needs students on both regular and special needs buses. This allows for the assignment of students to the most efficient mode of transportation that meets the students individual educational, physical, and emotional needs.

5.5.2 Recommendations

5.5.2.1 Analysis of system effectiveness[9]

Approximately 24,000 SCDSB and 11,300 SMCDSB students are provided with daily transportation service to 158 Public and 66 Catholic schools. Services are delivered using approximately 700 active route buses on over 2,200 runs. SCSTC is challenged by many factors including the large geographical area it serves, areas of growth, areas of low density, and changes in traffic volume and congestion.

To promote routing efficiencies, the Consortium uses planning strategies such as combination and multiple runs. As stated in Section 4.2.1.13, there are no planning restrictions for the sharing or integration of either routes or runs. However, there is only limited integration of both routes and runs between each of the Member Boards. A strategic planning goal of any effective operation is to use each asset as many times as possible throughout the day within the constraints of time, distance, and desired levels of service. The analysis of run data indicates that approximately 65 percent of the routes have two or more runs and almost nine percent of the routes serve both Boards. Run data indicates slightly more than five percent of runs are integrated with students from each Board.

While factors such as population density, road network, traffic volume, and time and distance constraints cannot be controlled, the ability to shift and manage bells times gives route planners the ability to adjust bell times to support the most effective and efficient use of the fleet. Currently, start times (based on run data) are very dispersed, ranging from 8:00 to 9:20 AM. An analysis of morning runs was conducted to determine the influence of bell times on run integration opportunities and other efficiency options. The review removed over 300 runs that were identified as special needs. The distribution of remaining 800 runs representing non-special needs, home-to school runs are shown below. Although the current bell time structure allows for the multiple use of busses nearly two-thirds of the time, the ability to shift times may present additional opportunities for run pairing and reduction of buses.

---

[9] All data reported in this section of the report refers to data collected while the E&E team was on site. There may be inconsistencies with some previously reported Ministry data due to the different timing of the data collection.

**Figure 8: Distribution of Runs by Time Tier**
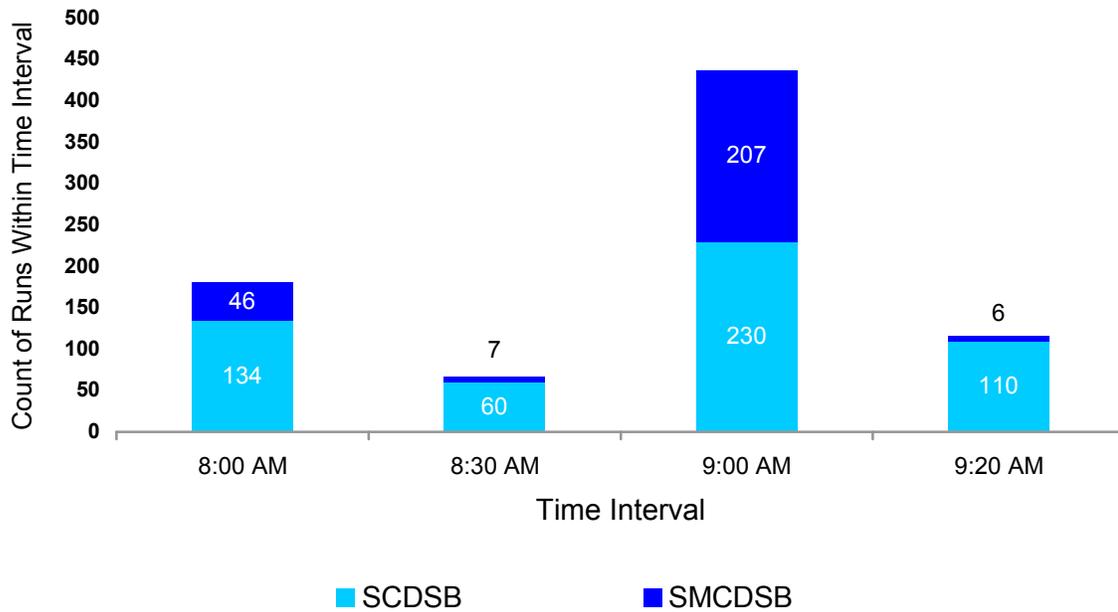
As shown in Figure 8 above, 437 bus runs (identified as regular education, home-to-school runs exclusive of special needs) are used during the 8:31 to 9:00 AM time frame. This accounts for approximately 43 percent of the total runs for SCDSB and 78 percent of the runs for SMCDSB. This timeframe is the key indicator of the overall number of buses needed to meet both the student load and bell times. While this analysis does not take into account the actual locations of the 437 schools in the 9:00 AM tier, it appears that additional opportunities for the pairing of runs and the integration of both routes and runs would be possible. It also appears that these changes could be made (pending further analysis by the Consortium) without significantly impacting current service levels.

