

Access Awareness 2014

What are the **TOP TEN** supports for Accessibility?

1. **TECHNOLOGY** - Access to technology including laptop computers, touch screens on iPads and interactive white boards provides opportunities for ALL students to access the curriculum. Training is provided to support students with many assistive technology software programs.
2. **SOUND SYSTEMS** - Many schools are wired with sound field systems that allow ALL students to hear instructions clearly, but are essential for students with Central Auditory Processing Disorder and those with hearing loss.
3. **BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY** - Schools ensure that students, staff and the community can access most of the school and keep hallways and stairwells clear, as well as using equipment that is provided. Alternative classrooms or meeting rooms are provided if required.
4. **ADVOCATE** - Ask how you can assist and advocate for someone. Have an open mind to individuals who may have a disability or need support. Be the voice for students who can't communicate.
5. **FIELD TRIPS** – Schools ensure that field trips are accessible to all students and that accessible busing is provided.
6. **RESOURCE ROOMS** – Provide a safe place for students and offer resources and materials for parents. Some Staff Meetings and Student Councils meet in the Special Education Room to learn more about programs and supports provided.
7. **COMMUNICATION & DIALOGUE** - Keep the conversations going and respond to needs with a perspective of care. Provide alternate forms of communication using visuals, enlarged fonts and signing as needed.
8. **SIGNAGE** - Accessible entrances, parking and washrooms are available and identified.
9. **TEACH ACCEPTANCE** - Staff teach students about accessibility issues to raise awareness and understanding. School volunteers who are wheelchair users or have special needs model acceptance. Presentations by Autism Ontario, Community Living, and the Five Counties Children's Centre increase our community support. At one school students model acceptance by signing 'O Canada' in the classroom each morning.
10. **MAKE EVERYONE FEEL WELCOME** – Schools offer a variety of supports and groups including Go Girls, Circle of Friends, Healing Circles, Peer Partners and Fitness Friends, and create a welcoming environment of inclusion and acceptance.