



Accessibility

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Policy Statement

Grand Erie District School Board provides accessibility accommodations that foster independence, equity of opportunity, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians, employees and the community.

The Accessibility Policy embeds the policies of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which includes mandatory accessibility standards that identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in five areas: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and Design of Public Spaces.

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Accessibility training for employees
– Adherence to standards set out in the AODA

Legal Framework

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR), Ontario Regulation 191/11
Ontario Human Rights Code
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56

Procedures

1. Training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities will be provided when required. Employees who develop the Board's policies and procedures and those who interact with the community or other third parties on behalf of the Board shall receive training with respect to any changes to the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) as needed.
2. All employees will be provided with Accessibility Awareness Training. A record of the training, including the names of those trained and the dates on which the training was provided, shall be kept.

Board employees will consider the impact on persons with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, developing or building new spaces, designing new systems, planning a new initiative and providing accessible means of transportation where deemed appropriate.

3. A feedback process will be created that will review the implementation of this policy with the Board's various constituency groups.
4. The Board will maintain the Accessibility Committee as per Bylaw 8 in order to prepare a multi-year accessibility plan, with annual progress reports.
 - 4.1 The Board will establish a process for consulting with employees who have a role in implementing the expectations and procedures established under this policy to review its effectiveness.
5. The Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual (Appendix A), shall be followed, and used for training and daily operation.

Definitions

Disability:

Disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time.

Accessibility:

Accessibility is defined as that which enables people to achieve their full potential.

Barrier:

A "barrier" means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, policy or a practice; ("obstacle")

Accommodation:

An accommodation is a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing – in a timely manner - barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the Board.

Board Resources

Policy SO14 – Equity and Inclusive Education
Procedure SO 124 – Use of Service Dogs in Schools



Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

September 2016

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1.0 Introduction to Accessibility Awareness

1.1 Legal Framework

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), S.O. 2005, CHAPTER 11
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11
- Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER H.19
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56

1.2 Related Policies/Procedures

- Policy SO31 Accessibility
- Policy SO14 – Equity and Inclusive Education
- Procedure SO124 – Use of Service Dogs in Schools

2.0 Customer Service Standards

2.1 Monitoring and Feedback on Accessible Customer Service

- 2.1.1 The Chair of the Accessibility Committee will maintain a process for collecting feedback on Accessibility – Customer Service Standards that has the following components:
- 2.1.2 Information on the Board and school websites inviting users of Board services to provide feedback on their experience with, or concerns about, access to services for people with disabilities.
- 2.1.3 Printed information available through school offices and public offices of the Board to invite people with disabilities to provide feedback on their experience with, or concerns about, accessibility of services. Consideration must be given to providing information in alternate formats.
- 2.1.4 Information on how the Board will respond to feedback.
- 2.1.5 Methods of feedback:
- a) A range of methods for soliciting feedback is employed to ensure optimum access to the feedback process by people with disabilities.
 - b) Methods include Board/school websites, e-mail, verbal input, social media, a suggestion box or a feedback card. Accessibility concerns are directed to the Board’s Accessibility Committee by site administrators.
 - c) The feedback process should include the title(s) of the person(s) responsible for receiving feedback and indicate how the Board’s response to the feedback will be made known.
- 2.1.6 Proactive measures for accessible customer service:
- a) To ensure ongoing efficient and effective adherence to Accessibility – Customer Service Standards, Board staff, will take into account the impact on people with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.

2.2 Use of a Service Dog By The General Public

2.2.1 Recognizing service dogs:

A service dog 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 a regulated health care provider.

Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who have vision loss, hearing-alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety. The customer service standard's provisions also apply to animals providing other services to people with disabilities. It is "readily apparent" that an animal is a service dog when it is obvious by its appearance or by what it is doing. For example, it may be readily apparent that an animal is a service dog if it is wearing a harness, saddlebags, a sign that identifies it as a service dog if it has a certificate or identification card from a service animal training school or an identification card from the Attorney General of Ontario. It may also be readily apparent if a person is using the animal to assist him or her in doing things, such as opening doors or retrieving items.

2.2.2 Responsibilities:

- a) Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service dog.
- b) Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a service dog will be welcomed on Board premises with his or her service dog and may be accompanied by the service dog while on the premises. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
- c) This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or Board offices where the public does not have access.
- d) This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service dog. Access to classrooms for service dog used by students and staff is covered under separate procedures (SO124 – Use of Service Dogs).