5.5.2.2   Student ride times

The amount of time that any one student spends on the bus is a key indication of the overall level of services provided by any transportation operation. An analysis of both run and individual ride times indicates that rides are well within the policy guidelines of 60 minutes for elementary students and 75 minutes for high school students. As shown in the following chart, average morning ride times for regular education students are approximately 20 minutes for both Boards with a nearly identical distribution by time interval. This analysis shows that not only is a high level of service being delivered, but services are being planned and delivered equitably between each of the Boards.

Figure 9: Student Ride Times by Board
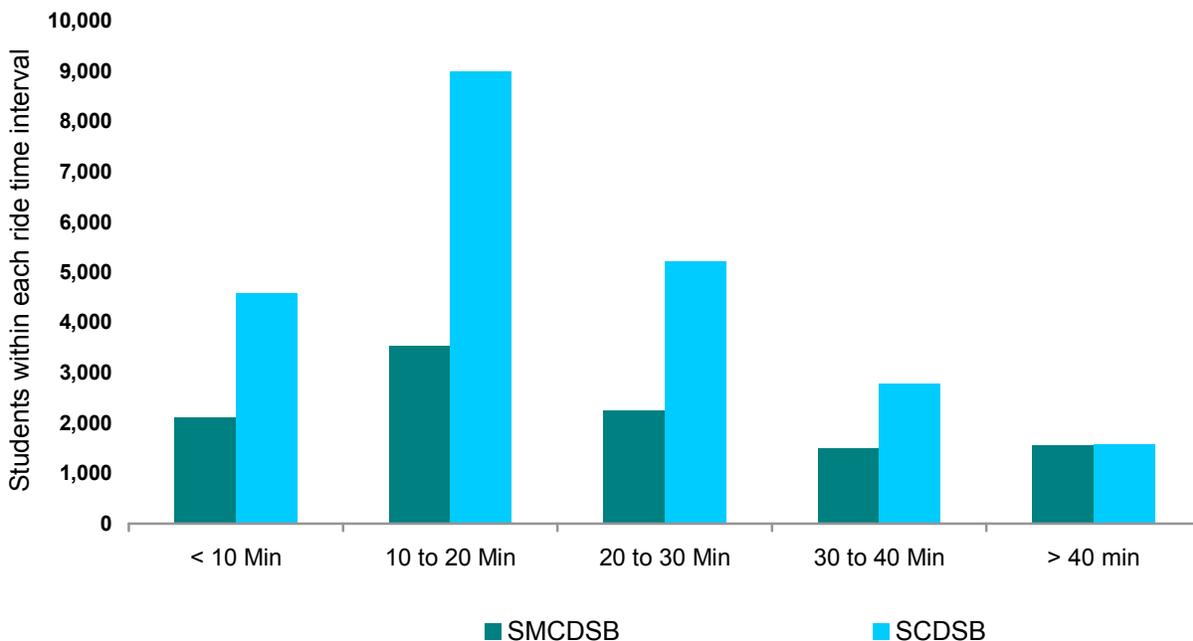
Ride times for special needs students are also well within desired planning parameters with an average of all rides for both Boards being approximately 30 minutes.

5.5.2.3 Capacity utilization

In conjunction with using each bus as many times as possible, the planning for the high utilization of each available seat is a key factor in limiting the number of buses required. Bell times, time and distance constraints, ride time policies, and seating guidelines are all factors that impact the overall seating utilization of the fleet. The analysis of data indicates current simple capacity utilization (calculated as total riders divided by total available seats based on rated capacity of the bus) is approximately 60 percent across the entire regular education fleet. As the formula for calculating simple capacity does not take into consideration seating guidelines that reduces the number of seats available based on the age and size of the student, 60 percent utilization is within an acceptable range.

5.5.3 Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practices in the following areas:

Student ride times

SCSTS has established a routing scheme that provides high quality services by focusing on minimizing the amount of time students must ride the bus. As demonstrated in Figure 9 above, the majority of students are provided with bus rides of 30 minutes or less. This is a notable accomplishment given the large geographic area being serviced.

5.5.4 Recommendations

5.5.4.1 Evaluate the current transportation approval process

Internally, the process for the approval and assignment of a student to a stop and run varies depending on the Transportation Officer responsible for that particular area. To support consistency and to determine the most effective use of each staff member, it is recommended that this process be evaluated to determine the best use of staff time and the functions most appropriate to each job classification. It is also recommended that run assignments at a school level be evaluated to ensure that the Consortium's rider lists are current and automatically updated.

