Halton
District
School
Board

HDSB Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

2017-2022

TOGETHER
we inspire every student to

LEARN   **GROW**   **SUCCEED**

Prepared by:
Halton District School Board
Accessibility Coordinating Committee

This publication is available on the Halton District School Board
website at www.hdsb.ca and available in alternate formats.

Halton District School Board Mission and Values: 2016-2020

Mission: Together we inspire every student to learn, grow, and succeed.

Vision: Every student will explore and enhance their potential, passions, and strengths to thrive as contributing global citizens.

The Multi-Year Plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in 2016, includes specific goals that address **students**, **staff** and **system**:

Goals for Students:
Engagement and Achievement:
Every student will be intellectually engaged in their learning and socially engaged in their school.

Stewardship and Resources:
Every student will be supported by evidence-based instructional strategies, resources and interventions differentiated to their strengths and needs.

Equity and Well-being:
Every student will learn in an inclusive and caring environment that promotes their well being; and Every student will learn in a respectful culture of high expectations that values diversity, and will see themselves reflected in their learning.

Goals for Staff:
Engagement and Achievement:
All staff will contribute to collaborative and inclusive learning environments to enhance innovative practices and build a strong learning organization.

Stewardship and Resources:
All staff will use data to inform actions, validate decision-making and allocate resources.

Equity and Well-being:
All staff will engage in learning, and model a culture of equity and inclusion in support of student well-being.

Goals for System:
Engagement and Achievement:
We will engage stakeholders by using strategies to build relationships and establish confidence in our public education system.

Stewardship and Resources:
We will provide facilities that are safe, accessible and engaging learning environments; and

We will optimize resources and technology through innovative and creative opportunities and partnerships.

Equity and Well-being:
We will advance a culture of respect for all students, staff, families and community. and;

We will use innovative approaches to student accommodation that reflect the changing needs within our community.

The mission, values and goals of the Halton District School Board are reflected in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the 2017-2022. 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 annual review of our HDSB Accessibility Plan 2017-2022.

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 goal is for Ontario to be barrier-free, accessible, by 2025. The Act requires that school boards to:
- review and revise the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2022 annually,
- consult with people with disabilities in the review and revision of Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2022, and
- make the revision of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2022 public.

The Act allows organizations to determine their own priorities and implement them within existing planning processes and using existing resources. The Accessibility Plan 2017-2022 has been prepared by the Accessibility Coordinating Committee of the Halton District School Board. The plan describes:
- measures that the Halton District School Board has taken in the past, and
- measures that the Halton District School Board will implement during 2017 - 2022 to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Coordinating Committee 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, employment, and transportation.

The Accessibility Coordinating Committee continues to explore strategies to put in place for the following areas covered by *O. Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR)* addressing Information and Communication, Transportation, and Employment. This Regulation came into effect June 3, 2011. The *Built Environment* Standard is still in discussion at the provincial level.

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 five year period (2017- 2022) 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:
   a. Describes the *process* by which the Halton District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
   b. Lists the policies, procedures, programs, practices and services that the Halton District School Board will review in the *coming years* to identify barriers for people with disabilities.

c. Describes the *actions* the Halton District School Board will take in the coming years to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
d. Describes how the Halton District School Board will make this accessibility plan *available to the public.*

3. **Commitment to Accessibility Planning**
    The annual review of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2022 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 and input. This process will be 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 Coordinating Committee,
    ● 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, and
    ● 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 Coordinating Committee 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, in southern Ontario, serving approximately 64,500 public school students in the municipalities of Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. 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 and alternative curriculum (*The Carolina Curriculum* and *A Functional Assessment and Curricula*) includes a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, core French, technology, employment, living skills, music and arts programs. Information about other programs offered within the Halton District School Board can be accessed at www.hdsb.ca. Special education programs are also provided by the Halton District School Board for students with special education needs.

    With total budget revenues of approximately $749 million the Halton District School Board operates 86 elementary schools and 19 secondary schools. This represents a $37 million increase and enrolment growth of 2.1.5% over last year. A team of 222 principals and vice-principals, 15 senior staff as well as more than 4334 teaching staff, and 2245 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 each school year. Board meetings occur on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Public session for all meetings begin at 7 pm. All meetings

are live-streamed on the board's website at www.hdsb.ca. and take place in J.W. Singleton Education Centre, 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, L7P 5A8.

The Halton District School Board believes that public education is one of the major cornerstones of a prosperous and democratic Canada. Its essential and critical role must continue through commitment to our mission and guiding principles.