2.2.3 Exclusion of Service Dog:

- a) A service dog can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g. school cafeteria or lunchroom).
- b) Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service dog, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service dog. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service dog. It is the Board's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g., creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.
- c) A service animal dog can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario Dog Owners' Liability Act, which places restrictions on pit bull terriers.

- d) In the rare instance where a service dog must be excluded, the Board must make every effort to put alternative arrangements in place to provide the services required by the person with a disability. This could involve leaving the service dog in a secure area where it is permitted by law and discussing with the person how best to serve her/him, e.g., a person with a vision disability might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide her/him.

2.2.4 Confirming the Status of a Service Dog:

- a) At times it may be necessary to confirm that an animal is a service dog. Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service dog, the school or Board staff member may request a letter from an Ontario regulated health professional, e.g., a physician or nurse confirming that the employee requires a service dog because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the dog is needed or how it is used.
- b) Where the person using the service animal regularly attends at the school or Board facility, the principal or departmental manager may request to keep a copy of the letter on file but only as long as required by the circumstances.
- c) Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to produce a letter on occasions when visiting the premises. The principal or departmental manager shall preserve the confidentiality of the letter and information contained in the letter, and shall not use or disclose the letter or information except as provided for in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56, or as otherwise required by law.

**Please refer to Procedure SO124 "Use of Service Dogs" for parameters to be followed when considering the use of a service dog by a student or an employee of the board at a school site.

2.3 Use of Support Persons by the General Public

- 2.3.1 A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from a Board employee who provides support services to a student or staff person – separate and specific procedures apply. A support person is an individual chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual's health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure. The support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend or a family member.
- 2.3.2 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that staff members receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing Board services accompanied by a support person.
- 2.3.3 Access to Board premises and school events:
 - a) Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Board premises with his or her support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
 - b) This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or Board offices where the public does not have access.
 - c) Where an individual with a disability who is accompanied by a support person wishes to attend a school, Family of Schools or Board-organized event for which a fee is charged, the notice of the event will include information as to whether support persons will be charged a fee and specify the amount of the fee.

- d) The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

NOTE: This would be a rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill the Board's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.

It is further noted that people with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health and safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health and safety before one may be required – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means. Any considerations in protecting health or safety should be based on specific factors and not on assumptions. Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean he/she not capable of meeting health or safety requirements.)

2.3.4 Confidentiality

- a) Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is not the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the Superintendent of Education, principal or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure.
- b) Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian. (See Appendix A Consent Form for Student Support Person).
- c) The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- d) A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/Board office.
- e) If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

2.4 Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public

- 2.4.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that staff are trained to support parents and the general public who may use assistive devices while accessing Board services.
- 2.4.2 Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices. (See Appendix B – Information on Interacting with People Using Assistive Devices.)
- 2.4.3 Students and staff have separate and specific procedures related to their personal use of assistive devices.
- 2.4.4 Communication with respect to the use of assistive devices:
 - a) The Board website and each school website will indicate that all Board facilities provide services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities and offer services that include the use of assistive devices.

- b) Each Board facility that is open to the public will post information in the front office/reception area that welcomes the use of assistive devices and encourages users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.
- c) The Board website and school websites, as applicable, will indicate the availability of assistive devices provided by the Board* or school to assist in provision of services to people with disabilities.
- d) Each Board facility that is open to the public will, as applicable, post information in the front office/reception area that indicates the availability of assistive devices and encourage potential users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

*Note – these could include:

- **Assistive devices:** TTY service, telephones with large numbers, amplifiers, lifts.
- **Services:** Sign language interpretation, oral interpretation, real-time captioning.
- **Alternate service methods:** Assistance of a staff person to complete a transaction, e.g., school registration)

2.5 Notice of Disruption of Service

- 2.5.1 As members of the general public, people with disabilities may rely on certain facilities, services or systems in order to access the services of the school or Board offices. Escalators and elevators, for example, are important to people with mobility disabilities because that may be the only way they can access the premises. Other systems and services designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities can include accessible washrooms, amplification systems, and note-taking or TTY services. When those facilities or services are temporarily unavailable or if they are expected to be temporarily unavailable in the near future, a notice of disruption of service is required. Generally, disruptions to any of the Board’s services, such as a major storm or power outage, do not require this special notice. However, if the disruption has a significant impact on people with disabilities, a notice of the disruption should be provided.
- 2.5.2 Supervisory Officers, Principals, Managers, Manager of Communications and Community Relations will ensure that the users of Board and school services are notified when there is a disruption in services that may have an impact on access to services by people with disabilities.
- 2.5.3 Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at or in the school or at or in Board facilities. Other options that may be used include: posting on the Board and/or school website; through direct communication with users of the services in accordance with school practices. (See Appendix C – Sample Notices of Disruption to Services.)
- 2.5.4 Notice must be provided in multiple formats (upon request).
- 2.5.5 If the disruption is planned, notice should be provided in advance of the disruption. If the notice is unplanned, notice should be provided as soon as possible after the disruption has been identified.
- 2.5.6 The notice of disruption of service must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

3.0 Information & Communications

3.1 Regulation

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to our services as all others we serve. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of services related to information and communications.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 Information

Includes data, facts and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital, or images, and conveys meaning.

3.2.2 Communication

Means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

3.2.3 Accessible Formats

Include, but are not limited to, options such as large print, screen readers, braille, audio format, or captioning.

3.2.4 Conversion-ready

Is an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format. **WCAG** refers to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

3.3 Responsibility

Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others providing services and programs on behalf of the Board have received initial training in the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, including the Standards related to Information and Communications.

3.4 Feedback

3.4.1 Administrators/managers will ensure that processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities.

3.4.2 Upon request, administrators/managers will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and/or communication supports to facilitate feedback.

3.4.3 Administrators/managers will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports with regard to its feedback processes.

3.5 Procurement

3.5.1 All Board employees with responsibility for purchasing will, wherever practicable, incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods and services, designing new systems or planning new initiatives that are related to provision of information and communication services.

3.6 **Provision of Information and Communications in Accessible Formats**

- 3.6.1 Upon request, Administrators/Managers will provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities to facilitate their access to the services of the Board.
- 3.6.2 Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs and a cost no greater than the regular cost charged to other persons.
- 3.6.3 Administrators/Managers will determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support and, in so doing, will consult with the person making the request.
- 3.6.4 Administrators/Managers will notify the public, through websites, general publications and other relevant means, about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

3.7 **Accessible Websites**

- 3.7.1 The Communications & Community Relations Manager will ensure that all new websites and web content on these sites will conform with WCAG 2.0 at Level A.
- 3.7.2 The Communications & Community Relations Manager will ensure that, as of January 1, 2021, all its internet websites and web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 at Level AA.
- 3.7.3 These requirements do not include Live Captions or Pre-recorded Audio Descriptions.
- 3.7.4 These requirements apply to:
 - (a) websites and web content, including web-based applications, that the Board controls directly or controls through a contractual relationship that allows for modifications of the product;
 - (b) web content published on a website after January 1, 2012
- 3.7.5 Where the Communications & Community Relations Manager determines that meeting these requirements is not practicable, such determination will include consideration of:
 - (a) the availability of commercial software or tools or both; and
 - (b) significant impact on an implementation timeline that was planned or initiated before January 1, 2012.

3.8 **Educational and Training Resources and Materials**

- 3.8.1 Administrators/managers will, upon notification of need, provide educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format that takes into account the accessibility needs due to a disability of the person to whom the material is to be provided.
- 3.8.2 To do so, the Accessibility Committee will procure through purchase, or obtain by other means, an accessible or conversion-ready electronic format, where available.
- 3.8.3 If the resources cannot be procured or converted into an accessible format, administrators/managers will arrange for the provision of comparable resources.
- 3.8.4 Administrators/Managers will, upon notification of need, provide information on the requirements, availability and descriptions of programs in an accessible format to persons with disabilities.
- 3.8.5 School administrators will, upon notification of need, provide student records in an accessible format to persons with disabilities.
- 3.8.6 Training materials are available in the GEDSB Staff Portal.

3.9 **Training for Program/Classroom Staff**

3.9.1 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that all staff involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction will be provided with accessibility awareness training related to these responsibilities.

3.9.2 The Accessibility Committee will keep a record of the training provided, including the dates on which training was provided and the number of individuals to whom training was provided.

3.10 **School Libraries**

3.10.1 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that school libraries are able to provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion-ready format of print resources upon request by a person with a disability.