5.5.4.2 Conduct an analysis of integrated runs, routes, and bell times

While offering high levels of service, the limited integration within the current system may be constraining additional opportunities for efficiency. An analysis should be conducted that evaluates the bell time change requirements, impact on seating capacity use, asset use, the number of buses required, and the impact on ride times of greater integration across the system. The purpose of this analysis should be to determine whether greater integration would have a positive impact on efficiency while minimizing the overall impact on system effectiveness. Given the size of the service area, SCSTS should select a limited pilot area to conduct the analysis in order to mitigate the impact that the project would have on the availability and effectiveness of Transportation Officers.

5.6   Results of E&E Review

Routing and technology has been rated as **Moderate**. As evidenced by student ride times, a high level of service is being provided to all students served by the Consortium. SCSTS has established a highly functional technology infrastructure including a well designed reporting scheme. In order to receive a High rating, SCSTS should conduct an evaluation of the current transportation approval process and pursue additional improvements in the use of technology such as improved integration with *eSIS* and a separate and unique Consortium website coupled with a review of the bell structure.

6 Contracts

6.1 Introduction

The Contracts section refers to the processes and practices by which the Consortium enters into and manages its transportation and other service contracts. The analysis stems from a review of the following three key components of Contracting Practices:

- Contract structure;

- Contract negotiations; and

- Contract management.

Each component has been analyzed based on observations from information provided by the Consortium, including information provided during interviews. The analysis included an assessment of areas requiring improvement that were informed by a set of known best practices identified during previous E&E Reviews. These results are then used to develop an E&E assessment for each component. The E&E assessment of contracting practices for the Consortium is as follows:

Contracts – E&E Rating:	Low

6.2 Contract Structure

An effective contract[10] establishes a clear point of reference that defines the roles, requirements, and expectations of each party involved and details the compensation for providing the designated service. Effective contracts also provide penalties for failure to meet established service parameters and may provide incentives for exceeding service requirements. Contract analysis includes a review of the clauses contained in the contract to ensure that the terms are clearly articulated, and a review of the fee structure is conducted to enable comparison of its components to best practice.

6.2.1 Observations

6.2.1.1 Bus operator contract clauses

The Consortium has standardized contracts for use with all of its bus operators; however, the current and previous year's contracts have yet to be signed and executed by the Member Boards. Nonetheless, negotiations for the contract have been completed and the Consortium does not expect substantive changes to the contract presented to the E&E Review Team. Noteworthy clauses in the bus operator contract include:

- Safety and training requirements

  The contract requires operators to provide a minimum of 6 hours of safety training and also requires drivers to receive a First Aid training certificate from an authorized instructor. Operators are compensated for providing this training through a fixed, per driver fee that is to cover up to one-third of the cost of training. Consortium management indicated that reimbursements are limited to one third

---

[10] The word Contract in this context refers to detailed documents outlining the scope of services, rates and expected service levels. The phrase Purchase of Service agreement is used in this report to describe a less detailed document that only outlines the services to be provided and the rates at which they are to be provided.

since these safety certifications expire every three years. Operators are not required to provide this training prior to drivers initiating their employment.

- Information submission requirements such as operator insurance coverage;
- Vehicle age requirements. The maximum allowable age is 12 years for busses and 9 years for cars/minivans;
- Performance expectations of operators;
- Compensation amounts and structure; and
- Other terms related to regulatory compliance.

A clause that automatically extends the contract by mutual agreement is included; however, clauses related to dispute resolution, confidentiality of information, or driver performance expectations are not part of the contract.

The contract states that the allocation and reallocation of routes is the exclusive purview of the Consortium, but does not outline a methodology to be used. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that routes have historically been allocated based on a combination of performance factors (assessed using route audits), geographic factors and historical equity among the operators.

Student safety programs are provided by operators at the request of individual schools, in line with a contract clause requiring operators to be available to provide safety training and first rider programs.

6.2.1.2   Bus operator compensation

The formula to be used to compensate bus operators is included as a schedule to the bus operator contract and is calculated based on a 190 day school year. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the rationale for the 190 day payment schedule is primarily to simplify calculations and is based on historical practice. The bus operator compensation formula is the sum of the following components:

1. Basic rate;

   A fixed rate per day based on the size of vehicle.

2. Time rate;

   A daily rate paid in addition to the daily basic rate for route times that exceed three hours per day. This is calculated based on the amount of time spent over the three hour minimum.

3. Kilometer rate;

   A variable rate intended to compensate operators for driver costs and maintenance, determined by the size of vehicle operated and distance travelled. Operators are compensated based on a 57 km/day minimum as per the Consortium's historical practices.

4. Fuel costs;

   A variable rate based on vehicle size and distance travelled. This includes a fuel escalator component.

