

The Toronto District School Board wants to stress to its staff the importance of driving safely when travelling in their own vehicle or in a TDSB owned vehicle.

The Ontario Government has passed Legislation that bans the use of hand-held devices to talk, text or email while driving. It is expected to take effect in the fall of 2009.

For safety and liability reasons, cellular telephones and Blackberrys should not be used while driving. If it is necessary to answer the phone, stop the car safely at the side of the road or turn into a parking lot and conduct the conversation. The same action is recommended when initiating a call.

TDSB will not provide legal advice or assistance to those employees charged under the legislation. Fines levied upon conviction will not be paid by the employer or reimbursed as an expense. Under the legislation, drivers who continue to text, type, email, dial, or chat without the benefit of a hands-free handheld device could face fines of up to \$500.

#### **Wireless Handheld Devices and Bill 118: Countering Distracted Driving**

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The Canadian Automobile Association and the Traffic Injury Research Foundation have developed the following definition of distracted driving:

*Distraction involves a diversion of attention from driving, because the driver is temporarily focusing on an object, person, task or event not related to driving, which reduces the driver's awareness, decision-making and/or performance, leading to an increased risk of corrective actions, near-crashes or crashes.*

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Also, see the following references: