



LEA FAQs

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is the Parent Portal?

This portal is a user-friendly online tool that empowers parents and guardians of students with active individualized education programs (IEPs) that include transportation services to choose their transportation preference for the upcoming school year.

The portal puts the parent in the driver's seat by empowering them to share accurate information and choose the transportation option that works best for their child and family. In the past, OSSE has received outdated or incorrect information about pickup/drop-off locations, or requests for students not currently riding -- causing delays in getting students to school. The new portal allows families to confirm or update details and select the best transportation option for their child.

2. What are the transportation options available for SY25-26?

- i. **Will Not Need Transportation:** My student will not use any OSSE transportation services.
- ii. **Parent Stipend Program:** I will transport my student to/from school and receive a monthly stipend. (Please see Question 44 for more information on Parent Stipend.)

(Note: Parents currently enrolled in the stipend program must still submit their preference to confirm participation in the upcoming school year and upload supporting documentation in the parent portal. Additionally, regular student attendance is required and will be verified monthly.)

- iii. **DOT Transportation:** OSSE-Division of Student Transportation (OSSE-DOT) will transport my student to/from their enrolled school (via yellow school bus or other OSSE-designated vehicle). I will provide the necessary home address and school address details.

3. Will parents be able to access the Parent Portal through their cell phones?

Yes! The Parent Portal is designed to be accessible through multiple platforms, including laptop/desktop, tablet, and cellphones. If parents don't have internet access or access to a device to complete submission, they can get in-person assistance at OSSE Headquarters.

OSSE will provide in-person technical support to families for ESY Transportation from April 14-23:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays | 4–7 p.m.

OSSE will provide in-person technical support to families for SY26-27 transportation in June and July:

- June 9-18 - Tuesdays and Thursdays | 4–7 p.m.
- July 14-23 - Tuesdays and Thursdays | 4–7 p.m.

Location: OSSE, 1050 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002

You may also request help through the OSSE Parent Resource Center at (202) 576-5000 or email osse.parentportal@dc.gov.

4. Why this change?

In past years, transportation service for students with special needs has been impacted by incomplete or outdated transportation on transportation request forms. The OSSE Parent Portal puts families in the driver's seat and allows them to confirm or update their transportation details, such as addresses and service preferences.

5. Is the OSSE Parent Portal available in other languages?

Yes, the parent/guardians have the option to use the **Select Language** feature and choose from a varied selection of language preferences.





PARENT SUPPORT AND OUTREACH

6. How can parents receive Customer Service Support regarding any questions they have regarding the OSSE Parent Portal?

The parent/guardian can reach out directly by contacting via email at osse.parentportal@dc.gov or calling the Parent Resource Center at (202) 576-5000..

7. Will they receive training on creating a single sign on account?

The OSSE Parent Portal has step-by-step video guides to help parents navigate through the site, as well as logging in to portal. They can also call/email OSSE and visit OSSE headquarters for in-person support.

8. Who is responsible for ensuring 100% participation from parents?

It's a collaborative effort between LEA and OSSE, but OSSE is taking the lead. OSSE will be partnering with LEAs throughout the enrollment process to ensure parents have peace of mind that their application is complete.

9. Will OSSE be offering any parent-facing trainings about how to complete their portions of the TRF?

There are step-by-step guides available on the portal to help guide parents how to submit a transportation application for each preference. There is no in-person training available, however OSSE is providing online/phone support and in person support to parents throughout select days in June and July.

10. What does logging into the portal look like for a parent? How will it be confirmed that they are a primary guardian?

The parent will use the email address provided to the LEA to receive a one time passcode, create an account and then log in. The parent will see not only their name and email on the Home page, they will also see all children eligible for transportation listed.

11. What is the plan for completing TRFs for students who qualify for transportation between now and start of school? Do they get the same level of outreach/ communication through OSSE? If a student qualifies for transportation after today, will the parent have to submit a TRF to start the process?

OSSE will reach out to parents/guardians through email and text communication. All students will get the same level of opportunity to have their transportation preference submitted, however the parent must initiate the request.

12. What are OSSE's plans for cases that involve parents who refuse or are unable to complete their tasks? Is there an override so that students may attend school?

Though the expectation is for the parent/guardian to complete the request on their own with phone/in person support provided by OSSE, in rare and case-by-case scenarios OSSE will review to make an exception in the application process.

UPDATED PROCESS AND TIMELINES

13. Can I change my preference once approved?

Yes. You can update and submit a new preference at any time during the school year. You will need to complete the process for the new transportation preference which will effectively cancel the existing preference.

14. What is the deadline for the parents to complete the submissions?

To ensure transportation services are provided on start of school, the deadline is ten days prior to LEA start of school. However, the system doesn't close, and parents can submit at any time.

15. If a parent has not reenrolled the student, can they still enter a TRF for their child?

To be eligible for transportation, the student has to be successfully enrolled in a school.

16. How is OSSE capturing student accommodations via IDS?

Student accommodations are entered by the LEA/school in the IEP. All information in the IEP is entered in the IDS, which filters through to OSSE.

17. Will ESY change for next year to the OSSE Parent Portal.

Yes, this will be the process henceforth. Starting school year 25-26, parent/guardians will have the ability to select their transportation preferences for all school terms. All student profiles with a transportation selection made in the current school year will roll over to ESY for ESY eligible students. Parents will not need to log in and make the choice again, unless they want to update.

18. As an extended school year LEA, SY25-26 data won't start feeding through until about 10 calendar days before the start of school. Will parents of new students not be able to complete requests until the SY25-26 feed begins or will they automatically be notified now if they are marked enrolled through MSDC?