3.10.2 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that school libraries are able to provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion-ready format of digital or multi-media resource materials upon request by a person with a disability (by January 1, 2020).

4.0 **EMPLOYMENT**

4.1 **Regulation**

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to employment opportunities and services as do all employees and prospective employees. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of services related to employment.

4.2 **Definitions**

4.2.1 **Performance management**

Means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness with the goal of facilitating employee success.

4.2.2 **Career development and advancement**

Includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level, or a combination of these. For both additional responsibilities and employee movement, this is usually based on merit or seniority or a combination of these.

4.2.3 **Redeployment**

Means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs as an alternative to lay-off, when a particular job or department has been eliminated where possible

4.2.4 **Information**

Includes data, facts and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

4.2.5 **Communication**

Means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

- 4.2.6 **Accessible formats**
Include, but are not limited to, options such as large print, screen readers, braille, audio format, or captioning.
- 4.2.7 **Conversion-ready**
Is an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format.
- 4.2.8 **WCAG** refers to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- 4.3 **Procedures**
 - 4.3.1 Responsibility
 - 4.3.2 All staff who have responsibility for hiring and employee selection and/or supervise the work of employees of the Board will ensure that the provisions in this procedure are implemented.
 - 4.3.3 Human Resource Services will ensure that the provisions of this procedure are incorporated in the Board's hiring practices.
- 4.4 **Recruitment**
 - 4.4.1 Human Resource Services will ensure that in its recruitment outreach practices the public is made aware that the Board will provide accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
 - 4.4.2 Applicants to the Board will be made aware that Human Resource Services provides accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
 - 4.4.3 For a job selection process, the principal/supervisor will make applicants aware that, upon request, they have access to accommodations in relation to materials and processes that will be used for applicant selection and that they will be consulted about the necessary accommodations that take into account their accessibility needs due to disability.
 - 4.4.4 When making an offer of employment, the principal/supervisor will notify the successful applicant of its policy of accommodating employees with disabilities.
- 4.5 **Supports for Employees**
 - 4.5.1 Human Resource Services will inform employees of the Board's policy of supporting employees with disabilities and procedures that provide for job accommodations.
 - 4.5.2 Human Resource Services will make this information available as soon as practicable to new employees and will provide updated information as policies are revised.
- 4.6 **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**
 - 4.6.1 Where an employee with a disability so requests, the principal/supervisor will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports in relation to information that is generally available to employees in the workplace and that the employee needs to perform the employee's job.
 - 4.6.2 The principal/supervisor, in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication as required in 4.1, will consult with the employee.

4.7 **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

- 4.7.1 The principal/supervisor will ensure that individualized workplace emergency response information is provided to employees who have a disability, provided the disability is such that individualized information is necessary and the principal/supervisor has been made aware of the need for accommodation due to the disability. The principal/supervisor will provide the necessary information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.
- 4.7.2 If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, the principal/supervisor will, with the consent of the employee, provide such information to the person(s) designated to provide assistance to the employee.
- 4.7.3 The principal/supervisor, in consultation with the Health and Disability Officer, will review individualized workplace emergency response information:
 - a) when the employee moves to a different location in the Board;
 - b) when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
 - c) when the Board reviews its general emergency response procedures.

4.8 **Individual Accommodation Plans**

- 4.8.1 The Board will have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- 4.8.2 The Board's written process will address:
 - a) how the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
 - b) the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
 - c) how the Health and Disability Officer, or designate, can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the Board's expense, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how it can be achieved.
 - d) how the employee can request to have a representative of his/her bargaining unit, or another workplace representative if the employee is not a member of a bargaining unit, participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
 - e) the steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
 - f) the frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and how this will be done.
 - g) how the reasons for denying an individual accommodation plan will be provided to an employee, if accommodation is denied.
 - h) how the Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will ensure that the individual accommodation plan is provided in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- 4.8.3 The Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will provide individual accommodation plans that:
 - a) include, if requested, any information regarding accessible formats and accommodation supports provided;
 - b) include, if required, individualized workplace emergency response information; and
 - c) identify any other accommodation to be provided.

4.9 **Return to Work Process**

4.9.1 This return-to-work process does not replace or override any other return-to-work process created as a result of any other statutory compliance, e.g., under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, CHAPTER 16

4.9.2 The Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will develop, put in place and document a return-to-work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

4.9.3 The return-to-work process will:

- a) outline the steps to be taken to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work;
- b) use documented individual accommodation plans (as in 6.0) as part of the process; and,
- c) ensure that all staff involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction will be provided with accessibility awareness training related to these responsibilities.