The contract outlines a separate set of rates that are to be used to compensate operators for school to school transportation. The formula used to determine the charges for this service are determined using the same components as those for home-to-school transportation but with different rates applied.

Only the basic and time rates are paid for by the Consortium on inclement weather days and on days for which service is cancelled due to strike action. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the rationale for paying the time rate on inclement weather days was due to the short supply of drivers in the labour market at the time, and to compensate operators for overhead costs.

6.2.1.3   Parent drivers

The Consortium currently utilizes one parent driver and this relationship is documented in an agreement between the parent and Consortium. The agreement requires the parent to comply with specific regulations.

The Consortium collects the parent's insurance and driver's license information. Parent drivers are compensated based on a fixed daily rate per day that the student attends school. The number of days on which the student was in attendance is then verified by contacting his/her school directly. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the compensation amount was determined based on historical practices.

6.2.2   Best Practices

It is recognized that the Consortium has demonstrated best practice in the following areas:

Insurance

The Consortium requires operators to provide proof of insurance prior to the start of the school year. This ensures that this important safeguard is met prior to providing any services.

6.2.3   Recommendations

6.2.3.1   Execute the bus operator contract

The Consortium should take all steps necessary to immediately execute the bus operator contract. Executing the contract - for which negotiations have ended – will not only help limit liability to the Consortium, it will also facilitate bus operator efforts to raise the debt and working capital necessary for them in order to continue providing the Consortium with high quality service. Going forward, the Consortium should have operator contracts in place prior to the commencement of the school year.

6.2.3.2   Include additional clauses in the bus operator contract

It is recommended that the bus operator contract be modified to include clauses related to dispute resolution, confidentiality of information, and driver performance expectations. It is further recommended that bus operators be mandated to provide EpiPen training to drivers prior to their first day of operating a bus with students onboard, in line with best practices in the sector and to ensure that drivers are qualified to manage potentially life threatening emergency situations from the first day of their interaction with students.

6.2.3.3   Modify the bus operator compensation formula

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that bus operators are paid the time rate on inclement weather days to, in part, compensate them for overhead costs. However, this fixed cost should be fully captured in the basic rate, which is also provided to bus operators on inclement weather days. Furthermore, the time rate is calculated based on the amount of time spent over a three hour minimum, which is unlikely to be exceeded on days during which the fleet is not in operation. While it is recognized that there are costs incurred by bus operators to ensure that the fleet of buses and drivers are ready to resume duty when the inclement weather passes by, it is equally important that bus operators not be compensated for costs that are not incurred by them on these days. It is therefore recommended that the Consortium make efforts to ensure that they are not compensating operators for the overhead portion of the time rate during inclement weather days.

6.3   Goods and Services Procurement

Procurement processes are intended to provide an avenue by which the Consortium, as a purchaser of services, can ultimately obtain the best value for money. The goal of the Consortium is to obtain high quality service at fair market prices.

6.3.1   Observations

6.3.1.1   Operator services procurement

Contracts are secured with operators by the Consortium through a negotiation process. Negotiations for both the current and previous year's bus operator contract concluded in September, 2009, implying that the Consortium's annual operator procurement process is not timely. In addition, the Consortium does not

currently have a documented, Board of Directors-approved procurement calendar that mandates the conclusion of operator procurement processes well before the start of the school year.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium's operator procurement process usually begins upon completion of the previous year's contract negotiations. However, in order to facilitate the operators' annual planning process, and if requested by the operator, the Consortium provides operators with a letter indicating that the bus operator contract is continuous and that Member Boards intend to sign a contract. Negotiation meetings usually take place twice a month, with major points of negotiation including processes, rates and logistics.

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium does not currently intend to move to a competitive process for the procurement of bus operator services.

6.3.1.2   Special needs transportation

Special needs transportation is provided by the Consortium to students enrolled in special education courses that are not within their walk boundary; students with physical disabilities; and to students with other special needs that impair their ability to manage the walk distance for regular buses. Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium procures special needs transportation services as part of the process used to procure regular home-to-school transportation.

6.3.2   Recommendations

6.3.2.1   Develop and communicate a procurement calendar

It is recognized that the Consortium currently has an annual planning calendar in its draft administration policies; however, this calendar does not mandate a timeline over which the Consortium must procure operator services. It is recommended that the Consortium modify this planning calendar to include key dates, milestones and responsibilities related to the procurement of operator services. This timeline should also mandate the completion of operator procurement processes well before the start of the new school year. The Consortium should then communicate this procurement calendar to its operators so as to facilitate the operator's annual planning process.

