Peterborough Victoria
Northumberland and Clarington
Catholic District School Board

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
Administrative Procedure **Accessibility and Barrier Free Learning and Work Environment: Information and Communication**	*Administrative Procedure Number* **819** (NEW) **705** (OLD)
Directional Policy **Healthy Schools and Workplaces 800**	

TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

ACCESSIBILITY AND BARRIER-FREE WORK ENVIRONMENTS: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

DATE APPROVED:

April 2021

PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:

April 2026

DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy by ensuring the board complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (2005) in its information and communication practices.

ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Accessibility and Barrier-Free Work Environments: Information and Communication Administrative Procedure supports our Vision of achieving Excellence in Catholic Education by ensuring our structures, processes, relationships and actions reflect our Gospel values and Catholic Social Teachings. This vision calls the Board to these Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Vision
Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education
LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

Mission
To educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body and spirit of all.

LEARN
Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.

LEAD
Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.

SERVE
Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

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 composed of a trustee, a superintendent, a student, 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, at each meeting, current initiatives and successes in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers;
- to review and ensure bi-annually accessibility checklists are completed as required to promote 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.

BACKGROUND:

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.

On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, His Holiness, Pope Francis calls all of us to the importance of accessibility as all persons with disabilities *have been grafted onto Christ in baptism. They share with him, in their own particular way, the priestly, prophetic, and royal mission of evangelizing through, with and in the Church.* (CNA, 2020).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing this Administrative Procedure to ensure its alignment with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces 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;
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Superintendent of Learning/Special Education is responsible for:

- resourcing the Accessibility for All Committee and overseeing the development and review of five relevant administrative procedures, each adhering to the AODA (2005).

Superintendent of Learning/Human Resources is responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that, as new staff and volunteers 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;
- ensuring that assistive devices, services, and accommodations are provided when appropriate medical documentation is provided.

Superintendent of Learning/Innovation Technology is responsible for:

- supporting Information Technology Services in ensuring the Board's requirements under the act are fulfilled.

Superintendents of Schools and System Portfolios are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures - Information and Communication.

Principals, Vice Principals and Managers are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures – Information and Communication;
- allowing individuals to use their own assistive devices, service animals or support persons to access services in keeping with AP 706, Service Animals in Schools;
- 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 school staff understand how to accommodate students with disabilities;
- modelling of an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

The Manager of Information Technology is responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the Accessibility and Barrier Free Administrative Procedures – Information and Communication;

- ensuring public facing websites are Web Content Accessibility Guide 2.0 AA compliant;
- establishing a liaison with publishers for obtaining accessible versions of learning materials and ensuring the liaison contact information is readily available;
- providing training to website document creators on accessibility strategies and compliance for website documents;
- providing a tool for website content creators to validate document accessibility;
- establishing proactive monitoring of public facing websites to identify compliance issues.

Teachers and 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 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;
- 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 needs, and barriers to access which they are experiencing;
- modelling an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

Parents are responsible for:

- engaging in all learning experiences;
- articulating their strengths, their needs, and barriers to access which they are experiencing;

- modelling an awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, in order to support a culture of acceptance.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

- monitoring and collecting the number of requests for accessible formats;
- monitoring of public facing websites for accessibility compliance.

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").

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").

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

Administrative Policy 706: Service Animals in Schools, PVNCCDSB
https://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/706-AP-Service-Animals-in-Schools.pdf

Blind Persons' Rights Act https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90b07

Catholic News Agency. Pope Francis: Disabled People Must Have Access to the Sacraments, Parish Life, December 2020. Retrieved from https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope-francis-disabled-must-have-access-to-the-sacraments-parish-life-52850

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 Chart of Rights and Freedoms http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) http://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/