



Executive Summary

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada, about 1.5 million Ontarians (13.5% of Ontario's population) have disabilities. This number is expected to increase to 20% by 2020 as the population ages.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*,

Our Mission

The Mission of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the family and church, is to provide, in a responsible manner, a Catholic education which develops spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, social, and physical capabilities of each individual to live fully today and to meet the challenges of the future, thus enriching the community.

4. Definitions

The ODA, the AODA and this Plan apply to barriers and disabilities that extend well beyond those that are physical. The ODA and AODA contain the following broad definitions of “barrier” and “disability”:

Barrier means:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of her/his disability, including a physical barrier, architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, policy or practice (“obstacle”);

Disability means:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) a condition of mental impairment or development disability;
- c) a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) a mental disorder or;
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 (“handicap”).

A disability may be a temporary or permanent infirmity.

The identification, removal and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities have significant impact for Board departments, locations and general operations.

5. Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Board reconfirmed its commitment to accessibility planning in 2004 by adopting the following Commitment to Accessibility Planning Mission Statement:

- b) List facilities, regulations, policies, programs practices and services that cause or may cause barriers to people with disabilities.
- c) Recommend barriers to be removed or prevented.
- d) Describe how these barriers would be removed or prevented.
- e) Prepare an annual report on these activities, and after its approval by the Board of Trustees, make the plan available to the public.

Access Dufferin-Peel meets regularly during the school year. Sub-Committees also continue to be established and operate as specific needs are identified. Meetings are scheduled as needed. Accessibility Coordinator responsibilities are currently assigned to Michelle Coutinho Principal, Equity Diversity and Inclusive Education.

6. Barrier-Removal Initiatives

a) Physical Barriers

The Board has recognized in many ways the need to ensure access to all board facilities and services, including the provision of student transportation and accommodation of employees and students with disabilities in a manner appropriate to their needs. Specialized health support services are provided for students in consultation with local health agencies. Injured/ill employees who are returning to work are provided with individual vocational rehabilitation plans to promote integration into the workplace. Some of the resources used and the physical barrier removal initiatives implemented to date include:

- Installation of elevator lifts to gymnasium stages
- Emergency Evacuation Chairs (new in September 2012)
- New construction of an interior elevator system for barrier-free access St. Anne
- Automatic door openers installed at main entrance to buildings
- Appropriate student transportation opportunities
- Specialized health support services
- Assistance with mobility
- Ergonomic modifications
- Workstation accessibility
- Designated handicap parking and curb cuts at all sites
- Barrier-free washroom facilities, including ceiling lifts where needed
- Lightweight/customized tools for learning
- Individualized vocational rehabilitation plans for employees
- Specialized equipment (transfers and lifts)
- Access to appropriate supports through outside agency supports (e.g. CCAC)
- Special Education and Support Services Department- system supports for students
- Health Promotion & Wellness Department – system supports for staff
- Health & Safety Department – system support for staff and students
- Health & Safety Plant audits

Special Education and Support Services and Health Promotion & Wellness Department staff

c) **Informational Barriers**

The 2004 survey results identified a need to increase public awareness of accessibility issues and to communicate the Board's accessibility planning initiatives as an on-going priority. ACCESS DP has remained active in promoting issues, events and activities related to accessibility through its various channels for information dissemination. Initiatives that have been implemented include:

New Website – The new DPCDSB website rolled out in fall 2013 meets all the necessary requirements for accessibility under WCAG 2.0 Level A.

Accessible Formats for documents - An agreement was reached in September 2012 with W. Ross. MacDonald School for the Blind, Visually Impaired and BlindDeaf, where-in upon request, Dufferin-Peel, may submit Board documents to AERO who will in turn, provide them in an accessible format such as BRAILLE etc. This service will be accessed on an "as needed" basis.