4.10 **Performance Management**

In administering performance appraisal processes in respect of employees with disabilities, the principal/supervisor will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans.

4.11 **Career Development**

Where the Board provides career development and advancement to its employees, the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans will be taken into account.

4.12 **Redeployment**

Where the Board has in place a redeployment process, Human Resource Services will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans during the redeployment process.

5.0 **TRANSPORTATION**

5.1 **Regulation**

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to our services in a similar way as these services are available to all others we serve. We are committed to meeting, in a timely manner, the accessibility needs of students with disabilities in the provision of services related to student transportation.

The provision of accessible student transportation services will include the development of an individual school transportation plan for each student who has a disability that affects his/her transportation to and from school. The plan will be developed in consultation with the student's parents or guardians.

5.2 Definitions

5.2.1 Individual school transportation plan

Is defined as a plan that provides details of the arrangements that meet the transportation needs of an individual student who has a disability.

5.2.2 Operator

Means the driver of the school transportation vehicle.

5.2.3 Transportation Provider

Is defined as an entity or person who has entered into an agreement with the Board for the transportation of students in accordance with the Education Act.

5.2.4 Transportation Services

Means transportation that a Board provides for students in accordance with the Education Act.

5.3 Responsibility

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and the Manager of Transportation Services will ensure that the provisions of this Administrative Procedure are implemented.

5.4. Individual School Transportation Plans

5.4.1 The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education, or his/her designate, will, in consultation with parents or guardians, annually identify students who require specific transportation services and provide a Student Support Plan; such identification will, wherever possible, be made prior to the commencement of the school year.

5.4.2 Following consultation with parents or guardians, the Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education, or his/her designate, will work with the Manager of Transportation Services, or his/her designate, to implement recommendations within an individual student transportation plan for each student who requires specific transportation services.

5.5 Content of Individual School Transportation Plans

An individual school transportation plan shall, in respect of each student requiring specific transportation services, include the following:

5.5.1 Details of the student's assistance needs with respect to transportation to and from school.

5.5.2 Provisions for the boarding, securement and debarking of the student, as applicable.

5.6 Communication of Responsibilities re Individual School Transportation Plans

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and, where appropriate, the Manager of Transportation Services, will identify and communicate roles and responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the individual school transportation plan to the following:

a) The Transportation Provider

b) The parents or guardians of the student

c) The operator (driver) of the student transportation vehicle

d) The appropriate members of the school staff (e.g., principal, teacher, educational assistant)

e) The student

6.0 DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

6.1 Regulation

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to public spaces and play areas as do all students and members of the public. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of design of new public spaces and play areas.

6.2 Definitions

6.2.1 Accessible Public Spaces:

Include special features that make it easier for everyone, especially people with disabilities, seniors and families to use public spaces.

6.2.2 Public Recreational Spaces:

Can also include recreational elements such as outdoor eating areas & play spaces that people of all abilities can enjoy.

6.2.3 Accessibility by Design:

Benefits everyone; good public spaces are planned and designed from the beginning with accessibility in mind and can provide people with disabilities with more opportunities to work and play independently.

6.3 Responsibility

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and the Manager of Transportation Services will ensure that the provisions of this Policy are implemented.

6.4 Public Design Standards

6.4.1 All organizations with accessibility plan requirements must make sure that their multi-year accessibility plan outlines how their requirements under the regulation (including the Design of Public Spaces Standard) will be met.

6.4.2 Designated public sector organizations are required, except where not practicable to do so, to "incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities", which may be relevant to the accessibility features of public spaces such as outdoor play spaces or outdoor public use eating areas.

6.5 Features of Accessible Public Spaces

6.5.1 Sidewalks that are free of barriers & wide enough to move around

6.5.2 Gentler ramp slopes

6.5.3 Wider accessible parking spaces for people with mobility limitations.

6.5.4 Service counters that a person seated in a mobility device can use.

Grand Erie District School Board Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

Consent Form for Student Support Persons (to be filed in the student's OSR)

I, (parent/guardian or student over the age of 18) consent to the sharing of confidential information by the staff members named below in relation to my child/ward/self, in the presence of my child/ward's/own support person named below.

