

# Halton District School Board

## Annual Accessibility Plan 2007 - 2008

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Halton District School Board  
Accessibility Working Group*

*Edited by:  
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This publication is available on the Halton District School Board website  
[www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca) and in alternate formats upon request.



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**Halton District School Board Mission and Values:**

*The Halton District School Board is committed to every student. We will...*

- *inspire learning;*
- *create safe, healthy, and engaging environments; and*
- *provide opportunities for challenge and choice.*

*The Halton District School Board values:*

*Relationships   Respect   Responsibility   Ingenuity*

The operational plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2007, includes nine specific goals which address **students, staff and system:**

- *Literacy and numeracy achievement*
- *Student success for all students*
- *Safety and well-being*
- *Staff development*
- *Staff wellness*
- *Leadership development*
- *Program accommodation*
- *Communication*
- *Technology*

Of particular note in relation to accessibility is the goal relating to safety and well-being.

One of the specific targets of this goal is:

- *all students will indicate a positive response on the “belonging” and “communication and community” domains of the annual School Effectiveness survey by 2010.*

The following are some of the strategies to be implemented to accomplish these goals:

- Positive and inclusive learning environments
- Progressive Discipline and School Safety (Bill 212)
- Cultural proficiency development
- Social skills development (ex Tribes, LINC-Crew, etc)
- Diversity initiatives

The mission, values and goals of the Halton District School Board are reflected in the Annual Accessibility Plan for the 2007-2008 school year. The Halton District School Board is committed to the continual improvement of access to school board facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/ guardians, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities. It is our intent to expand our focus by including more avenues for collaboration with people with disabilities in the review of our annual plan.

Background: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

The intent of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities, and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province.

The Act requires school boards to:

- prepare an annual accessibility plan,
- consult with people with disabilities in the preparation of the plan,
- make the plan public.

The Act allows organizations to determine their own priorities and implement them within existing planning processes and using existing resources. Once the Provincial Education Standards working group sets out the series of five year plans, our plan will be adjusted to reflect any changes in priorities.

The Accessibility Plan 2007 - 2008 has been prepared by the Accessibility Working Group (see participant list page 7) of the Halton District School Board. The plan describes:

- measures that the Halton District School Board has taken in the past,
- measures that the Halton District School Board will take during 2007 - 2008 to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Working Group identified a number of barriers for people with disabilities, and recommends continued focus on identifying, removing and preventing barriers in the areas of attitudinal, policy/practice, physical, architectural, information and communication for the 2007-2008 school year.

In addition, the Accessibility Working Group will review and make recommendations on **Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service** made July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007. This Regulation, made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, establishes accessibility standards for customer service and applies to every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.

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Note: The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* uses the term “persons with disabilities”. However, the Accessibility Directorate uses the term “people with disabilities” for general or common use when speaking or referring to persons with disabilities. Any time the Act is directly quoted, the term “persons with disabilities” is used. For all other references, “people with disabilities” is used.

### 1. **Aim**

This plan describes the measures that the Halton District School Board has taken in the past and measures that will be taken during the next year (2007 - 2008) to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities who work in, use or access school board facilities and services.

### 2. **Objectives**

This plan:

1. Describes the *process* by which the Halton District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
2. Reviews efforts at the Halton District School Board to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities during the *past year(s)*
3. Lists the policies, procedures, programs, practices and services that the Halton District School Board will review in the *coming year* to identify barriers for people with disabilities
4. Describes the *measures* the Halton District School Board will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
5. Describes how the Halton District School Board will make this accessibility plan *available to the public*

### 3. **Commitment to Accessibility Planning**

The Annual Accessibility Plan of the Halton District School Board will be approved by Administrative Council and shared with Trustees and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for information in line with the Halton District School Board's governance policy prior to being posted on the Board website.

The Halton District School Board is committed to:

- Establishing an Accessibility Working Group
- Consulting with board employee groups and people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans
- Ensuring school board policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Working Group to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Halton District School Board to meet these commitments.

#### **4. Description of the Halton District School Board**

The Halton District School Board is a regional school board serving more than 51,000 public school students in the municipalities of Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville in southern Ontario. All four municipalities form the Regional Municipality of Halton. The Region of Halton and the Halton District School Board share the same boundaries encompassing 232,000 acres of land, 25 kilometres of which are along the shore of Lake Ontario.

Regular curriculum includes a wide range of topics including – but not limited to – core French, technology, vocational, music and arts programs. Other programs offered within the Halton District School Board include French Immersion, English-as-a-Second-Language, adult and continuing education programs. Special education programs are also provided by the Halton District School Board for students with special needs.

