

1<sup>st</sup> May 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Hunter Valley Buses (HVB) are writing to you as a provider of school bus services to your child's school. HVB would like to address some concerns regarding the current use of School Opal Cards.

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) provides eligible school students with free or subsidised travel under the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) between home and school during school terms. There is no provision under the scheme to fund the carriage of students to or from any other location.

When using a School Opal Card, it is a condition of use that students must tap on at the beginning of a trip and tap off at the end of a trip at an Opal Card reader.

Our data indicates that only 40% of students with School Opal Cards are using them correctly.

Data gathered from Opal taps are used to determine the number of services provided to your school. If students don't tap on and tap off, lack of perceived patronage could lead to a service appearing underutilised, prompting a review of the number of services provided.

As a part of our campaign and ongoing commitment to provide the level of service needed for your school, HVB may have visible presence of Customer Support Officers both on buses and at schools to assist students in the correct use of School Opal Cards.

HVB are asking that students become aware of the following travel options to avoid any possible repercussions with either our Customer Support Team or TfNSW Revenue Protection Officers:

#### **School Opal Card**

Eligible students can apply or update their details online at:

<https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts>

Students who are not eligible for a free School Opal Card have the following options:

#### **School Term Bus Pass**

Students who don't qualify for free school travel, may be eligible to purchase a School Term Bus Pass

<https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/termBusPass>



**Child/Youth Opal Card**

Children aged 4 - 15 years are entitled to concession fares. Eligible secondary students aged 16 years and older also pay concession fares with their proof of entitlement card

<https://transportnsw.info/tickets-opal/opal/get-opal-card>

**Request an Application Review**

If your application was unsuccessful, you can request a review by clicking on the 'Request a Review' link in your application status screen or via the SSTS website using your application ID

<https://ssts-apply.transport.nsw.gov.au/ApplySSTS/TrackApplication.html>

Students that do not have a valid Opal card are required to travel with a receipt for School Opal Card application/replacement or pay a fare to travel to and from school on our buses. Failure to produce a valid Opal Card will result in the driver or Customer Support Officers recording the students name for HVB to follow-up with the school and Parent/Carer concerned.

Revenue Protection Officers may issue a warning or fine for students who do not have a valid ticket for travel.

If a student's travel pass is lost, stolen or damaged, please apply for a replacement (a fee may be charged) at <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/reportPass>. While waiting for your replacement school Opal Card to arrive, students are required to travel with a receipt for School Opal Card replacement or a valid ticket for travel.

Students or Parents/Carers with any concerns regarding Opal cards and travel to/from school should contact TfNSW at:

<https://transportnsw.info/contact-us/feedback/passes-concessions-feedback>

Kind Regards,

Hunter Valley Buses