Hiring Practices –

In 2011/2012 the Human Resources Department amended its postings, advertising and hiring practices for teaching and support staff. All postings and advertising for employment include information advising that Dufferin-Peel C.D.S.B. will make efforts to meet the needs of disabled candidates and eliminate barriers wherever possible, upon request.

Upon hire, new staff is advised of the Board's policy on Accessibility and Disability Awareness. Staff that self-identify special needs are provided with assistance (as required). The Health Promotion and Wellness Department, and the Health and Safety Department, work together with the employee to resolve any areas of identified need.

Performance Appraisals, Career Development/Re-Deployment - Board policy now ensures that performance appraisals, career development and re-deployment all take into consideration any special needs as identified by the employee.

Emergency Response Plan - The Health and Safety Department, department supervisory and principals ensure that all workplace emergency response plans for staff and students with disabilities are crafted appropriately and reviewed annually according to the individual need and site specifications.

Accommodations Plans - These are developed in conjunction with the individual, physicians, Human Resources Department,

8. Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has developed standards under the Ontario Disabilities Act. They are:

- Customer service
- Employment
- Information and Communications
- Public Transportation
- Built Environment (buildings and other structures)

The Customer Service Standard is the first standard developed under the ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (AODA).

As a public sector organization providing goods and services externally to the public, the Board must comply with Regulation 429/07, *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, which has a deadline for compliance of January 1, 2010. As required under the standard, policies and procedures were developed by the Freedom of Information / By-Laws / Policies & Procedures Officer.

All requirements of the Customer Service Standard have been met in a timely fashion. Status Update Report pht submitted to the Ministry of Economic Development, 7

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Inform employees of supports
Accessible formats and communication supports
Workplace emergency response information
Accommodation Plans
Return to work process
Performance management
Career development and advancement – complete and ongoing
Re-deployment – complete and ongoing
Accessible websites and content step 1– new sites to be complete Jan 1, 2014
All new construction and major renovations meet the Built Environment Standard – complete and ongoing
Libraries – The needs of students with disabilities or diverse needs are being met (under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005). Any resource such as library, literacy room, online, can be translated and made accessible to students on an “as needed, case by case” basis and coordinated through an itinerant teacher.

c) IAS Future Requirement/Actions:

The following are actions within the Integrated Accessibility Standard that are required to be met by 2021.

Libraries multimedia material – to be complete January 1, 2020
Accessible websites and content step 2 - new sites to be complete January 1, 2021

The Board has already initiated and implemented many measures to improve opportunities for people with disabilities, many of which are outlined in this report. ACCESS Dufferin-Peel will continue to expand these earlier initiatives in 2015 with a primary focus on ensuring the regulations in the Integrated Accessibility Standard are met in a timely fashion.

Training of staff, both current and new, will be ongoing throughout 2015. As well, the Information, Communication and Technology Department is ensuring continued compliance with the requirements for new websites.

All major renovations to structures, playgrounds and parking facilities as well as new buildings are continually monitored by the Plant Department to ensure compliance with the Built Environment Standard.

The Special Education Department, Plant Department, Health and Safety Department, and the Health Promotion and Wellness Department continue to work with identified staff and students to ensure accommodations are made as needed and appropriate. The Board Communication and Community Relations Department continues to monitor the on-line questionnaire to respond to questions and complaints and meet the needs of the visitors and public. Human Resources Department will continue to train staff and ensure employment in Dufferin-Peel reflects the Integrated Accessibility Standards as outlined in the AODA Act 2005. The ACCESS DP committee will continue to be a monitoring body as mandated by the Board, addressing current issues, ensuring the Board’s compliance with the regulation and surveying the needs of the Dufferin-

10. Communication of the Annual Accessibility Plan Status Report 2014

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board's Annual Accessibility Plan Status Report 2014 will be posted on the Board website at www.dpcdsb.org. Hard copies and copies in accessible format will also be available upon request by contacting the Board's Communications Department.

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Date: December 1, 2014