With total budget revenues of \$411 million the Halton District School Board operates 92 public schools (77 elementary and 16 secondary). A team of 88 principals, 80 vice-principals, ten superintendents, an Executive Officer of Human Resources, a Chief Information Officer (Information Technology), an Associate Director and the Director of Education, as well as more than 3,100 teaching staff, and 1,100 support/non-teaching staff make the Halton District School Board one of the region's largest employers.

Public school supporters in the Region of Halton elect a board of 11 trustees, who establish policies and direction of the Halton District School Board. Two student trustees are appointed annually to represent the student voice on the Board. Committee-of-the-Whole meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month, with Board meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. Individual committee meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Public session for all meetings begins at 8 p.m. All meetings take place in the boardroom of the J.W. Singleton Education Centre, 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, L7R 3Z2.

The Halton District School Board believes that public education is one of the major cornerstones of a prosperous and democratic Canada.

### 5. The Accessibility Working Group Members

The accessibility working group was formally constituted in May 2003 and consists of the following members:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>
Chair: Jacki Oxley	School & Community Liaison, Office of the Director	(905) 335-3663 x3208 oxleyj@hdsb.ca
Helen Lamping, Acting Disability Management Coordinator	Facility Services	(905) 335-3663x3393 lamingh@hdsb.ca
Dean Barnes	Secondary Administrators	barnesd@hdsb.ca
Carol Davin		davinc@hdsb.ca
Toni Marlow	Elementary Administrator	marlowet@hdsb.ca
Kim Tennant	Elementary Teacher	<a href="mailto:tennantk@hdsb.ca">tennantk@hdsb.ca</a>
Margaret Taylor	Occasional Teacher	<a href="mailto:taylorme@hdsb.ca">taylorme@hdsb.ca</a>
Patty Dean, Manager of Employee Health and Attendance	Human Resources	<a href="mailto:deanp@hdsb.ca">deanp@hdsb.ca</a> 905-335-3663 ext 3407
As needed	Information Technology	
Bill Wotherspoon, Manager of Capital Projects	Facility Services	(905) 335-3663 x 3265 wotherspoonb@hal.hdsb.ca
Alice Strachan, School Council Co-Chair	School Councils	<a href="mailto:Astrachan1@cogeco.ca">Astrachan1@cogeco.ca</a>
Janet Barton, SEAC Member	Special Education Advisory Committee	<a href="mailto:janetbarton@bellnet.ca">janetbarton@bellnet.ca</a>
Marian Thorpe, Co-ordinator (north)	Student Services	(905) 335-3663 x 3226 thorpem@hdsb.ca
Suzanne Muir, Diversity Coordinator	Community Relations	(905) 335-3663 ext 3257 muirs@hdsb.ca

## **6. Barrier-removal Initiatives during 2006-2007**

During the last several years, there have been a number of initiatives in the Halton District School Board to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The Halton District School Board, through its Special Education Plan addresses access for students with disabilities through modifications and accommodations of programs and services. The Special Education Plan is available on the board website at [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca).

Since 1998, the Halton District School Board has run an integrated Track and Field Meet where elementary students with physical and/or intellectual disabilities participate alongside their peers. Each year over 100 students with disabilities participate in the event.

We partnered with Community Living Oakville, Erinoak, other community service providers and the Halton Catholic District School Board to design the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Halton Accessibility Showcase for agencies and service providers in Halton Region. The Showcase held on May 8, 2007 at the Halton Regional auditorium, featured displays by more than 60 community groups addressing accessibility services and support programs for people with disabilities of all ages. With more than 350 members of the public attending the 2007 Showcase, this event will be held again in the Spring of 2008 with more vendors to address the service/programs gaps identified by the Showcase participants.

To further awareness and cultural proficiency, the Guidelines on Inclusive Language booklet was designed. The booklet was vetted by a variety of persons and groups in Halton. The booklet will be available in the fall 2007 at all HDSB venues and on the website at [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca).

Many of our schools have been renovated to improve accessibility with the inclusion of automatic door openers on school interior and exterior doorways, elevators in most secondary schools with multiple stories, ramps for school front and rear access points, accessible washrooms, parking spaces designated for people with disabilities and renovations to some schools to accommodate track lifting for students with physical disabilities, to name a few. The Accessibility Working Group revised the annual School Facilities' Accessibility Survey to provide a more comprehensive look at individual school and board offices' accessibility features. See Appendix A.

Since 1991, the design of new schools includes architectural features that incorporate the principles of universal design meeting government accessibility requirements. Renovations to existing buildings have accessibility for people with disabilities addressed in the plans, as resources permit.

After a new school opens, Facility Services personnel and members of SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee), accompanied by students with a variety of disabilities, tour the school to test the accessibility features. Recommendations for architectural improvements are added to the Halton District School Board's Building Manual on an ongoing basis.