6.3.2.2   Develop plans for the implementation of competitive procurement for bus operator services

Contracts for school bus transportation services are currently not competitively awarded. By not engaging in a competitive process, the Consortium will not know whether it is paying best rates for services provided. If a competitive process is used to procure contracted services, the Consortium can clearly state all service requirements in the procurement document. In addition, the Consortium can be sure that it will obtain the best value for its money as operators will compete to provide the required service levels. The use of competitive procurement may not mean that rates will decline; however, the concern for the Consortium should be to obtain best value for money expended.

A competitive process can be used with certain safeguards in place to protect the standards of service. The Consortium should continue to enforce limits placed on the amount of business any one operator can hold to avoid a monopoly situation. Additionally, in evaluating the successful proponents, cost should not be the overriding factor as that will encourage low cost proponents to enter the market while not necessarily ensuring that the same or improved levels of service are being provided. Local market conditions should be considered at all points in the development and evaluation of any service proposal. For example, local operators can be encouraged to participate in this process by placing a value on having local experience as part of the evaluation criteria; however, this specific criterion for local experience should also not be an overriding factor in the proposal evaluation process.

As the *Contracting Practices Resource Package* has been released, the Consortium should start developing an implementation plan for competitive procurement. A plan should include a review of existing procurement policies, an analysis of the local supplier market, strategies to help determine the RFP scope and processes and a criteria and timeline to phase-in competitive procurement. The plan should also utilize the best practices and lessons learned that are available from the pilot Consortia.

6.4   Contract Management

Contracting practices do not end after a contract is signed. Ongoing monitoring of compliance and performance of contracted service is an important and valuable practice to enhance service levels and ensure that contractors are providing the level of service that was previously agreed upon. Effective contract management practices focus on four key areas:

- Administrative contract compliance to ensure that operators meet the requirements set out in the contract;

- Operator facility and maintenance audits to ensure that operators keep their facilities and vehicles in line with the standards outlined in the contract;

- Service and safety monitoring to ensure that the on the road performance of drivers and operators reflects the expectations set out in the contract; and

- Performance monitoring to track the overall performance of operators over time.

6.4.1   Observations

6.4.1.1   Bus operator administrative and contract compliance

The Consortium has developed a policy on route and vehicle audits as part of its draft administrative policies, which are yet to be formally ratified by the Consortium's Board of Directors. This draft policy states that the Consortium is to hire an external third-party consultant to conduct audits of its operators' administrative and contract compliance.

The operator audit reviews the safety, maintenance and planning aspects of the operators' performance; this includes a review of the operators' hiring practices, training programs (including safety training programs), driver evaluation policies and procedures, and driver meetings. However, the scope of work does not include verification of the operators' contractual and legal requirements such as, for example, the sufficiency of the operators' insurance, CVOR certificates, or the maintenance of valid driver's licenses. The Consortium does not collect CVOR, WSIB or drivers licensing information, although some of the Consortiums operators have provided CVOR information to the Consortium voluntarily.

Compliance with safety related contractual clauses is ensured through both the operator auditing process, and the invoices submitted to the Consortium by operators for the reimbursement of training costs. The fuel component of the operator compensation formula is verified using invoices provided to the Consortium by the operators.

6.4.1.2   Operator facility and maintenance monitoring

The Consortium does not currently conduct audits of operator facilities. However, the monitoring of operator vehicles is included as part of the scope of work for the consultant.

The scope of work indicates that vehicle related information verified by the consultant includes a review of the drivers pre-trip inspection procedures, maintenance log books, contingency plans for vehicle break downs, and a random visual inspection of vehicles in service.

6.4.1.3   Operator safety and service monitoring

The Consortium has a policy in place with respect to service audits that has been ratified by the Consortium's Board of Directors. This policy requires the Consortium to conduct service audits on at least 10% of its entire fleet on an annual basis. The policy delegates responsibility for the implementation of service audits and outlines alternative procedures that can be used to conduct them. These procedures include following busses, observing activity at school locations, and using *Edulog* to ensure compliance with assigned routes. The procedures require Transportation Officers to contact bus operators prior to following them as part of an on-the-road audit.

Areas assessed during on-the-road audits include, among other things, the cleanliness of vehicles, the completeness of vehicle log books, appropriate student behaviour management practices, driver compliance with route information provided by the Consortium, and the verification of vehicle, mileage and student count information submitted by operators during the annual start-up procedure.

6.4.1.4 Performance monitoring

Discussions with Consortium management indicated that the Consortium has followed up with operators that have performed poorly during administrative, vehicle and service audits. This follow-up action has included the reallocation of routes based on the audit results.