As soon as MSDC updates their feed or the LEA completes enrollment for the student, the portal will become available for parents/guardians to leverage.



19. How long after a student’s new IEP with transportation is finalized will they populate in the parent portal?

One business day.

20. Where are we updating parent contact information?

Parent Contact information is updated in your school information system.

21. How long will it take to take to route if parents are late with signing up?

It can take up to 10 days before school year and 3-4 days after school year for routing to complete.

22. Does a parent need to wait for the switch over from one school year to another (i.e. end of ESY, SIS change/roll over) before new TRF can be submitted?

The parent/guardian for existing students will not need to wait. They can complete their transportation preference at any time and the system will update as soon as the data is received from MSDC. New to district students will need to wait for SIS change rollover.

NOTIFICATIONS

23. How will LEAs receive notifications about completed parent tasks specifically?

They will receive email notification through the LEA email provided to LEA data manager.

24. How will parents receive notifications?

Parent/guardians will receive email and text notification through the email and phone number that they have provided to the school.

25. Will the notifications go directly to the school-based LEA reps, or will we need to push this out to schools centrally?

It will go through to both LEA and school representatives.

26. Will LEA and School SPED POCs receive the Transportation notifications, or solely staff designated as Transportation POC?

It will go out to LEA and SPED POCs as well.

27. Will communications go out to only currently enrolled students, or will it include new students enrolled through MSDC for upcoming school year?

It will go out to both.

28. Will the LEA be notified when a student is routed? Currently, this information is priced to the parent only.

Yes, the LEA will be notified of the student’s TRF status.

29. Will LEA’s receive notification that parents have done their portion so we can move forward?

Yes, three times a day. 8am, 12noon, and 3pm. Also, LEAs can access IDS. Where KPIs are updated daily.

STUDENT EXCEPTIONS

30. Will Adult Learners (18 years old and older) have access to this portal as well?

Adult learners or students with access to their own rights will have access to the portal.

31. How will the new system know if students have a single vehicle-single rider transportation modality?

We know of those modalities and are in consideration.

32. What if a student is MKV and has an MD/ VA address? Can a family enter a temporary address in the system?

Yes, they can add a temporary address.

33. How does one flag that student is a ward? We have quite a few wards of DC that reside in MD?

OSSE receives a nightly feed that lets us know if there is a student who is a ward of the state.

34. How will students under foster care complete?

The CFSA or foster parent will be listed as guardian and can complete.

LEA RESPONSIBILITY

35. How can the LEA email be updated?

LEA data manager will have to update.

36. Should the LEA use the IDS dashboard to actively manage the KPIs to get to “active TRFs” right?

Yes. They should be actively monitoring throughout the summer for KPIs that have “pending parent submission” and conduct outreach to ensure parents complete those.

37. Does it matter which party enters their TRF info first - parent or LEA?

Parents need to enter their TRF first, and then it will be available for the LEA to complete.

**38. Will LEA's have parent login information in case the parent misplaces it?**

No, LEAs will not be able to reset parent login information. If parent/guardian misplaces/forgets their password, they can reset it through the portal or contact OSSE for support.

39. What about students that have 504s?

To receive transportation, OSSE would need to know that they're eligible. OSSE will need to receive that information from LEA.

40. For students accessing a specialized program, will parents generate and submit their own Independent Student Drop-off form?

No, the independent drop off form will be submitted by the LEAs in the IDS form.

41. Is there a way for LEAs to see which parents have completed this or not?

Yes, the daily KPI feed in IDS will indicate which parents have completed and which are still pending.

42. The LEA is submitting the information in the "student accommodation" section. Will this area be grayed out for parents?

Parents won't see that area. That will only be in IDS. Parents will only see parent portal.

43. Will the parent or the LEA have to update the TRF to effectuate a change in location? (Ex. change to a nonpublic school) Where will the Alternate Go-Live date option be?

It will be for the schools to tell us when to start at the new address.

PARENT STIPEND PROGRAM**44. Does a parent selecting the Parent Stipend Program mean automatic approval?**

Applications for the monthly Parent Stipend Program undergo a review and approval process. Submission of an application does not guarantee enrollment in the program. You will receive an email confirming enrollment and next steps once your application is reviewed and approved.

DOT TRANSPORTATION**45. Will they get an error message if there are errors with days of the week? For example, if they select Monday for both addresses.**

Yes, error messages will populate for any inconsistencies within the application. All addresses will be validated by DC MAR and only one address per school day will be able to be selected.

46. Can a parent enter different a.m. and p.m. addresses for different days of the week?

Yes, they can choose different a.m. and p.m. addresses as well as alternate addresses.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION**47. If there is a change in guardianship, will the LEA be able to update the TRF to update the guardian?**

Yes, any updates that are made to the student profile regarding the parent/guardian information, including contact information, will be updated on our side as long as it's done in the feed.

48. Does OSSE accept more than one contact identified as the primary guardian indicator? Does the system allow for more than one person to access?

Yes, more than one guardian can have access. The guardian(s) needs to be listed on the student's record with the LEA to have access.

49. If a guardian has edit privileges, what does it entail? Does this mean they could lock the other guardians out of the system?

The guardian who finalizes the transportation preferences will lock the choice. All additional guardians will have view only access unless granted access by the primary guardian.

SCHOOL INFORMATION**50. Will parents see the school they are enrolled in, or will they see multiple options including all the nonpublic schools that OSSE uses?**

They will see all the public and nonpublic schools, but their current school will be defaulted for them. They will have the ability to update if the default school is incorrect.

51. What will the process be if a student changes schools during the school year?

The change will come through in the feed and the parent will be notified.