5. **The Accessibility Coordinating Committee Members**
   The Accessibility Working Group was formally constituted in May 2003 and was transitioned into the Accessibility Coordinating Committee in September 2013. Current members of the Accessibility Coordinating Committee are:

Member	Department	Contact Information
Chair: Robert Eatough, Superintendent Sponsor	Superintendent, Education and Safe and Inclusive Schools	eatoughr@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3294
Mary Marshall Co-Chair	System Principal, Equity and Inclusive Education	marshallm@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3208
Sari Taha, Co-Chair	General Manager of Human Resources	tahas@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3287
Gord Truffen,	Superintendent of Information Services (Information Technology, Information Centre, Records Management)	truffeng@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 2211
Gail Gortmaker	Manager - Director's office	gortmakerg@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3296
Jim Moher	Assistant Manager Plant Operations	moherj@hdsb.ca 905-693-2935
Richelle Papin	Trustee	papinri@hdsb.ca
Jane Lewis	System Principal, Special Education	lewisj@hdsb.ca 905-631-6120 x 336
Melissa Dockeray	Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);	melissawebste23@hotmail.com
Marsha Sulewski	Supervisor of Staffing and Recruiting, Human Resources	sulewskim@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3379
Judi Goldsworthy	Manager, Health & Safety Human Resources	goldsworthyj@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3221
Danielle MacDonald	HEPA Representative Vice-principal, West Oak Public School	macdonaldd@hdsb.ca 905-469-6119
Nancy Trainor	HEPA Representative Vice-principal, Capt. R. Wilson Public School	trainorn@hdsb.ca 905-465-3881
Joanne Eliuk	HSPA Representative; Vice-principal, Dr. Frank Hayden Secondary School	eliukj@hdsb.ca 905-332-5235

Member	Department	Contact Information
Sal Bertin	Manager of Employee Health and Wellness	bertins@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 3317
Sandy Morgan	Manager, Halton Student Transportation	morgans@haltonbus.ca 1-888-803-8660
Karen Lacroix	General Manager, Halton Student Transportation Services	lacroixk@hdsb.ca 1-888-803-8660 x 259
Marnie Denton	Manager, Communications Services	dentonm@hdsb.ca 905-335-3665 x 2227

6. **Barrier-removal Initiatives**

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.

In 2016-2017, a Recruitment Accommodation Administrative Procedure was introduced in an effort to ensure that all applicants are provided with equitable consideration during employment and promotion processes.

From 1987 to 2012, the Halton District School Board ran the Special Athletes' Track Meet during which elementary students with physical and/or intellectual disabilities participated alongside their typically able peers. The Special Athletes' Track Meet celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2012. Since 2013 the Special Athletes Track Meet has run independently for students with disabilities.

We partner with Community Living, ErinoakKids, and other community service providers and the Halton Catholic District School Board to design and deliver an annual Halton accessibility fair featuring agencies and service providers in Halton Region. The fair features displays by more than 60 community groups addressing accessibility services and support programs for people with disabilities of all ages.

During the Spring of 2009 through to Fall of 2009, Harrison Consulting was hired to perform an accessibility audit on all our schools, J.W. Singleton Education Centre and New Street Education Centre. The extensive report is available by contacting the Facilities Service Department at 335-3665 ext. 3358. It is this report that guides our facility renovations to accommodate the needs of our students and staff with disabilities.

Also available is a 2017 report by Snider Architects Inc which documents Burlington high school accessibility issues.

The Creating a Culture of Accessibility 2010, booklet gives an overview of the AODA Customer Service Standard, and focuses on inclusive, respectful language and ways of interaction with people with disabilities.

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 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.

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.

The Boardroom 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. As of November 2012, Board meetings are live-streamed on the board website.

The following charts are a synopsis of some of the major accomplishments during the noted years:

2015-2016

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Review status of accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff have been trained. Support teachers in implementation of lesson plans under the Teachable Project and others to raise disability awareness for students.		
		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on the Customer Service Standards.		
		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on *Human Rights Code* provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.		
		Continue to highlight AODA language guidelines to system.		
		Continue to provide access to 'competing rights' learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning sessions.		
		Continue and expand learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses to address issues relevant to each employee group.		
		Offer community learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses.		
		Continue to offer student and staff learning conferences that promote		

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
		and celebrate all HDSB Equity Lenses.		
		Partner with community organizations that promote positive varied 'able-bodied' and diverse 'ability' learning to offer learning and Professional Development.		
		Continue with Professional Development on embedding Equity Lenses into classroom instruction and school operations		
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of digital or multimedia resources upon request in anticipation of 2020 deadlines	Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline.	
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards.	Ongoing preparation for Board website by August 2016. All existing school based websites by 2021.	
Systemic		Mental Health Strategy developed	May 2016	
Systemic		Central Interviewing process accommodations inclusive of assistive technology, additional time, etc.	January 2016 and ongoing	

2014-2015

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Attitudinal	Board-wide	Support teachers in implementation of lesson plans under the Teachable Project and others to raise disability awareness for students.	On-going	
		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on the Customer Service Standards.		
		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on Human Rights Code provisions regarding disabilities and ensure		

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
		third- party providers have similar training.		
		Continue to highlight AODA language guidelines to system.		
		Continue to provide access to 'competing rights' learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning sessions.		
		Continue and expand learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses to address issues relevant to each employee group. Offer community learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses.		
		Continue to offer student and staff learning conferences that promote and celebrate all HDSB Equity Lenses.		
		Partner with community organizations that promote positive varied 'able-bodied' and diverse 'ability' learning to offer learning and Professional Development.		
		Continue with Professional Development on embedding Equity Lenses into classroom instruction and school operations.		
Systemic -	Board-wide	Mental Health and Addictions Strategy: 4 target areas: Mental Health Literacy, Pathway to Care, Promoting Positive Mental Health, Making Connections (curriculum, developmental assets, culturally responsive teaching, CPS, restorative practices).		
Systemic – Attitudinal	Board-wide	Children's Mental Health Week celebration and symposium (April 2015) providing strategies and resources to create a greater awareness of mental health issues in youth and a mental health promotion toolkit.		
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Pathway to Care Document outlines services within the board and the community, and access points to reduce barriers.	Ongoing 2014-2015	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Continued support of Service Dog use in schools and board buildings		
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Increase in external agency partnerships related to Children's Mental Health	2015	
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Identify and have ready access to resources that enable the Board to provide information and communication supports upon request and in a timely manner to persons with disabilities. (Consider access to Board meetings/school events). Board meeting broadcasted through the internet. Provided "Text Read and Write" to all staff and students to enhance accessibility to electronic information.	January 1, 2015	
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Ensure readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request.	January 1, 2015	Vendor review to be completed August 2014
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchase related to Board and school websites and anticipated of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards.	On-going preparation for 2021 deadline	Vendor review to be completed August 2014
Physical		Installation of accessibility features in all new schools and schools being renovated, etc. to meet Section 3.8 (Barrier Free Design) of the 2006 Ontario Building Code.	Ongoing 2014015	
Physical	To be determined	Student Services will be consulted in new school building designs.		

2013-14

Type of Barrier	Location	Action to be Taken	Status
Systemic – Attitudinal	Board-wide	Provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on *Human Rights Code* provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.	Completed as of December 2013
Systemic – Attitudinal	Board-wide	Competing Rights Learning Session with officer from the OHRC. With focus on our responsibility for a preventative approach to barriers and consideration of inclusivity of all protected grounds when making decisions.	January 2014 and April 2014

Type of Barrier	Location	Action to be Taken	Status
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Conferences highlighting HDSB & Equity Lenses	December 2013 and May 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Special Education Legal Issues workshop with a focus on accommodation for students with disabilities requiring service animals and prescribed medications.	May 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Learning series with one session focused on 'ability' as an equity lens to be incorporated into planning, programming, procedures, operations and policy creation.	May 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Stakeholder review of HDSB documents: Equity Review Tool for policy, procedure, program and practices; HDSB Equity Lenses; Inclusive Language Guidelines	March 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Professional Development on embedding Equity Lenses into classroom instruction and school operations.	September 2013 – June 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Mental Health and Addictions Strategy: 4 target areas: Mental Health Literacy, Pathway to Care, Promoting Positive Mental Health, Making Connections (curriculum, developmental assets culturally responsive teaching, CPS, restorative practices)	September 2013 – June 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Children's Mental Health Week celebration and Symposium providing strategies and Symposium providing strategies and resources to create a greater awareness of mental health issues in youth and a mental health promotion toolkit.	May 2014
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-wide	Pathway to Care Document outlines services within the board and the community, and access points to reduce barriers	May 2014 and on-going
Information and Communication	Board Offices	Review process for receiving/responding to feedback to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities and readiness to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Notify the public re above.	Process is being developed that will provide accessible formats through Information Centre. Ongoing. A notification will be added to the Board Website to indicate the availability of this service for September
Information and Communications	Board-wide	Review Board and school websites to assess level of accessibility. Ensure that new sites and web content published after Jan 1, 2014 meet WCAG 2.0, Level A standards.	A vendor is reviewing all Board Websites. Work is on-going.

Type of Barrier	Location	Action to be Taken	Status
Systemic - Employment	Board-wide	Review and update Human Resources procedures and practices with regard to recruitment, job accommodations, alternative accessible formats and communication supports, individual accommodation plans, return to work, performance appraisal, career or professional development, redeployment.	Forms have been completed and implemented. Review of use and format of the form is on-going.
Information and Communication – Student Transportation	Board-wide (Student Transportation and Special Education)	Consult with parents and develop individual school transportation plans for students with disabilities, clarifying roles and responsibilities.	A vendor is reviewing library readiness.
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review the readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request.	
Physical	To be determined	Installation of accessibility features in all new schools and schools being renovated, etc. to meet Section 3.8 (Barrier Free Design) of the 2006 Ontario Building Code.	

2012-13

Type of Barrier	Location	Action to be Taken	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Develop Accessibility Policy Statement	January 1, 2013	
Attitudinal – Information and Communications	Board-wide	Develop a procedure re: Accessible Information and Communications	January 1, 2013	
Attitudinal – Employment	Board-wide	Employment Equity Policy implementation Develop procedure re: Accessible Employment	January 1, 2013	
Systemic	Board-wide	Review procurement practices to incorporate accessibility criteria for goods, services & facilities.	January 1, 2013	Integration of AODA
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Provide accessibility awareness training for all educators / classroom-based staff on accessible instruction and program delivery	Ongoing 2012 – 2013	
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Review practices to ensure readiness to provide educational resources or materials, student records and information on program requirements in accessible formats upon request	January 1, 2013	That will provide accessible formats through the Information Centre
Physical	To be determined	Installation of accessibility features in all new schools and schools being renovated etc. to meet Section 3.8 of the (Barrier Free Design) of the 2006 Ontario Building Code	Ongoing 2012 - 2013	

2011-2012

Type of Barrier	Strategy for Barrier Removal	Action Taken 2011-2012
Policy/Practice	Address equity and inclusion in our schools and workplaces	*Equity and Inclusive Education* policy revised June 2012
		Equity and Inclusive Education Steering Advisory Committee – Meets 5 x/yr. and vetted the revised policy and the draft Employment Equity policy.
		Faith Accommodation Guidelines completed.
		Explored the Employment Standards Regulation clauses in O.Reg. 191/11 – established a committee to develop the Employment Equity Policy. Reviewed the timelines for the Integrated Accessibility Regulation and created the 5 year plan as per the Regulation (p. 16)
		Employee Workplace Emergency Response Plan completed Jan. 1, 2012 as per O. Reg. 191/11
Communication and Information	Halton Accessibility Showcase featuring services and programs for people with disabilities.	Held April 2012 – 300 attendees and 60+ vendor product and services displays.
	Employee awareness of mental health disabilities and barriers to participation.	Student Services Professional Support staff created and in-serviced school teams about their publication *Child and Mental Health Addictions: A Guide for Educators* – Marsh 2012.
	Review the Integrated Accessibility and Built Environment draft Regulations	FOS April 2012 meetings focused on Mental Health with carousels and workshops by PSSP professionals on a variety of mental health topics.
		Children's Mental Health Week, May 7-11/12 featured many events across the system.
		Both Standards reviewed and provided input to OESC re: Integrated Accessibility Regulation. HDSB staff part of the provincial table. The TeachAble Project completed.
		The Transportation Standard for integrated transportation has been met and is in compliance with the Standard s.75 (2a, b)
		All Managers and Administrators in-serviced re: Employee Workplace Emergency Response Plan, April 2012
		Various components of IT reviewing IASR for compliance dates.

Type of Barrier	Strategy for Barrier Removal	Action Taken 2011-2012
Physical	Continuously upgrading of facilities to accommodate students and staff with accessibility needs.	Facility Services – Ongoing
Attitudinal	New employees participate in the Customer Service training.	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 Coordinating Committee is using the following barrier-identification methods:

Methodology	Description	Status
Presentation to Senior Administration	Opportunity for input and feedback	Fall 2017
Presentation to SEAC	Opportunity for input and feedback	Fall 2017
Presentation to Trustees	For information	January 2018
Communication with Public	Plan posted on board website	January 2018
Accessibility Coordinating Committee	Review Multi-Year Accessibility Plan annually. Update and report on AODA compliance.	Ongoing Meetings

9. **Barriers to be addressed under the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**
   The Accessibility Coordinating Committee will address the barrier groupings during the coming years. Our focus 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.