- a) **Staff Members who may Share Information with the Student Support Person**
My support person consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.

Name (print please)	Position
	School Administrator (Principal)
	Classroom Teacher

b) **Consent for Student Support Person**

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Printed Name of Student (if applicable)

c) **Support Person - Declaration of Confidentiality Agreement**

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between school staff and parent/guardian for whom I am a student support person:

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Support Person _____

Witness (Principal/Staff Member)

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of
Witness _____

Grand Erie District School Board

Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

Information on Interacting with People Using Assistive Devices

1. Assistive Devices:

Many users of Board services and facilities who have disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices. Examples of personal assistive devices include:

- wheelchairs
- scooters
- walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that “speak” when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

Key Point to Remember: One should not touch or handle an assistive device without permission.

2. Moving Personal Assistive Devices

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person’s instructions;
- confirm that the person is ready to move;
- describe what you are going to do before you do it;
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practise consideration and safety – do not leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the user’s reach.
- Respect personal space. Do not lean over a person with a disability or lean on their assistive device.
- Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

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3. How to use Canada Relay Services and TeleTYpewriter (TTY)

- a) How to communicate using the Relay Service
 1. Phone the Relay Service number (1-800-855-0511).
 2. Tell the operator the number you wish to reach.
 3. The operator will make the call for you. You speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say "Hi, How are you doing?" Do not say: "Tell him I said hello."
 4. Remember to say "Go Ahead" (GA) when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is their turn to speak.
 5. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak more slowly so your message can be typed while you are speaking. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies in text.

- b) How to use a TTY (Teletypewriter)

TTY (Teletypewriter) is a device that allows users to send typed messages across phone lines. Many people who are Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or who are deafblind may use TTYs to call other individuals.

This device generally has a keyboard and display that lets the user send and receive typed messages over telephone lines. People who are deafblind may use an additional large print or Braille display to read the typed messages.

A stand-alone TTY must communicate with another TTY. TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can call a Relay Service. The Relay Service operator will receive the messages on a TTY and relay the messages, by standard phone, to a person who does not have a TTY. A standard phone user can also place a call through the Relay Service operator to a TTY user.

If your business or organization has a TTY, learn how to operate the device.

To make a TTY call:

1. Push the "ON" switch.
2. Place the telephone receiver on the TTY's rubber receptacles. Make sure that the receiver is firmly in place and that the telephone's receiver cord is on the LEFT side of the TTY.
3. Check the telephone indicator light; if it is lit, you have the line.
4. Dial the number, and watch the telephone light; if it is flashing slowly, this indicates that the device on the other end is ringing.
5. When the person you are calling answers, you will see a phrase appear on the screen such as: "Hello, this is Richard GA." The "GA" stands for Go Ahead --
6. Don't forget to use "GA" whenever you have finished what you are saying, so that the other person will know it is his/her turn.
7. When you wish the call to end and you wish to advise the other person, type GA or SK ("Stop keying"). The person will respond by "SK" if he/she agrees. Be courteous - wait until the other person indicates "SK" before hanging up.

Note:

- The person who receives the call is always the one who starts typing first.
- Always switch the TTY "OFF" as soon as you have finished the call.

(© Queen's Printer for Ontario 2008)Resources Section of the e-course: Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Ministry of Community and Social Services

Grand Erie District School Board
Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual
Sample Notices of Disruption to Services

Sample 1 – Access to School Building

School Letterhead

Date: _____

To: Parents, Guardians and Community Users of our School

Maintenance work will make the main door of the school and the access ramp inaccessible from _____ (YYYY / MM / DD) to _____(YYYY | MM | DD).

A temporary ramp has been set up that gives access to the door at the following end or side area of the school building:

- East
- West
- South
- North

We regret this inconvenience. If you have questions or concerns, please contact _____ by calling _____.

Thank you,

School Administrator Signature and Name

Sample 2 – Accessible Washroom

Date: _____

To: Visitors to the Education Centre

Our accessible washroom is out of service due to a broken water pipe. Repairs are underway and the washroom is expected to be usable again by tomorrow. In the interim, we have made arrangements for our visitors to use the accessible washroom at [123 Main Street], which is located [next door to our premises]. We apologize for this inconvenience.

Thank you,

Name: _____, Division Manager of Facility Services – Maintenance

Grand Erie District School Board