The Board Room at J. W. Singleton Education Centre has a Hearing Assist system in place for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to facilitate their participation when attending Board Meetings.

The following chart is a synopsis of some of the major accomplishments outlined as action items in the Annual Accessibility Plan 2006-2007.

<b>Type of Barrier</b>	<b>Strategy for Barrier Removal</b>	<b>Action Taken 2006-2007</b>
Policy/Practice	Design a booklet addressing Inclusive Language Guidelines	completed September 2007 distribution Fall 2007
Communication and Information	Halton Accessibility Showcase featuring services and programs for people with disabilities was held at Halton Regional Auditorium.	Held May 8, 2007 – 350 attendees  Plan to repeat showcase in Spring 2008
Physical	Facilities Checklist for accessibility to board facilities updated	Completed, June 2007
Attitudinal	Accessibility Handbook and Planning Meetings for Accessibility made available to all new employees	ongoing
Architectural	HDSB building Manual is continuously updated to reflect accessible design	ongoing

#### **7. Measures in Place: Preventing new barriers**

The guiding principles of inclusive practice inform school board programs, policies, practices and services to reduce and minimize barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. We strive to create an environment that is accessible through the annual accessibility planning process to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

#### **8. Barrier-identification Methodologies**

The Accessibility Working Group is using the following barrier-identification methodologies:

<b><i>Methodology</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i>Status</i></b>
Presentation to Senior Administration	Opportunity for input and feedback	ongoing
Presentation to Trustees	For information	October, 2007
Presentation to SEAC	Opportunity for input and feedback	ongoing
Presentations to Employee Groups	For information	October 2007
Communication with Public	Plan posted on board website	October 2007
Accessibility Working Group	Review, plan, and make recommendations for year 5 plan; report progress about Year 4 plan	Monthly meetings

## **9. Barriers to be addressed in 2007 - 2008**

The Accessibility Working Group will address six barrier groupings during the coming year. Our focus this year is to continue to raise awareness about the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Board Accessibility Plan.

It is our intent to expand our focus by including more avenues to collaborate with people with disabilities in the review of our annual accessibility plan.

This plan will address at least one area in each of communication, information, attitude, physical, policy/practice and architecture.

In addition, the Accessibility Working Group will review and make recommendations on **Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service made July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007**. This Regulation, made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, establishes accessibility standards for customer service and applies to every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.

## **10. Review and monitoring process**

The Accessibility Working Group meets regularly during the planning year to review progress. Throughout the year, the effectiveness of implementing the barrier-removal and prevention strategies will be discussed in preparation for appropriate revisions for the fourth year of accessibility planning.

## **11. Communication of the plan**

The Halton District School Board's accessibility plan is posted on the board website at [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca) and hard copies are available. The plan can be made available in accessible formats, on request. The plan may be included in the school board orientation package for new staff on request.

Contact information for accessible format requests: 905-335-3663 ext 3208

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**12. Definition of Disability:** The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. “Disability” is:

- (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 co-ordination, 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 a developmental 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*.

### **What is a barrier?**

A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**Physical Barrier:** objects added to the environment – doors, windows, elevators, furniture, etc.

**Architectural Barrier:** building design, area adjacent to the building, shape of room, size of doorways, etc.

**Information Barrier:** inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, etc.

**Communication Barrier:** difficulties receiving information in person or by telephone, difficulties interacting with receptionists or other staff, difficulties receiving training

**Attitudinal Barrier:** staff who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, staff who refuse to provide service, discriminatory behaviours

**Technological Barrier:** computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones and switches, assistive technologies

**Policy or Practice Barrier:** rules, regulations and protocols that prevent one performing their job satisfactorily, or from serving the public, or that restrict participation..

Accessibility Action Plan for 2007-2008

<b><i>Barrier</i></b>	<b><i>Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Means to remove or prevent barriers</i></b>	<b><i>Timing</i></b>	<b><i>Responsibility</i></b>
<p><b>Information</b></p> <p>Increase system understanding about mental health disabilities</p>	<p>Every employee will be aware of mental health disabilities, and barriers to participation.</p>	<p>Research resources, educational materials, services, attitudinal barriers for people with mental health disabilities.</p> <p>Design a brochure <i>Creating Mental Health-Friendly School Environments for Employees and Students</i> addressing findings and share with system</p> <p>Update Student Health conference on chat with current information about Mental Health supports.</p>	<p>Spring 2008</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>Accessibility Working Group</p>
<p><b>Communication and Information</b></p> <p>Strategy to keep members of the community updated with regard to programs and services for people with disabilities in Halton</p>	<p>Community groups, staff and agencies have the opportunity to showcase programs and services for people with disabilities in Halton</p>	<p>Organize and implement the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Halton Accessibility Showcase featuring displays by community groups addressing accessibility services and support programs</p>	<p>Spring 2008</p>	<p>Accessibility Working Group to organize with HDSB Student Services and HCDSB Special Education Services with support from community agencies providing programs and services for people with disabilities.</p>