6.4.2 Recommendations

6.4.2.1 Modify the audit consultant's scope of work

While the audit consultant's scope of work includes the verification of a number of key service and compliance areas, additional elements should be included in order to ensure that the consultant is verifying all mandated elements of the bus operator contract and all areas that are of concern to the Consortium. In particular, the scope of work should be modified to include, at minimum, the verification and assessment of:

- Bus operator CVOR certificates;

- The validity of driver's licenses; and

- The condition of operator facilities such as, for example, vehicle garages.

6.4.2.2 Modify the operator safety and service monitoring process

It is recognized that the Consortium's route auditing process imposes sufficient documentation and information requirements. However, in order to increase the effectiveness of the safety and service monitoring process, it is recommended that the Consortium move towards making this monitoring process random – i.e. audits should be conducted without informing the bus operator in advance. Making the process random will allow Consortium staff to gain a clearer view of the service standards maintained by operators on a typical, day-by-day basis. This will improve the Consortium's ability to identify the difference between expectations and reality.

It is further recommended that the results of the Consortium's operator safety and service monitoring process be documented, tracked over time and the results of the service monitoring process be communicated back to the operators on a regular and timely basis. Having such a feedback loop will assist them in managing their drivers, facilities and vehicles, and will ultimately help operators improve the quality of their services.

6.5 Results of E&E Review

The process by which the Consortium negotiates, structures, and manages its contracts for transportation services has been assessed as **Low**.

While the Consortium is to be commended for implementing appropriate safety and service compliance procedures, modifications to this process are recommended. In addition, significant changes are required in order to increase the clarity and effectiveness of the Consortium's contracting practices, the most important of which are the immediate execution of the bus operator contract and the implementation of a competitive process for the procurement of bus operator services. Other critical areas include alterations to the bus operator contract and compensation formula, alterations to the parent driver contract, changes to the operator procurement process in order to ensure its timeliness, and alterations to the Consortium's operator performance monitoring process.

7 Funding Adjustment

The Ministry has asked the E&E Review Team to apply their Funding Adjustment Formula to each Board that was subject to an E&E Review in Phase 3. Note that where Boards are incurring transportation expenses in multiple Consortium sites, the Board's adjustment will be prorated for the portion attributed to the Consortium under review. For example, if 90% of Board A's expenditures are attributed to Consortium A, and 10% of expenditures are attributed to Consortium B, the funding adjustment resulting from Consortium A's review will be applied to 90% of Board A's deficit or surplus position.

The Ministry's funding formula is as follows:

Table 8: Funding Adjustment Formula

Overall Rating	Effect on deficit Board[11]	Effect on surplus Board[11]
High	Reduce the gap by 100% (i.e. eliminate the gap)	No in-year funding impact; out-year changes are to be determined
Moderate-High	Reduce the gap by 90%	Same as above
Moderate	Reduce the gap by 60%	Same as above
Moderate-Low	Reduce the gap by 30%	Same as above
Low	Reduce the gap by 0%	Same as above

Based on the Ministry's funding formula, in conjunction with our E&E assessment of the Consortium, it is anticipated that the following funding adjustments will be made for each Board:

Simcoe County District School Board

Item	
2008-09 Transportation Surplus (Deficit)	1,073,507
% of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded)	100%
Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium	1,073,507
E&E Rating	Moderate-Low
Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula	No Adjustment
Total Funding adjustment	Nil

---

[11] This refers to Boards that have a deficit/surplus on student transportation

Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Item	
2008-09 Transportation Surplus (Deficit)	(32,806)
% of Surplus (Deficit) attributed to the Consortium (rounded)	80%
Revised amount to be assessed under the Consortium	(26,245)
E&E Rating	Moderate-Low
Funding Adjustment based on Ministry's Funding Adjustment Formula	30%
Total Funding adjustment	7,873

(Numbers will be finalized once regulatory approval has been obtained)

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Act	Education Act
Assessment Guide	The guide prepared by the E&E Review Team and the Ministry of Education which will be used as the basis for determining the overall effectiveness and efficiency of each Consortium
Common Practice	Refers to a set of planning parameters that have been reported by Ontario school boards as the most commonly adopted planning policies and practices. These are used as references in the assessment of the relative level of service and efficiency.
Consortium, the; or SCSTC	Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium
Deloitte	Deloitte & Touche LLP (Canada)
Driver	Refers to bus Drivers, see also operators
E&E	Effectiveness and Efficiency
E&E Review Team	As defined in Section 1.1.5
E&E Reviews	As defined in Section 1.1.4
Effective	Having an intended or expected effect; the ability to deliver intended service
Efficient	Performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort; the ability to achieve cost savings without compromising safety
Evaluation Framework	The document, titled "Evaluation Framework for the Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium" which supports the E&E Review Team's Assessment; this document is not a public document
Funding Adjustment Formula	As described in Section 1.3.5
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
JK/SK	Junior Kindergarten/Senior Kindergarten
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
Management Consultants	As defined in Section 1.1.5
Memo	Memorandum 2006: SB13, dated July 11 issued by the Ministry
Ministry	The Ministry of Education of Ontario
MPS	Management Partnership Services Inc., the routing consultant, as defined in Section 1.1.5
MTO	The Ministry of Transportation of Ontario

