



## *Southwestern Ontario School Bus Operators Association*

Dear Drivers,

As we gear up for the school year, we are reaching out to you with an update on our contract negotiations with STS and the School Boards.

A few months ago, all of the bus operators serving STS came together to form an association (SOSBOA) so that we could negotiate as one entity. There are a few contract issues on the table and our goal is to have a single, long-term contract with a consistent rate for all operators.

The biggest issue is wage rates for you, our drivers. As you well know, the wages that we are able to offer at current contracts are below what is reasonable for the incredibly important job that you do getting our children safely transported to school every day.

While we have made some progress in our negotiations, we are still working to establish a fair and consistent wage rate for all drivers across all bus operators, and to secure funding to cover it. Operator Associations in other parts of the province have been successful in negotiating multi-year deals with rates everyone is happy with and we remain hopeful that the School Boards here will do the same. We are asking for wage increases that are in line with what has been agreed to in neighbouring school districts.

In the meantime, we are preparing for September as usual and look forward to seeing you at start up meetings between now and Labour Day. Our hope is that the current impasse will be resolved and that STS and the School Boards will agree to put a contract in place, or at least a process for setting a contract down the road, so that we can provide service on September 4th. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Les Cross, Cathy VanBommel, or Jean Barber. You can also read our note to parents on our website.

Warm Regards,

The Southwestern Ontario School Bus Operators Association