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Means to remove or prevent barriers</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
<b>Physical</b> Long range planning required to bring all HDSB facilities up to accessible standards.	Continued upgrading of facilities to accommodate students and staff with accessibility needs  Design a long range plan (3 to 5 years) for board-owned facilities to bring up to accessibility standards as per HDSB Building manual.  Establish a budget line to address accessibility requirements as per the 3 to 5 year plan.	Facilities Checklist database updated as physical plant accommodations made  Review accessible features currently in place for HDSB facilities and create a continuum placing all our facilities on the continuum from somewhat accessible, moderately accessible to fully accessible.	May 2008	Student Services  Facility Services  Accessibility Working Group  Administrative Council
<b>Attitude</b>  Importance of continually educating our employees about people with disabilities and inclusive practices that remove barriers	All new board employees must be in-serviced about accessibility topics to increase awareness and sensitivity towards people with disabilities	All new teachers receive the Accessibility Handbook, 2004 and Information Card during August in-service. Other new board employees receive handbook and training by supervisors  Update Accessibility Handbook and rename <i>Creating a Culture of Accessibility</i> .	Ongoing   Spring 2008	Every employee group  Community Relations   Accessibility Working Group
<b>Architectural</b>	Continue to update Halton DSB Building Manual to reflect best practice in accessible building design	Halton DSB Building manual is continuously updated with input from SEAC touring students with disabilities through new schools.	ongoing	Facility Services

## HDSB SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY JUNE 2007 - SECONDARY

Schools	Accessible cubicle in washroom	Separate accessible washroom	Designated accessible parking spaces	Automatic door opener on exterior door	Automatic interior door openers	Exterior ramp to main entrance	Flat grade main entrance	Other ramp locations	Single story building	Elevator in multi-story building	Elevating lift device	Stair lift	Other Accessible Features
Abbey Park H.S.	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			Stage access, acoustic panelling, sightlines
Acton District HS	✓		2					✓					Eye wash stations, sightlines
Aldershot HS	✓	✓	3	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	Eye wash stations, stage access, sightlines, drinking fountains
Burlington Central HS	✓		1	✓									Stage access, drinking fountains, acoustic panelling, sightlines
E.C. Drury HS	✓	✓	4	✓			✓	✓		✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines
Georgetown District HS	✓		3	✓			✓	✓		✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines, drinking fountains
Iroquois Ridge HS	✓		6	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines, stage access, acoustic panels, drinking fountains
L.B. Pearson HS	✓		2	✓			✓	✓		✓			Sightlines
M.M. Robinson HS	✓		2	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	Eye wash stations, stage access, sightlines, drinking fountains
Milton District HS		✓	2	✓	✓		✓	✓					Stage access, acoustic paneling, sightlines
Nelson HS	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Stage access, eye wash stations, 5 Evac+Chairs
Oakville Trafalgar HS	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Eye wash stations, stage access, acoustic panelling, sightlines
Robert Bateman HS	✓	✓	8	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		Acoustic panelling, sound field system, sightlines, drinking fountains, eye wash stations, stage access
T.A. Blakelock HS		✓	3	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	Eye wash stations, sightlines
White Oaks SS South Campus	✓		2	✓	✓		✓				✓		Eye wash stations, sightlines
White Oaks SS North Campus		✓	1	✓			✓			✓			Drinking fountains, sightlines