operators	Refers to companies that operate school buses, boats or taxis and the individuals who run those companies. In some instances, an operator may also be a Driver.
Overall Rating	As Defined in Section 3.2 of the Evaluation Framework
Partner Boards, Member Boards, School Boards or Boards	The School Boards that have participated as full partners or members in the Consortium; the SMCDSB and the SCDSB
SCDSB	Simcoe County District School Board
SMCDSB	Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
Rating	The E&E Assessment score on a scale of High to Low, see Section 1.3.4
Report	The report prepared by the E&E Review Team for each Consortium that has undergone an E&E Review (i.e. this document)
Separate Legal Entity	Incorporation

Appendix 2: Financial Review – by School Board

Simcoe County District School Board

Item	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-09	2009-2010[12]
Allocation[13]	18,209,675	18,417,891	18,807,817	19,366,172	19,102,657
Expenditure[14]	16,673,717	17,430,994	18,071,972	18,292,665	18,432,300
Transportation Surplus (Deficit)	1,535,958	986,897	735,845	1,073,507	670,357
Total Expenditures paid to the Consortium	16,673,717	17,430,994	18,071,972	18,292665	18,432,300
As % of total Expenditures of Board	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Item	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Allocation	11,406,307	11,525,453	11,754,893	12,143,254	12,400,717
Expenditure	10,626,976	10,074,949	11,635,374	12,176,060	12,227,607
Transportation Surplus (Deficit)	779,331	1,450,504	119,519	(32,806)	173,110
Total Expenditures paid to the Consortium	10,626,976	10,074,949	11,635,374	9,740,848	9,782,086
As % of total Expenditures of Board	100%	100%	100%	80%	80%

---

[12] 2009/2010 allocations and expenditures based on Ministry data – Revised Estimates for 2009/2010

[13] Allocation based on Ministry data – includes all grant allocations for transportation (Section 9 00008C, Section 13 00006C, Section 13 00012C)

[14] Expenditure based on Ministry data – taken from Data Form D: 730C (Adjusted expenditures for compliance) – 212C (Other Revenues) + 798C (Capital expenditures funded from operating)

Appendix 3: Document List

1	Acceptable use of information technology - draft
2	Accident-Incident Policy - draft
3	Administration Calendar
4	Agenda - Board of Directors
5	Agenda - Staff meeting
6	Alarm System agreement
7	APM-Courtesy Rider - SCDSB
8	Appendix A travel
9	APPENDIX B for Travel
10	appendix C - travel claim form
11	Appendix D - SMCDSB reimbursement policy
12	Approval to attend conference form - draft
13	Article - As bus costs rise-15th Oct
14	Article - Barrie Examiner March 23 - SMCDSB funding complaint
15	Article - Board recommended to terminate bus agreement - May 20 2008
16	Article - Board to opt out of bus deal - May 15 08
17	Article - Bus crash strands students
18	Article - Bus issue still unsettled_Aug 23 2006
19	Article - Bus plan sparks discussion_sept 1 2009
20	Article - Carden Dalton residents feel board not acting in children's best interests - May 17 2008
21	Article - Carrying precious cargo - 20th October
22	Article - Catholic board budget eyes more funding for busing - June 19 08
23	Article - Changes to bus schedule upsets parent - May 23 08
24	Article - Confusion over bus pickup-30th Oct
25	Article - Driver charged after school bus crash - Simcoe - June 11 09
26	Article - Driver charged in collision-8th September
27	Article - FW EDU late posting
28	Audit report
29	Auto Insurance Policy - draft
30	Board of Directors
31	Bylaws
32	Child booster seats-draft
33	Clerical - SCDSB
34	Communications - SCSTC - draft

