



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC MEETING ROOMS FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY

“The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.”

2 Peter 3:9

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January 17, 2020	March 5, 2020	Click here to enter a date.

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INFORMATION REPORT

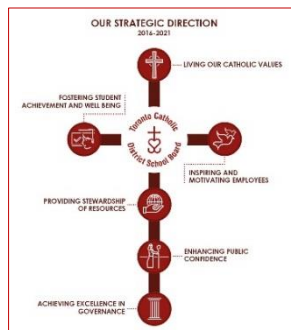
Vision:

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.



Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

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Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Audio/Visual (A/V) Design specialist and Architect were retained for the current project to update the A/V technology and millwork in the public meeting rooms (i.e., Main Boardroom, Large Committee Room, Michael Cornacchia Meeting Room, and Catholic Teachers Centre). The design work and final specifications for these meeting rooms incorporates enhancements for hearing assistance technology for those that are Hearing Impaired.

There is continued work to enhance the live and recorded webcasts of the Board meetings with Closed Captioning. Testing of the Closed Captioning functionality is underway in advance of the upgrades to the sound system in the Main Boardroom. Upon successful testing and pilot in the Main Boardroom, the webcasts of the Board meetings will be provided with Closed Captioning. The additional annual subscription cost for this service is \$10,000 plus net taxes.

As per the motion from the Board on November 21, 2019, a process can be established that upon request, sign language interpreters would be present at a Board meeting to the sign the content and proceedings of the meeting for attendees from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The estimated cost to provide sign language interpretation services a Board meeting is between \$600-\$960 plus net taxes.

The upcoming project to refresh the TCDSB public website will address the Ontario accessibility requirements for content posted on the website including videos. The estimated timeline to launch the new public website is Fall 2020.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 25 hours

B. PURPOSE

1. This report addresses a motion from the Board on November 21, 2019 to address accessibility of the public Board meetings and the online video webcasts of the meetings along with other Board videos to accommodate the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

C. BACKGROUND

1. The current project underway to update the public meeting rooms (i.e., Main Boardroom, Large Committee Room, Michael Cornacchia Meeting Room, and Catholic Teachers Centre) with upgraded Audio/Visual (A/V) technology and millwork replacement for the Main Boardroom has incorporated accessibility as part of the design. The new design includes assistive technology for the hearing impaired. Sixteen (16) hearing assistance devices will be available for Trustees and the public.
2. For the Hearing Impaired, Closed Captioning (CC) is a process that transcribes the auditory components of a video into a textual representation. The captions appear at the bottom of the display and there is a toggle control to turn the Closed Captioning on or off.
3. The current webcasting subscription included with the TCDSB meeting management software (eScribe) has additional functionality available to provide Closed Captioning of the live and recorded video of the Board meetings.
4. For the Visually Impaired, Described Video (DV) is a narrated audio description of the main environmental and visual images that are present in a video.
5. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is the law that develops and enforces accessibility standards. The Ontario Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) is a grouping of five standards that AODA developed and includes standards for addressing accessibility of Information and Communications.
6. WCAG 2.0 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0) is an intentionally accepted standard for web accessibility developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The guideline has three levels of accessibility: A, AA and AAA. The Ontario IASR specifies that beginning January 1, 2021 all public websites and web content must meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA. The standard does not pertain to live video.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. A pilot of the Closed Captioning functionality within eScribe for live and recorded board meetings will be fully conducted after the A/V technology and sound systems upgrades are completed in the Main Boardroom. The upgrades

to the Main Boardroom are expected to be completed by the second week of April.

2. If the pilot were successful, the eScribe software subscription would be enhanced to add the closed captioning functionality at an annual subscription cost of \$10,000 plus net taxes.
3. The project to refresh the TCDSB public website will address the requirement that content posted on the website including videos be compliant with the Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).
4. In the motion, Described Video for the recorded videos of the Board meetings was included, however, Described Video is for the visual impaired who cannot see the video and need the video described to them in audio format. Described Video is not for the hearing impaired as described by the motion. As such, the recorded videos of the Board meetings will only be enabled with Closed Captioning and not Described Video.
5. As per the request in the motion, a process can be established to have a sign language interpreter attend the Board meetings upon request to enable access to the content and proceedings of the meeting for attendees from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.
6. A sign language interpreter can only sign for 20 minutes at a time. Due to the length of Board meetings, such a request would require having two (2) sign language interpreters present at the meeting and alternate signing. The rate for a sign language interpreter is \$75-\$120 per hour. The cost to provide sign language interpretation for an average four (4) hour Board meeting is estimated between \$600-\$960 plus net taxes.
7. In general, there is a province wide shortage of sign language interpreters. In order to accommodate a request to provide sign language interpretation for a Board meeting, the request would need to be sent to the Recording Secretary at least ten (10) business days in advance in order to make the necessary arrangements. Staff will develop a request process for this service in the coming weeks.

E. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.