**HDSB SCHOOLS ACCESSIBILITY JUNE 2007 – EAST AREA ELEMENTARY**

Schools	Accessible cubicle in washroom	Separate accessible washroom	Designated accessible parking spaces	Automatic door opener on exterior door	Automatic interior door openers	Exterior ramp to main entrance	Flat grade main entrance	Other ramp locations	Single story building	Elevator in multi-story building	Elevating lift device	Stair lift	Other Accessible Features
Abbey Lane	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	Sightlines, eye wash stations, acoustic paneling
Brantwood			2										Sightlines, eye wash stations
Brookdale		✓	2			✓		✓					Eye wash stations, sightlines
Captain R. Wilson		✓	3	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Drinking fountains, eye wash stations, hydraulic changing bed
Chisholm		✓	1	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	Stage access, sightlines
E.J. James	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				Eye wash stations, drinking fountains, sightlines
Eastview	✓	✓	2			✓						✓	Sightlines
Falgarwood	✓	✓	2	✓	✓		✓					✓	Eye wash stations
Gladys Speers		✓	1				✓	✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
Heritage Glen	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		Eye wash stations, sightlines, sound field system, drinking fountains, acoustic paneling
Joshua Creek		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			Eye wash stations, drinking fountains, acoustic panelling, sound field system, sightlines
Linbrook			1										Eye wash stations, sightlines
Lorne Skuce			1				✓						Sightlines, drinking fountains
Maplegrove	✓	✓	1			✓		✓					Sightlines, drinking fountains
Montclair			1										Acoustic paneling
Munn's	✓	✓	1				✓		✓				Drinking fountains
New Central			1						✓				Sightlines, acoustic paneling
Oakwood	✓	✓	2			✓		✓	✓				Drinking fountains, sightlines
Pilgrim Wood	✓	✓	2	✓	✓		✓			✓			Eye wash stations, drinking fountains
Pinegrove		✓	1				✓		✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
Post's Corners	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines, 2 Evac+Chairs, drinking fountains
River Oaks	✓	✓	2	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines
Sheridan		✓	1						✓				Acoustic paneling, sightlines, drinking fountains
Sunningdale		✓	1				✓						Sightlines
W.H. Morden	✓		2			✓		✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains, eye wash stations
West Oak	✓	✓	3	✓	✓		✓			✓			Drinking fountains, sightlines, sound field system, eye wash stations

**HDSB SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY JUNE 2007– WEST AREA ELEMENTARY**

Schools	Accessible cubicle in washroom	Separate accessible washroom	Designated accessible parking spaces	Automatic door opener on exterior door	Automatic interior door openers	Exterior ramp to main entrance	Flat grade main entrance	Other ramp locations	Single story building	Elevator in multi-story building	Elevating lift device	Stair lift	Other Accessible Features
B.T. Lindley	✓		1			✓			✓				Eye wash stations
Brant Hills	✓		1				✓	✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains, eyewash stations
Central			1										Drinking fountains
Charles Beaudoin	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Drinking fountains, eye wash stations, acoustic panelling, sound field, sightlines, 2 Evac+Chairs
C.H. Norton		✓	2	✓		✓		✓		✓			Sightlines
Clarksdale		✓	2	✓				✓					Sightlines, sound field system
Dr. Charles Best	✓		1				✓		✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
Florence Meares	✓	✓	2	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			Sound field system, drinking fountains, stage access, 1 Evac+Chair
Frontenac		✓	1				✓	✓					Drinking fountains, sightlines
Glenview	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓			✓				Drinking fountains, sightlines
John T. Tuck	✓		1					✓					Acoustic panelling, sightlines, drinking fountains
Kilbride	✓	✓	2			✓		✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
King's Road	✓	✓	1	✓		✓		✓					
Lakeshore			1					✓					Sightlines
Maplehurst		✓	1			✓							
Mohawk Gardens	✓		2	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
Orchard Park	✓	✓	3	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Drinking fountains, eye wash stations, acoustic paneling, sound field system, 2 Evac+Chairs
Paul A. Fisher		✓	2	✓	✓	✓		✓					Sightlines, drinking fountains
Pauline Johnson			2										Sightlines
Pineland	✓		2					✓					Sightlines, drinking fountains, eye wash stations
Rolling Meadows	✓		2	✓			✓						Drinking fountains, eye wash stations, sightlines
Ryerson	✓		1			✓		✓					Drinking fountains, sightlines, eye wash stations
Sir Ernest MacMillan	✓		2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				Sightlines
Tecumseh		✓	2				✓			✓			Eye wash stations, sightlines, 2 Evac+Chairs
Tom Thomson		✓	4	✓	✓	✓			✓				Stage access, sightlines
J.W. Singleton Ctr.		✓	6				✓						Sightlines

**HDSB SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY JUNE 2007– NORTH AREA ELEMENTARY**

Schools	Accessible cubicle in washroom	Separate accessible washroom	Designated accessible parking	Automatic door opener on exterior	Automatic interior door openers	Exterior ramp to main entrance	Flat grade main entrance	Other ramp locations	Single story building	Elevator in multi-story building	Elevating lift device	Stair lift	Other Accessible Features
Brookville	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				Lowered counters, sightlines, drinking fountains
Centennial	✓		1	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				Eye wash stations
Chris Hadfield	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			Drinking fountains, sound field system, eye wash stations, 2 Evac+Chairs
E.W. Foster	✓	✓	2				✓		✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains
George Kennedy	✓		1			✓	✓	✓					Eye wash stations, sightlines, drinking fountains
Glen Williams		✓	1				✓		✓				Eye wash stations, drinking fountains, sightlines
Harrison	✓		3	✓			✓	✓	✓				Sightlines
Hawthorne Village		✓	3	✓	✓		✓			✓			Eye wash stations, acoustic panelling, sound field, sightlines
J.M. Denyes	✓		1				✓		✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains, eye wash stations
Joseph Gibbons		✓	1	✓	✓	✓			✓				Drinking fountains
Limehouse	✓		1				✓	✓	✓				Eye wash stations, sightlines
Martin Street	✓		1					✓	✓				Eye wash stations, drinking fountains, sightlines
McKenzie-Smith Bennett	✓	✓	2	✓	✓		✓					✓	Eye wash stations, stage access, sightlines
Park		✓	1				✓	✓	✓				Eye wash stations, drinking fountains, sightlines
Pineview	✓	✓	1				✓	✓	✓				Sightlines, drinking fountains, eye wash stations
Robert Baldwin		✓	1			✓	✓		✓				Sightlines
Robert Little	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				Drinking fountains, sightlines, eye wash stations
Sam Sherratt	✓		1				✓	✓	✓				Sightlines, 1 Evac+Chair
Silver Creek	✓	✓	1	✓	✓		✓			✓			Drinking fountains, sound field system, sightlines, eye wash stations, 2 Evac+Chairs
Stewarttown	✓		1	✓	✓	✓			✓				Eye wash stations, sightlines, drinking fountains
W.I.Dick	✓	✓	1			✓	✓		✓				Eye wash stations, stage access, acoustic paneling

## Suggested Reference Material/Resources

**Note:**

In addition to the following resources, school boards are encouraged to consult the links provided on the Ministry of Citizenship's website

(<http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/index.html>)

and on the Paths to Equal Opportunity website

([www.equalopportunity.on.ca/eng\\_g/links](http://www.equalopportunity.on.ca/eng_g/links))

**Accessibility Planning Resources for School Boards:**

Accessibility Ontario – Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning

<http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/accessibleplanningguide.htm>

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*,

2001 <http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act2001.htm>

Human Resources Development Canada, *A Way With Words*

[http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/hrib/sdd-dds/odi/documents/waywithwords\\_tmp/purpose.shtml](http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/hrib/sdd-dds/odi/documents/waywithwords_tmp/purpose.shtml)

Community Resources for Independence, *Using Words With Dignity*

<http://www.crinet.org/dignity.php>

Government of Ontario – Paths to Equal Opportunity

A-Z index – Accessibility in Educational environments

[http://www.equalopportunity.on.ca/eng\\_g/subject/index.asp?action=search\\_4&dir\\_id=1071](http://www.equalopportunity.on.ca/eng_g/subject/index.asp?action=search_4&dir_id=1071)

Ontario Human Rights Commission - *Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate* <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/english/publications/disability-policy.shtml>

Enablelink (Canadian Abilities Foundation) Directory of Canadian Disability Links

[http://www.enablelink.org/resources/links\\_to.html](http://www.enablelink.org/resources/links_to.html)

Directory for Accessibility <http://www.accessibilitydirectory.ca>

Adaptive Technology Resource Centre <http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc>

Ontario Interpreter Services (OIS) <http://www.chs.ca/services/ois.html>

Canadian Standards Association: <http://www.csa.ca>

B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design

B480-02 – Customer Service Standard for People with Disabilities

Playability Tool Kit: Building Accessible Playspaces

<http://www.opassoc.on.ca/toolkit.asp>

## **Some Key Ontario Disability Organizations:**

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)  
<http://www.cnib.ca>

Canadian Hearing Society  
<http://www.chs.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association – Ontario  
<http://www.ontario.cmha.ca>

Community Living Ontario  
<http://www.oacl.on.ca>

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – Ontario Division  
<http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario>

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario  
<http://www.ldao.on.ca>

Little People of Ontario  
<http://www.lpo.on.ca>

Ontario Brain Injury Association  
<http://www.obia.on.ca>

Canadian Paraplegic Association – Ontario  
<http://www.canparaplegic.org/on>

Le Phénix  
<http://www.lephenix.on.ca>

Ontario March of Dimes  
<http://www.dimes.on.ca>

The Easter Seal Society – Ontario  
<http://www.easterseals.org>

AboutFace International  
<http://www.aboutfaceinternational.org>

## ABOUT DISABILITY

### The Disability Continuum

There is no universally accepted meaning for the word "disability". However, the Ontario Human Rights Code provides definitions of disability that form our guiding principles.

Most definitions, however, can be placed on a continuum. At one end of the spectrum, disability is explained in terms of medical conditions (medical model). At the opposite end, disability is explained in terms of the social and physical contexts in which it occurs (environmental model).

The medical model focuses on deficiencies, symptoms and treatments. The World Health Organization's (WHO) 1976 definition for disability, for example, is "any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being." Medical model definitions promote the idea that disability is a deviation from the norm.

