



GOLDIE GHAMARI
MEMBER OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT
CARLETON

PRESS RELEASE

Carleton MPP Goldie Ghamari says OSTA funding gap was already addressed by Ministry, school boards in summer months

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[OTTAWA] — As the 2023-24 school year is into its third week, Goldie Ghamari, MPP for Carleton, says it is “unacceptable” that there are still many students in the western rural and suburban areas of the city without school bus service.

In the early summer, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB), the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB), and the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) informed the Ministry of Education about transportation funding for the 2023-24 school year. OSTA had then threatened route closures in Ottawa if additional funding wasn’t provided.

Throughout the summer months, the Ministry of Education worked with the OCDSB and OCSB on supporting the boards with additional funding for the 2023-24 school year.

“Our government committed an additional \$1.8 million to OCDSB and OCSB on top of our student transportation investment of \$75M for the 2023-24 school year. This also includes a commitment from the two school boards to address remaining transportation pressure needs to ensure that transportation services are stable for parents, students, and school communities,” said MPP Ghamari.

OSTA’S website which states on July 25th confirms this commitment with the following: “Over the summer, we worked with our partners at OCDSB, OCSB, and the Ministry of Education to address the expected \$6M funding shortage for the upcoming school year.”

“School transportation is funded in the same way across the province,” MPP Ghamari explained. “Yet about 75% of current route cancellations occurring in the entire province are still in Ottawa’s two English school boards, with the vast majority affecting children at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.”



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“This is unacceptable,” said MPP Ghamari. “While students are back in class and getting back to the basics of reading, writing and math, through OSTA’s mismanagement with the school boards, families in Carleton and across Ottawa have experienced unnecessary duress.”

“I look forward to the Ministry of Education’s directed third party review of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority so that there is a better long-term sustainable solution to ensure this does not happen again,” said MPP Ghamari. “In addition, I would encourage parents to contact their local trustees to let their voices be heard.”

OSTA has been able to provide OC Transpo vouchers for students 12 and over in urban and suburban areas where city bus service is available, but that is not an option for most rural families.

“We expect better financial management from Ottawa’s two school boards and OSTA so that students can benefit from a stable and enjoyable school year with the full school experience of extracurriculars like clubs, band, sports that build real life and job skills that go beyond the classroom,” MPP Ghamari added.

“I am encouraging parents and children impacted by this situation to share their experiences with me directly through my contact form:
<https://goldiempp.ca/contact>”

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