



Peterborough Victoria
Northumberland and Clarington
Catholic District School Board

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

**Accessibility and
Barrier Free Learning
and Work
Environments**

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
NUMBER

**705 (NEW)
406 (OLD)**

Directional Policy

Learning and Work Environments

TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Accessibility and Barrier Free Learning and Work Environments

DATE APPROVED: November 29, 2016

PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:

Following the approval of the Learning and Work Environments Directional Policy

DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT: Learning and Work Environments

ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN and CATHOLIC GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS:

The Accessibility and Barrier-free Learning and Work Environments Administrative Procedures support our vision for achieving excellence in Catholic education through an unwavering focus on learning, leadership and service. This vision calls the Board to these Strategic Priorities:

- Ensure our structures, processes, relationships, and actions reflect our Gospel Values and Catholic Social Teachings;
- Implement the most effective, evidence-based instructional and assessment practices to help all students meet the Catholic School Graduate Expectations;
- Embed technology to support digital literacy, creativity, innovation, collaboration, and the learning needs of all students;
- Develop the intellectual, spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional well-being of students in safe, diverse, respectful, and faith-filled learning environments; and

- Implement fair and transparent processes in recruitment, leadership, talent development, and succession planning to ensure our employees have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attributes to support our Vision.

The Ontario Catholic School Graduate is expected to be:

- An effective communicator who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values;
- A reflective, creative, and holistic thinker who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good;
- A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner who develops and demonstrates God-given potential;
- A collaborative contributor who finds meaning, dignity, and vocation in work that respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good;
- A responsible citizen who give witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice, and the sacredness of human life.

GUIDELINES:

Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board is committed to improving opportunities and providing services to our students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, clergy, and the public that are free of barriers and biases.

The Board strives to ensure that key principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environments.

Our conduct shall demonstrate our belief in the strength diversity brings to our communities. The Board will comply with the “Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005”. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>

ACTION REQUIRED:

The Director of Education will designate a staff member as chairperson and invite system representation to be members of the Accessibility For All Committee.

The Committee will be comprised of a trustee, a superintendent, a representative from Finance, Communications, Human Resources, Plant, Student Transportation Services of Ontario (STSCO), Information Technology, a principal, resource staff, Special Education Advisory Committee member, and community agency representative(s).

The mandate of the Accessibility For All Committee is as follows;

- to meet once a term (or up to three times a year);
- to review current initiatives and successes in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers at each meeting;
- to review and ensure bi-annual audits are completed as required to ensure accessibility and the removal of barriers;
- to set priorities and develop accessibility strategies annually;
- to monitor progress of the Accessibility Plan through reports from Committee members and updates from Board departments at each meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing this Administrative Procedure to ensure its alignment with the Learning and Work Environments Directional Policy;
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- establishing and implementing a multi-year strategic plan (vision and goals) which reflects Accessibility and Barrier-Free Learning and Workplace Environments;
- overseeing implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that the principles of equitable and inclusive hiring practices are adhered to; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Superintendents are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that, as new staff are hired, accessibility training will become a component of their orientation training;
- ensuring that staff with any barriers or special needs have access to the individualized workplace emergency response plan;

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- ensuring that assistive devices, services, and accommodations are provided when appropriate medical documentation is provided;
- ensuring that architectural barriers are eliminated, and that capital projects comply with the accessibility requirements as budget allows;
- ensure that all purchases do not create physical barriers;
- ensuring that the physical requirements for accessibility for the Catholic Education Centre, each Catholic Secondary school and one designated Catholic Elementary school for each community as defined by the Ontario Building Code are met;
- ensuring that translation services, non-print, and alternative formats for School Board information brochures, forms and web information are available upon request; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that new staff have completed the accessibility training;
- allowing individuals to use their own assistive devices, service animals or support persons to access services;
- ensuring that all purchases do not create physical barriers;
- ensuring that their site Accessibility Audit is completed and reviewed as required;
- ensuring that communications with members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with non-disabled people;
- requesting appropriate aids and services from Special Education or agencies as needed;
- ensuring that specialized transportation is arranged, using the appropriate Board process, when needed;
- ensuring that there is proper exterior and interior signage (including accessible parking and signage), using the international symbol for accessibility;
- ensuring that when services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice will be posted at the site;

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- ensuring that school staff understand how to accommodate students with disabilities;
- ensuring that staff experiencing any barriers or having special needs have access to the individualized workplace emergency response plan;
- ensuring that for staff who have an individualized workplace emergency response plan, the plan is adhered to; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

School and Departmental Staff are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that they complete the accessibility training as required;
- allowing individuals to use their own assistive devices, service animals or support persons to access services;
- fulfilling their role in supporting students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) as outlined in the Education Act;
- ensuring that, if required, they complete the individualized workplace emergency response plan;
- ensuring that they communicate barriers they are experiencing or their special needs to their supervisor;
- encouraging and honoring student voice in the development of authentic and relevant learning experiences; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Students are responsible for:

- engaging in all learning experiences;
- articulating their strengths, their special needs, and barriers to access which they are experiencing; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Parents are responsible for:

- articulating their children’s strengths, their special needs, and barriers to access which they are experiencing;
- articulating barriers to access which they are experiencing themselves; and
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

- Students, parents/guardians, the public, and our staff are able to access Board services, free from barriers and biases.
- The Board is recognized as one that supports the rights of all persons with disabilities by providing equal opportunities to participate in our school communities with respect, independence, and dignity.
- Students are treated equitably in all classrooms.
- Accessibility audits reflect compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

DEFINITIONS:

Assistive Device – An assistive device is any device used by people with disabilities to help with their daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices.

Barrier – A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or practice: (“obstacle”)

Customer – A customer is any person who uses the services of the School Board.

Disability – As Defined by the Human Rights Code – Section 10 (1):

- 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
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability

- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- a mental disorder
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997: ("handicap")

Individualized workplace emergency response plan - A plan that identifies individual workplace emergency response information for those employees who have a disability.
Physical Accessibility Criteria:

The Catholic Education Centre, each secondary school, and a minimum of one school for each community where a Catholic school exists, must be physically accessible according to the following criteria:

- designated parking areas with appropriate signage
- cut-away curb
- exterior and/or interior ramps with appropriate slopes and handrails as required
- a minimum of one automatic door entrance
- accessible gym
- accessible library
- a minimum of one accessible washroom
- a minimum of one accessible classroom
- clear path of travel in entrances and hallways leading to gym, library, washroom, and classroom
- visually defined contrasts when any change of level occurs.

Service Animal – A service animal is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability, and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from an appropriate professional. The animal must be certified and trained by a licensed and registered trainer to support the person's needs.

Support Person – A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as they access the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.

REFERENCES:

Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>

Access Ontario

<http://accessontario.com>

Blind Persons' Rights Act

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90b07>

Human Rights Code - Duty to Accommodate

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-disability-and-duty-accommodate>

Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations

<http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/en/ourboard/catholicGraduate.asp>

The Building Code Act, 1992

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/92b23>

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>