   The Integrated Accessibility Standard and the Built Environment Standard regulations, made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, establish accessibility standards and apply 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 that has at least one employee in Ontario.

10. **Review and Monitoring Process**

The Accessibility Planning Committee meets regularly during the year to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of barrier-removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

The Accessibility Planning Committee will ensure that in respect of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan the following steps take place:

a) An annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the plan is prepared.

At least once every five (5) years the plan is reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee and other relevant committees.

11. **Communication of the Plan**

In addition to the public availability of the plan as referenced earlier, Halton District School Board will post an annual status report on the progress of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on the Board's website. The Board will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

Questions, comments or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:

Robert Eatough, Superintendent Sponsor, Accessibility Coordinating Committee
Mary Marshall, Co-Chair, Accessibility Coordinating Committee
Sari Taha, Co-Chair, Accessibility Coordinating Committee
Halton District School Board

12. **Definition of Disability**: The AODA 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 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 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.

The Halton District School Board assesses accommodation requirements on a case by case basis and uses all relevant information to respond to, and to achieve resolution, in each scenario.

From the OHRC Guidelines on Accessible Education:

> The most appropriate accommodation is one that most respects the dignity of the student with a disability, meets individual needs, best promotes inclusion and full participation, and maximizes confidentiality.

> An accommodation will be considered appropriate if it will result in equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance, or to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges enjoyed by others, or if it is proposed or adopted for the purpose of achieving equal opportunity, and meets the student's disability-related needs.

> The aim of accommodation is the inclusion and full participation of students with disabilities in educational life. Education providers must make efforts to build or adapt educational services to accommodate students with disabilities in a way that promotes their full participation. **http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/guidelines-accessible-education**

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 their disability, including an architectural barrier, an attitudinal barrier, an informational or communications barrier, a physical barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice, or a technological barrier.

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

Attitudinal Barrier: staff, students and school community who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, discriminatory behaviours, disability awareness

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

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

Physical Barrier: objects added to the environment – doors, windows, elevators, furniture, playgrounds, school yards, portables, etc.

Policy or Practice Barrier: rules, regulations and protocols that prevent a person performing their job satisfactorily, or from serving the public, or that restrict participation. Policy, practice and procedures that prevent a student from accessing the curriculum and fully participating in the school community.

Technological Barrier: computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones and switches, (lack of) assistive technologies

2016-2017

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Review status of mandatory (AODA) accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff have been trained. Implementation of program to notify employees (new and existing) and their supervisors of completion rate of mandatory trainings (inclusive of AODA training requirements).	Ongoing 2016-2017	Implement 2017-18
Systemic	Board-wide	Creation of an administrative procedure for recruitment accommodations.	Ongoing 2016-2017	Completed 2016
General		Support teachers in implementation of lesson plans under the TeachAble Project and others to raise disability awareness for students. Library Services to consider including electronic copy of TeachAble Project in collection. Library Services to consider providing hard copy for school based library collections.	Ongoing 2016-2017	
Systemic		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on the Customer Service Standards.	Ongoing 2016-2017	
Systemic		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on *Human Rights Code* provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.	Ongoing 2016-2017	
General		Continue to highlight AODA language guidelines to system. Consider opportunities to reference the document with system staff. Consider drafting a protocol for inclusive meeting design.	Ongoing 2016-2017	
General		Continue to provide access to 'competing rights' learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning sessions.	2016 – 2017 and ongoing	
General		Continue to expand learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses to address issues relevant to each employee group.	2016-2017 and ongoing	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
General		Offer community learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses.	2016-2017 and ongoing	
General		Continue to offer student and staff learning conferences that promote and celebrate all HDSB Equity Lenses.	2016-2017 and ongoing	
General		Partner with community organizations that promote positive varied 'able-bodies' and diverse 'ability' learning to offer learning and Professional Development. Example of continuing to work with The Lunch Box – Community Living North Halton	2016-2017 and ongoing	
General		Continue with Professional Development on embedding Equity Lenses into classroom instruction and school operations.	2016-2017 and ongoing	
General		Library Services to expand review and purchase process to focus on the lens of Ability for bulk order for school libraries. Follow up inservice with Teacher Librarians and Student Services staff for use of the resources in classrooms.	2016-2017 and ongoing	
Systemic – Attitudinal	Board-wide	Mental Health and Addictions Strategy - 4 target areas: Mental Health Literacy, Pathway to Care, Promoting Positive Mental Health, Making Connections (curriculum, developmental assets, culturally responsive teaching, CPS, restorative practices)	September 2015 – June 2016	
Systemic – Attitudinal	Board-wide	Children's Mental Health Week celebration and Symposium providing strategies and resources to create a greater awareness of mental health issues in youth and mental health promotion toolkit.	May 2017	Completed
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Pathway to Care Document outlines services within the Board and the community, and access points to reduce barriers. Pathway coordination and communication embedded into Mental Health Strategy.	September 2014 and on-going	Launched and embedded in strategy
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Increase in external agency partnerships related to Children's Mental Health.	September 2014 – June 2016	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Review status of Board accessibility policies and procedures and update as required.	Ongoing 2016-2017	
Systemic	Board -wide	Healthy Schools Committee launch	Fall 2016	
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request. Library Services will create a list with service providers for the requests.	Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline 2016-2017	
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards Plan to template all school websites to ensure accessible format as well as consistent format. Consider including a standard message for all school based websites referencing the method and contact person for making accessibility accommodation requests. All Board surveys or requests for public consultation will include messaging referencing how requests for accessibility accommodations can be made.	Ongoing preparation for 2021 deadline 2016-2017	
Physical	To be determined	Installation of accessibility features in all new schools and schools being renovated, etc. to meet Section 3.8 (Barrier Free Design) on the 2006 Ontario Building Code.	Ongoing 2016-2017	

2017-2018

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Review status of mandatory (AODA) accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff have been trained. Implementation of program to notify employees (new and existing) and their supervisors of completion rate of mandatory trainings (inclusive of AODA training requirements).	Ongoing 2017-2018	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Systemic	Board-wide	Published administrative procedure for recruitment accommodations.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
General		Support teachers in implementation of lesson plans under the Teachable Project and others to raise disability awareness for students. Library Services to consider including electronic copy of Teachable Project in collection. Library Services to consider providing hard copy for school based library collections.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
Systemic		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on the Customer Service Standards.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
Systemic		Continue to provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on *Human Rights Code* provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
General		Continue to highlight AODA language guidelines to system. Consider opportunities to reference the document with system staff. Consider drafting a protocol for inclusive meeting design.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
General		Continue to provide access to 'competing rights' learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning modules through the OHRC webinars and e-learning sessions.	2017–2018 and ongoing	
General		Continue to expand learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses to address issues relevant to each employee group, focusing on inclusion as a key strategy	2017-2018 and ongoing	
General		Offer community learning workshops for HDSB Equity Lenses.	2017-2018 and ongoing	
General		Continue to offer student and staff learning conferences that promote and celebrate all HDSB Equity Lenses.	2017-2018 and ongoing	
General		Partner with community organizations that promote positive varied 'able-bodies' and diverse 'ability' learning to offer learning and Professional Development.	2017-2018 and ongoing	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
		Example of continuing to work with The Lunchbox – Community Living North Halton		
General		Continue with Professional Development on embedding Equity Lenses into classroom instruction and school operations.	2017-2018 and ongoing	
General		Library Services to expand review and purchase process to focus on the lens of Ability for bulk order for school libraries. Follow up inservice with Teacher Librarians and Student Services staff for use of the resources in classrooms.	2017-2018 and ongoing	
Systemic – Attitudinal	School	Pathway to Care Document outlines services within the Board and the community, and access points to reduce barriers. Pathway coordination and communication embedded into Mental Health Strategy.	September 2014 and ongoing	
Systemic	Board-wide	Review status of Board accessibility policies and procedures and update as required.	Ongoing 2017-2018	
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request. Library Services will create a list with service providers for the requests.	Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline ongoing 2017-2018	
Information and Communication	Board-wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards Plan to template all school websites to ensure accessible format as well as consistent format. Consider including a standard message for all school based websites referencing the method and contact person for making accessibility accommodation requests. All Board surveys or requests for public consultation will include messaging referencing how requests for accessibility accommodations can be made.	Ongoing preparation for 2021 deadline on-going 2017-2018	

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date	Status
Physical	To be determined	Installation of accessibility features in all new schools and schools being renovated, etc. to meet Section 3.8 (Barrier Free Design) on the 2006 Ontario Building Code.	Ongoing 2017-2018	

AT-A-GLANCE

REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY REGULATION – SCHOOL BOARDS

July 1, 2011	January 1, 2012	January 1, 2013	January 1, 2014	January 1, 2015	January 1, 2020-2025
Transportation School Boards to provide accessible transportation services for students with disabilities	**Information & Communications** Emergency procedure, plans and public safety information to be available in accessible formats.	**General** Develop policies and organizational commitment on achieving accessibility. Review/update.	**General** training of employees and volunteers on accessibility standards and Human Rights Code Self-service Kiosks to be accessible.	**Information & Communications** Provide accessible formats and communication supports producers of textbooks to provide accessible or conversion-ready versions	**Information & Communications** School libraries to provide digital and multimedia resources in accessible format by 2020.
	Employment individualized workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities.	**Accessibility Plans** In consultation with persons with disabilities.	**Information and Communication** Feedback Processes to be accessible. New internet websites and web content to conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.	**School Libraries** to provide accessible or conversion-ready versions of print materials**.**	Producers of print-based education supplementary learning resources to provide accessible or conversion-ready versions.
		Accessibility criteria for acquiring goods, services, facilities.	**Employment** Accommodation in recruitment. Job information in accessible formats and communication supports individual employee accommodation plans.		**All internet** websites and web content to conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA (By 2021).
		Information and Communications	Accessibility in performance management, career		

July 1, 2011	January 1, 2012	January 1, 2013	January 1, 2014	January 1, 2015	January 1, 2020-2025
		School Boards to provide: educational resources/materials, student records, and program information in accessible formats.	development and redeployment		
		School Boards to provide all educators with accessibility awareness training re: accessible program, course delivery instruction.	**Transportation** School Boards develop individual student transportation plans.		

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)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act:
https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11

Accessibility Rules for educational institutions:
https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-rules-school-libraries

Guidelines on Accessible Education:
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/guidelines-accessible-education

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*
https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/migration/documents/eng/disability/arc/way_with_words.pdf

Community Resources for Independence, *Using Words With Dignity*
http://www.crinet.org/Default.aspx?PageID=2663327&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11346772&ObjectID=2663327&ObjectType=1#Using_words_with_Dignity

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

Enable*link* (Canadian Abilities Foundation) Directory of Canadian Disability Links
http://www.enablelink.org/resources/links_to.html http://www.ohpe.ca/node/2878

Adaptive Technology Resource Centre http://www.adaptech.org/en/team/atrc

Ontario Interpreter Services (OIS) https://www.chs.ca/services/ontario-interpreting-services

CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation) http://www.chs.ca/services/captioning-services

Standards Council of Canada : https://www.scc.ca/en
    B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design
    https://www.scc.ca/en/standardsdb/standards/20064
    B480-02 Customer Service Standard for People with Disabilities
    https://www.scc.ca/en/standardsdb/standards/7716

Playability Tool Kit: Building Accessible Play Spaces http://www.opassoc.on.ca/toolkit.asp

A Few Key Ontario Organizations:
Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) http://www.cnib.ca

Canadian Hearing Society   http://www.cha.ca

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association   http://www.chha.ca

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

Community Living Ontario   http://communitylivingontario.ca/en/

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – Ont. Division -- http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario

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

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

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

Spinal Cord Injury – Ontario   http://www.sciontario.org/

Le Phénix   http://lephenix.ca/

Ontario March of Dimes   https://www.marchofdimes.ca/EN/Pages/default.aspx

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

AboutFace International   http://www.aboutfaceinternational.org

Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario   http://www.tourettesyndromeontario.ca

Association for Bright Children   http://www.abcontario.ca

Halton Down Syndrome Association   http://www.haltondownsyndrome.com

VIEWS: Support for the Families of Blind and Visually Impaired Children -- http://viewson.ca

Autism Ontario – Halton Chapter –
                        http://www.autismontario.com/client/aso/ao.nsf/halton/haltonhome

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, than 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.

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.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission sites environmental sensitivities and nut allergies as conditions that may need to be accommodated as disabilities.

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.)

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

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.
- Avoid referring to the disability, or using phrases like "handicapped".
- Unless it is an emergency, only touch the person if you have been given permission.
- If you offer assistance, wait until your receive permission.
- Offer your arm (the elbow) to guide the person and walk slowly.
- Service animals are working and have to pay attention at all times. Refrain from engaging with the animal.
- 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.
- When entering a room, show the individual to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient the person to the environment around them.
- Ensure you say good-bye prior to leaving the individual.
- Be patient. Things may take a little longer.

Hard of Hearing and Deafness
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 hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating. While some people may use sign language, notes or hearing aids when communicating, others may also use email, pagers, TTY telephone service or Bell Canada Relay Service.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people who are hard of hearing or deaf.
● Always ask how you can help. Don't shout.
● Avoid referring to the disability, or using 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.
● Keep your face clearly visible when speaking.
● Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
● Service animals are working and have to pay attention at all times. Refrain from engaging with the animal.
● 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 rather than someone who is with them.
● People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things. Ask before you help.
● Avoid refer to the disability, or using phrases like "handicapped".
● Be patient and be sure you understand their needs.
● Unless it is an emergency, refrain from touching any assistive devices, including wheelchairs.
● 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 <u>suggestions to help you interact with people with intellectual disabilities</u>.

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.
- Avoid referring to the disability, or using 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, ask again.
- Give one piece of information at a time.
- Be polite and patient.
- Speak directly to the person, not to someone who is with the person.

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 <u>suggestions to help you interact with people with learning or cognitive disabilities</u>.

- Patience and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- Recognize that some people with communication difficulties use augmentative communication systems such as Signed English and Picture Exchange System.
- 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.
- Avoid referring to the disability, or using 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 <u>suggestions to help you interact with people with mental health disabilities</u>.

- 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 him or her 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 communication challenges. 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, sign language 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; make no assumption they have an intellectual disability as well.
- If you don't understand, ask the person to repeat the information.
- Avoid referring to the disability, or using 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 they need to get their point across.
- Allow the individual to finish their sentences themselves without interruption.
- Patience, respect and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

Deaf-Blind Disabilities

A person who is deaf-blind 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 intervener, a professional who helps with communicating. Interveners 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.
- Make no assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. Some deaf-blind people have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- Avoid referring to the disability, or using 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 intervener.
- Identify yourself to the intervener 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.
- Unless it's an emergency, refrain from touching a deaf-blind person without permission.

Other

Disabilities result from other conditions, accidents, illnesses, and diseases, including ALS (Lou Gehrig's 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.

Retrieved August 2006 from http://www.mcss/gov.on.ca/mcss/english/topics/

Where to Look for Barriers

Barriers	Where to Look
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 - Desk
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
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
Attitudinal Barriers: - Biases and beliefs - Lack of understanding - Stigmatization * See also Policy / Practice below	- Lack of information / knowledge - Lack of sensitivity / intolerance
Technological Barriers: - Computers - Standard software - Websites - Mice - Fax machines - TTYs - Appliances - Switches	- Operating systems - Proprietary software - Keyboards - Printers - Telephones - Photocopiers - Control panels

Barriers	Where to Look
Policy / Practice Barriers: - Procurement and purchasing - Recruiting - Testing - Promotion - Regulations - Protocols - Community use of facilities	- Job postings – Hiring - Interviewing - Meetings - By-laws - Rules - Safety and evacuation - Accommodating students with disabilities

Student Travel Plan

Complete this form <u>annually</u> for any student who requires specialized transportation. Any school that has a student with special needs who rides on a full size school bus, should also complete this form.

Do not complete the Student Travel Plan if a student <u>has a medical condition ONLY and does NOT require specialized transportation</u>. The School Board's Medical Form for individual medical condtions (i.e. Anaphylaxis, Seizure Disorder etc.) <u>MUST</u> be completed and forwarded to HSTS as per the Board's Administrative Procedure.

Submitter's Name:

_____   _____
First Name   Last Name

Submitter's School/Work Location:

_____

Submitter's Email:

_____

By submitting this form the submitter confirms that the parent/guardian is aware of the details and direction provided in the student travel plan.

Student Information

School Year:
                    -
                    2016 2017

School Board: ○ HDSB   ○ HCDSB

Designated School: _____

Student Name: _____   _____
First Name   Last Name (First Initial ONLY)

Last Three Digits of Ontario Education Number _____

Grade: _____

Gender: ○ Male   ○ Female

Special Needs of Student

Areas of Need:
- ☐ Mobility
- ☐ Blind/Low Vision
- ☐ Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Developmental Delay
- ☐ Communication/ Non-Verbal

_____

Additional Details:

Areas of Accommodation:
- ☐ Safety Vest
- ☐ Accompanied by EA
- ☐ Walker
- ☐ Booster/Car Seat
- ☐ Wheelchair
- ☐ Service Animal

_____

Explanation (if applicable):

Information for the Driver

To be completed by school/board staff to assist the driver while transporting the students to and from the school.

Information to Assist the Driver:
- ☐ Flight Risk/Runner
- ☐ The student may have difficulty navigating steps
- ☐ The student may pose a risk of injury to self or others

Other Requirements:
- ☐ Must be met
- ☐ Can enter home without Parent/Guardian

Student Triggers and Supportive Stategies

List triggers that may affect the student's behaviour and strategies that the driver can use in maintaining a supportive environment.

[Submit]