Many people with disabilities are troubled by definitions that regard disability as abnormal, preferring instead to portray disability as commonplace, natural, and in fact, inevitable. As people age, they experience gradual declines in visual acuity, auditory sensitivity, range of motion, bodily strength and mental powers. Significant functional limitations affect almost half of people between the ages of 55 and 79, and over 70% of people over 80. Beyond middle age, disability is the norm.

The environmental model explains disability in relation to social and physical contexts. In this view, the environment, not an individual's medical condition, causes disability. For example, during an electrical blackout, a person who is completely blind can effortlessly navigate around the home, hammer nails, and, if a Braille user, read a novel.

A sighted person would be unable to perform these tasks easily, if at all. In this example, the environment disables the sighted person.

The environmental model emphasizes that people with disabilities are capable human beings, and that it is barriers, not medical conditions, that are disabling. Disability results when people design a world for their way of living only, without taking into account the natural - and foreseeable - variability among human beings. In other words, disability is a consequence of design flaws in the built and human environments.

All barriers are human-made. If design problems cause barriers, then disabilities can be eliminated -- or minimized -- by modifying how we live, the tools we use, and our intuitions about the proper way to do things. If systemic barriers cause disabilities, the disabilities can be eliminated by modifications to policies, plans and processes. If attitudes cause barriers, then disability awareness, respect and an understanding of positive interaction with people with disabilities will remove barriers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved August 2006, Bluewater District School Board Accessibility Plan, 2004

## **Types of Disability and Functional Limitations**

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively challenging to perform everyday tasks such as operating a keyboard, reading a sign, differentiating colours, distinguishing sounds, climbing stairs, grasping small items, remembering words, or doing arithmetic.

## **Disability and the Ontario Human Rights Code**

Persons with disabilities may face challenges because of the physical or mental limitations. But the attitudes of other people may also create barriers. Understanding this social aspect of disability is essential.

The Ontario Human Rights Code protects the rights of persons with disabilities to equal treatment in employment, housing, goods, services, facilities, contracts and membership in trades or vocational associations. The Code provides a basic definition of “handicap” to include conditions that have developed over time, those that result from an accident, or have been present from birth. It includes physical, mental, and learning disabilities and it does not matter whether the condition is visible. For example, persons with mental disorders, sensory disabilities (such as hearing or vision limitations) and epilepsy are all protected under the Code.

Protection for persons with mental disabilities deserves special attention. These persons have the same rights as persons with any other kind of disability. They may, however, have trouble expressing themselves or even identifying that they have a disability.

The Code protects people from the unequal effects of discrimination. For example, a person may not actually have a disability, but may be perceived to have one. The Code will protect a person who is the victim of discrimination because another thinks that the person has a disability.

*(This information is provided as a public service by the Ontario Human Rights Commission.)*

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There are many kinds of disabilities, including physical, sensory, hearing, mental health, developmental and learning. Disabilities can be visible or non-visible.

## **Visual disabilities**

Visual disabilities reduce one’s ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Some have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Impaired vision can restrict a person’s ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a visual disability. Others may use a guide dog or white cane.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with visual disabilities.

- Identify yourself when you approach the person and speak directly to them.
- Speak normally and clearly.
- Don’t refer to the disability, and never use phrases like “handicapped”.
- Never touch the person without asking permission, unless it’s an emergency.
- If you offer assistance, wait until you receive permission.
- Offer your arm (the elbow) to guide the person and walk slowly.

- Don't touch service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- If you're giving directions or verbal information, be precise and clear. For example, if you're approaching a door or an obstacle, say so.
- Don't just assume the individual can't see you.
- Don't leave the person in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient the person to the environment around them.
- Don't walk away without saying good-bye.
- Be patient. Things may take a little longer.

### **Hearing impairments**

People who have hearing loss may be deaf or hard of hearing. Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. People who are hearing impaired may require assistive devices when communicating. While some people may use sign language, notes or hearing aids when communicating, others may also use e-mail, pagers, TTY telephone service or Bell Canada Relay Service.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people who have hearing impairments.

- Always ask how you can help. Don't shout.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- Attract the person's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- Make sure you are in a well-lighted area where the person can see your face.
- Look at and speak directly to the person. Address the person, not their interpreter.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example a pen and paper.
- Don't put your hands in front of your face when speaking.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- Don't touch service animals -- they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Any personal (e.g., financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing.
- Be patient. Communication for people who are deaf is different because their first language may not be English. It may be American Sign Language (ASL).
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.

## **Physical disabilities**

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities and not all require a wheelchair. For example, people who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions, or amputations may also have difficulty moving, standing or sitting. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with physical disabilities.

- Speak normally and directly to the person. Don't speak to someone who is with them.
- People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- Be patient and be sure you understand their needs.
- Don't touch any assistive devices, including wheelchairs, unnecessarily unless it's an emergency.
- Provide the person with information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

## **Intellectual disabilities**

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not be able to know that someone has one of these disabilities unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or body language.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with intellectual disabilities.

As much as possible, treat the person with an intellectual disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- Use simple words and short sentences.
- Make sure the person understands what you've said.
- If you can't understand what's being said, don't pretend. Just ask again.
- Give one piece of information at a time.
- Be polite and patient.
- Speak directly to the person, not to someone who's with them.

## **Learning or cognitive disabilities**

Learning or cognitive disabilities can result in a host of different communications difficulties for people. They can be subtle, as in having difficulty reading, or more pronounced, but they can interfere with the person's ability to receive, express or process information. You may not be able to know that someone has one of these disabilities unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or body language.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with learning or cognitive disabilities.

- Patience and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- When you know that someone with a learning disability needs help, ask how you can best help.
- Speak normally and clearly, and directly to the person
- Take some time — people with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- Try to find ways to provide information in a way that works best for them. For example, have a paper and pen handy.
- If you're dealing with a child, be patient, encouraging and supportive.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- Be courteous and patient and the person will let you know how to best provide service in a way that works for them.

## **Mental health disabilities**

People with mental health disabilities look like anyone else. You won't know that the person has a mental health disability unless you're informed of it. But if someone is experiencing difficulty in controlling their symptoms or is in a crisis, you may need to help out. Be calm and professional and let the person tell you how you can best help.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with mental health disabilities.

- Treat people with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- Be confident and reassuring, and listen to persons with a mental health disability and their needs.
- If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.
- Take the person with a mental health disability seriously, and work with them to meet their needs.

## **Speech and language disabilities**

Some people have problems communicating. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express oneself or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with speech and language disabilities.

- Just because a person has one disability doesn't mean they have another. For example, if a person has difficulty speaking; don't assume they have an intellectual disability as well.
- If you don't understand, ask the person to repeat the information.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- Take some time. Be patient and polite, and give the person whatever time he/she needs to get his/her point across.
- Don't interrupt or finish the person's sentences. Wait for them to finish.

Patience, respect and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

## **Deaf-blind disabilities**

A deaf-blind person cannot see or hear to some extent. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities. Most people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by an intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating. Intervenors are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling, and may guide and interpret for their client.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people who are deaf-blind.

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do. Some deaf-blind people have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- Don't refer to the disability, and never use phrases like "handicapped".
- A deaf-blind person is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.
- Speak directly to the person as you normally would, not to the intervenor.
- Identify yourself to the intervenor when you approach the person who is deaf-blind.
- Don't touch service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Never touch a deaf-blind person suddenly or without permission unless it's an emergency.

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<sup>2</sup> Retrieved August 2006 from [http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/topics/pop\\_ado\\_needs.htm](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/topics/pop_ado_needs.htm)

**Other**

Disabilities result from other conditions, accidents, illnesses, and diseases, including ALS (Lou Gehrig disease), M.S. (Multiple Sclerosis), allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke and joint replacement to name a few.

**Where to Look for Barriers**

**1. Physical Barriers:**

- Furniture
- Chairs
- Door knobs
- Classroom design
- Planters
- Locks
- Drinking fountains
- Telephones
- Work stations
- Doors
- Handrails
- Windows
- Bathroom hardware
- Security systems
- Seats, tables, counters

**2. Architectural Barriers:**

- Exterior to a building
- Parking areas
- Hallways
- Carpets
- Reception areas
- Classrooms
- Cubicles
- Cafeterias
- Escalators
- Stairwells
- Storage areas
- Entrances
- Interior of a building
- Drop-off zones
- Floors
- Lobbies
- Offices
- Athletic facilities
- Washrooms
- Elevators
- Stairs
- Closets
- Lighting
- Assembly halls

**3. Information/Communication Barriers:**

- Books
- Web-based resources
- Bulletin boards
- Training
- Forms
- Fax transmissions
- Computer screens
- Printed information
- Signage
- Brochures
- Receptionists
- Manuals
- Equipment labels
- Public announcements

**4. Attitudinal Barriers:**

- Biases and beliefs
- Lack of understanding
- Stigmatization - \*See also "Policy/practice" below
- Lack of information/knowledge
- Lack of sensitivity/intolerance

**5. Technological Barriers:**

- Computers
- Standard software
- Websites
- Mice
- Fax machines
- TTYs
- Appliances
- Switches
- Operating systems
- Proprietary software
- Keyboards
- Printers
- Telephones
- Photocopiers
- Control panels

**6. Policy/Practice Barriers:**

- Procurement and purchasing
- Hiring
- Testing
- Promotion
- Regulations
- Protocols
- Community use of facilities

- Job postings
- Interviewing
- Meetings
- By-laws
- Rules
- Safety and evacuation