35	Complaint form
36	Consort reconcilation Aug 31,09
37	Consortia Submission document2007-06-18-162136
38	CONTRACT 2009-2010
39	Contract summary
40	cost sharing process
41	Courtesy Seats - draft
42	custodial agreement
43	discountinued use of booster seat form
44	Distance to a Bus Stop-draft
45	document2007-06-22-154425
46	DRAFTMINUTESSEPT2809
47	Duration of Bus Trips - Draft Policy
48	Duties of Bd of Directors &GM
49	Edulog Maintenance Agreeement
50	Edulog Maintenance agreement
51	Eligibility-draft
52	E-MAIL GUIDELINES - draft
53	Equipment on buses draft
54	Evidence of Tracking (one)
55	Evidence of Tracking (two)
56	Expenditure Approval Process - draft
57	Extended FSL Transportation
58	External Audit
59	First Student Backup RC
60	Hazard Eligibility - draft
61	Health and Safety polidy- draft
62	Inclement Weather Policy - draft
63	Inclement Weather procedure
64	Injury Report - SCDSB
65	Injury Report - SMCDSB
66	Insurance
67	Inventory of flleet - First Student Midland
68	Key service indicators
69	Late Bus Procedure
70	Lease agreement
71	Letter from Risk Management Services re: scope of work

72	Letters Patent
73	Manager Transportation and Assessment
74	Membership agreement
75	Membership Agreement document2007-06-22-154425
76	MINUTESFEB2508
77	MINUTESJUNE0508
78	MINUTESOCT2708
79	Missing Child Draft Policy &procedures
80	op paymnt sheets
81	Operational Calendar
82	Operator billing
83	Operator List
84	Operator sample CVOR
85	Operator sample reciepts fuel costs
86	Out of Area Students - draft
87	Planning practices
88	Policies and Practices Summary
89	Policy Statement-draft
90	Procedures for reviewing routes
91	Professional Development Policy - draft
92	Route &Vehicle Audit Policy - draft
93	Route Planning Process
94	Route Supervisor final Feb 2007 - SCDSB
95	Routing and Technical Efficiency summary
96	Routing of School Vehicles - draft
97	Routing Porcesses
98	Sample operator audit report and related correspondence
99	Sample operator start up package
100	Sample SCDSB start up package
101	Sample SMCDSB start up package
102	SCDSB startup package
103	SCDSB Transportation Policy
104	School Closure - transportation - draft
105	SCSTC 2008-2009 Budget
106	SCSTC 2009-2010 Budget
107	SCSTC ORG Chart generic
108	SCSTC Pandemic Plan

109	SCSTC_Manual_Admin
110	SCSTC_Manual_Operations
111	SCSTS Asset Inventory
112	Secretary_Transportation - RC Board
113	SMCDSB startup package
114	SMCDSB Transportaton Policy
115	Snow plowing agreement
116	specedform
117	SPECIAL ED Notice
118	Special Needs Transportation Process
119	Special Transportation Draft Policy
120	Speciialized Programs
121	Speical Needs Transportation Procedures
123	Staff Confidentiality Agreement - draft
124	Staff training tracking list
125	summary
126	Temp medical trasnp - draft
127	TRANSPORT GL CODES - SMCDSB
128	Transport of Co-op Students - draft
129	Transportation Accounts - SCDSB
130	Transportation Information Pamphlet
131	Transportation Officer - RC Board
132	Travel Expense Policy - draft
133	Vehicle size - tracking
134	Workplace health and safety report
135	Workplace Inspection Report

Appendix 4: Common Practices

		Elementary		Secondary
		JK/SK	Gr. 1 - 8	GR. 9 - 12
Home to School Distance				
Common Practice		0.8 km	1.2 km	3.2 km
Policy -	SCDSB	1.6 km	1.6 km	3.2 km
Policy -	SMCDSB	1.6 km	1.6 km	3.2 km
Home to Bus Stop Distance				
Common Practice		0.5 km	0.8 km	0.8 km
Policy -	SCDSB	0.8 km	0.8 km	1.6 km
Policy -	SMCDSB	-	-	-
Practice		0.8 km	0.8 km	1.6 km
Arrival Window				
Common Practice		18	18	25
Policy -	SCDSB	15	15	15
Policy -	SMCDSB	15	15	15
Departure Window				
Common Practice		16	16	18
Policy -	SCDSB	15	15	15
Policy -	SMCDSB	15	15	15
Earliest Pick Up Time				
Common Practice		6:30	6:30	6:00
Policy -	SCDSB	**5:52 AM is the earliest pick-up time in the database**		
Policy -	SMCDSB			
Latest Drop Off Time				
Common Practice		5:30	5:30	6:00
Policy -	SCDSB	**6:26 PM is the latest drop-off time in the database**		
Policy -	SMCDSB			
Maximum Ride Time				
Common Practice		75	75	90
Policy -	SCDSB	60	60	60 to 75 Min
Policy -	SMCDSB	60	60	60
Note:	30 min average ride time for both Boards with 98 percent below 60 minutes			
Seated Students Per Vehicle				
		JK/SK	Gr. 1 - 6	GR. 9 - 12
Common Practice		69	69	52
Policy -	SCDSB	-	-	-
Policy -	SMCDSB	-	-	-
Practice		69	69	52