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Monday, August 12, 2024

Dear Students and Families,

The Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium (RCJTC) has been in discussions with school bus service companies to secure student transportation services for the upcoming school year. Unfortunately, the school bus service companies have yet to agree to the terms we have put forward for the 200 bus routes which we coordinate for students across the RCDSB and RCCDSB.

Unlike years before, the school bus service companies are refusing to guarantee that there will be student transportation services in September unless contract extensions are reached. Our goal is to continue working hard to secure services for students and their families. However, you need to be aware that buses may not be running for the first day of school on September 4, in order to consider what other options may be available.

The most recent contract extension offers from RCJTC have been rejected by the school bus service companies.

RCJTC has enormous respect and appreciation for the school bus drivers and the important role they play in our students' education. However, our funding comes from the Ministry of Education, through the school boards. The funding provides a set amount specifically for student transportation. This means we are limited in what we can offer for rate increases to school bus service companies and the length of contracts we can agree to. Although our offers have included unprecedented increases to rates, meeting the current demands is simply not possible without cuts to programs and services that directly impact classroom education.

School bus service companies are private, for-profit businesses. These companies are ultimately responsible for hiring, training, and paying individual school bus drivers. The service companies have informed us that they will not have buses on the road in September without contracts in place.

We understand this may be stressful news to hear over the summer, but we want to make sure students and families have time to plan ahead. We hope to reach contract extensions that are fair and reasonable for everyone involved. RCJTC is exploring all options to secure student transportation services, which may include exploring alternative companies to service our bus routes.

We will provide students and their families with updates on new developments. If a disruption to services appears likely, we will do our best to inform families as early as possible.

An FAQ is available here: [www.onthebus.ca/updates](http://www.onthebus.ca/updates)

Sincerely,

Justin Jeffrey  
General Manager  
Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium