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# 2019/20 ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

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## *Achievements for the 2019/2020 Academic Year*

During the past school year, the TCDSB continued its efforts to support the elimination of barriers for individuals with disabilities.

### **Environmental Support Services and Capital Development, Asset Management and Renewal Departments**

The Capital Development, Asset Management and Renewal department works within the Ministry of Education budget allocations to renovate schools, build new or replacement elementary and secondary schools and modify existing structures while ensuring that all requirements under the *Ontario Building Code* were met. *Ontario Building Code* requirements are in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) statutory obligations to ensure that physical barriers are eliminated for individuals with disabilities. The Environmental Support department ensures procedures are followed for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and when dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order. This includes providing notice and contact information on-site and electronically, when possible.

### **2019/20 Accessibility Annual Status Report – Board Facilities**

The Capital Development, Asset Management and Renewal department has been incorporating accessibility upgrades in school addition, renovation and renewal projects wherever possible, most commonly adding a Universal Washroom. All new schools include elevators for barrier-free accessibility throughout the building, barrier-

free washrooms on all floors and at least one Universal washroom.

Work is also underway on an updated playground design standard which will incorporate accessibility to playground elements that currently are not accessible. The new standard will be used for new schools and for playground upgrades wherever possible.

AODA SUMMARY - RECENTLY COMPLETED CAPITAL AND RENEWAL PROJECTS		
School	Type of Project	Scope of Work
St. Augustine	School Addition	Universal Washroom, elevator, ramped stage access in new gym, exterior ramp
St. Joseph Morrow Park Secondary School	Replacement School	Universal Washroom, elevator
Neil Mc Neil High School	Ramp installation	Exterior ramp for student accommodation

AODA SUMMARY - PROJECTS PLANNED/UNDERWAY FOR CAPITAL AND RENEWAL		
School	Type of Project	Scope of Work
St. John Henry Newman CHS	Replacement School	Universal Washroom and elevator
Dante Alighieri Academy	Replacement School	Universal Washroom and elevator
Father Serra CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom and elevator
Holy Angels CS	Replacement School & Childcare	Universal Washroom and elevator
Holy Family CS	Child Care Retrofit	Universal Washroom
Madonna Catholic Secondary School	Accessibility Study	Consultant retained
Nativity of our Lord CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
New Baycrest Avenue School (Unnamed)	New School with Childcare Centre	Universal Washroom and elevator
Pope Francis CS	Child Care Retrofit	Universal Washroom
Santa Maria CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Albert CS	Child Care Addition	Universal washroom
St. Andre CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Antoine Daniel CS	Replacement School & Childcare	Universal Washroom and elevator
St. Barbara CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Barnabas CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Bartholomew CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Bernard CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Bruno-St. Raymond CS	Replacement School & Childcare	Universal Washroom and elevator

St. Edmund Campion CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Fidelis CS	Replacement School & Childcare	Universal Washroom and elevator
St. Gerald CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Gregory CS	Interior Renovation	Student Accommodation
St. Jean de Brebeuf CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. John Vianney CS	Child Care Retrofit	Universal Washroom
St. Leo / St Louis CS	Replacement School & Childcare	Universal Washroom and elevator
St. Margaret CS	School Addition/ Child Care Retrofit	Universal Washroom and elevator
St. Marcellus CS	Exterior Maintenance	Widen gate for accessibility
St. Mary of the Angels CS	Interior Renovation	Accessible Washroom
St. Matthias CS	Replacement School and Childcare	Universal Washroom and Elevator
St. Michael Choir School	Replacement School	Universal Washroom and Elevator
St. Nicholas of Bari CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Paul VI CS	Child Care Retrofit	Universal Washroom
St. Roch CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Thomas Aquinas CS	Child Care Addition	Universal Washroom
St. Wilfrid CS	Accessibility Study	Consultant retained

A protocol has been established for notification on the Board website when elevators and other accessibility devices are out-of-service and that protocol is being followed, with Environmental Support Services staff collaborating to ensure repairs are carried out as quickly as possible and notifications are placed on the website.

Work is underway on an updated playground design standard which will incorporate accessibility to playground elements that currently are not accessible. The new standard will be used for new schools and for playground upgrades wherever possible.

### **Accessible Schools for Individuals with Physical Disabilities**

The Board is proud to provide a great number of schools that either have one (1) story or alternatively, at schools which are greater than one (1) story, have a passenger elevator to assist individuals who may have mobility issues and who may experience a physical/architectural barrier if the individual is unable to utilize the stairwells.

#### **Single Story Schools:**

St. Kateri Tekakwitha CS	Our Lady of the Assumption CS	St. Henry CS
Holy Angels CS	Sacred Heart CS	St. John Vianney CS
Josyf Cardinal Slipyj CS	St. Elizabeth Seton CS	St. Maximilian Kobe CS
Monsignor John Corrigan CS	St. Florence CS	St. Sylvester CS
Our Lady of Grace CS	St. Gabriel Lalemant CS	The Divine Infant CS

#### **Schools with a Passenger Elevator or Lift (as of December 2020):**

All Saints CS	Nativity of Our Lord CS	St. Francis Xavier CS
Bishop Allen Academy	Our Lady of Fatima CS	St. Gregory CS
Bishop Morocco/Thomas Merton CSS	Our Lady of Lourdes CS	St. Helen CS
St. John Henry Newman CHS	Our Lady of Sorrows CS	St. Jane Francis CS
St. Mother Teresa CSS	Our Lady of Victory CS	St. Joachim CS
Blessed Trinity CS	St. John Paul II CSS	St. John the Evangelist CS
Brebeuf College School	Prince of Peace CS (lift)	St. Joseph's College School
Canadian Martyrs CS	Monsignor Fraser (Norfinch)	St. Kevin CS
Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts	Senator O'Connor College School	St. Luke CS
Cardinal Leger CS(lift)	St. Agatha CS	St. Malachy CS

Father Henry Carr CSS	St. Albert CS	St. Maria Goretti CS
Father John Redmond CSS	St. Ambrose CS	St. Mark CS
Francis Libermann CHS	St. Andre	
Holy Cross CS	Blessed Margherita of Citta di Castello CS (lift)	St. Angela
Immaculate Conception CS	St. Anthony CS	St. Monica CS (lift)
James Cardinal McGuigan CHS	St. Basil the Great CS	St. Nicholas CS
James Culnan CS	St. Bede CS	St. Norbert CS
Jean Vanier CSS	St. Bernard CS	St. Oscar Romero CSS
Loretto Abbey CSS	St. Bonaventure CS	St. Patrick CSS
Loretto College School	St. Brendan CS	St. Pius X CS
Marshall McLuhan CSS	St. Charles Garnier CS	St. Raphael CS (lift)
Mary Ward CSS	St. Clement CS	St. Robert CS
Michael Power/St. Joseph HS	St. Conrad CS	St. Simon CS
Monsignor Percy Johnson CHS	St. Cosmas & Damian CS	St. Stephen CS
Catholic Education Centre	St. Domenic Savio CS	St. Thomas More CS
St. Michael Catholic Academy (lift)	St. Edward CS	St. Timothy CS
St. Michael Choir School	St. Francis of Assisi CS	St. Ursula CS
	St. Mary Catholic Academy (lift)	The Holy Trinity CS

A protocol has been established for notification on the Board website when elevators and other accessibility devices are out-of-service and that protocol is being followed, with Environmental Support Services staff collaborating to ensure repairs are carried out as quickly as possible and updated notifications are placed on the website. Environmental Support Services maintains an active Preventive Maintenance programme to reduce out –of –service issues.

### **School Site Facility Accommodation Requests from Parents/Students- Board Operational Procedure “Accessibility Best Practices”**

The Board is pleased to announce that the “Accessibility Best Practices” document was created and approved by the Board of Trustees as an appendix to the TCDSB Accessibility Standards for Services and Facilities policy (A.36). This applies to accommodation requests for all students or prospective students of the School Board. It applies to all School Board locations.

This Operational Procedure does ***not*** apply to accommodations provided as part of special education programs and services for exceptional students under **Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils**, O.Reg. 181/98, made under the *Education Act*, RSO 1990, c E.2.

The Board encourages students and/or parents to suggest how the student's disability could be accommodated. In addition, the Board encourages the parents of the student to provide reports, letters, and/or other documents from treating physicians or other health care professionals relating to the disability and the impairments or restrictions which give rise to the need for accommodation.

Following receipt of a request for an accommodation, the school principal will send a letter or email confirming that the request has been received. The request will be considered in as expeditious a manner as possible. The request will be addressed and the appropriate accommodation may be provided in a way that respects the dignity of the student. Amongst the things considered in assessing the request are:

- The student's disability and the arising impairment or restrictions;
- The medical evidence provided, and/or, depending on the circumstances, additional medical evidence obtained with the permission of the student and/or parents or guardians;
- The accommodations requested;
- Other possible accommodations that may address the student's impairment or restrictions.

## **Special Education and Services**

The Special Services Department is committed to reducing and eliminating barriers for students with special needs for their physical and learning environments. The Toronto Catholic District School Board strives to provide each student with special needs with the attitudinal, academic and physical skills to reach their full potential for learning and practical skills development. During the 2019-2020 school year, 16,337 students with Special Education Needs accessed Special Education programs and/or services. Of that number, 7,773 accessed Special Education programs/services with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and were formally identified as Exceptional; and



8,564 accessed Special Education programs/services with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) only.

Students who have been identified with a Special Education Exceptionality, as possessing a special education exceptionality, as defined by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and outlined in the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Plan, have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), an MOE requirement. An IEP is written for students receiving Special Education supports and services in order to meet their individual, academic, emotional, social, behavioural and physical needs. Through consultation with parents, classroom teachers and a Special Education Teacher, the IEP is written within 30 school days of a student's placement in a Special Education program. Accommodations set out in the IEP are implemented to reduce or remove barriers that hinder the learning of a student with special needs. Access to assistive technology, extra time on tests, varying assessment methods and providing instruction notes are some examples of accommodations made as a result of the instructional assessment, and environmental accommodations set out in the IEP.

The IEP includes the following elements:

- strengths and needs related to the student's learning;
- relevant assessment data;
- list of instructional, environmental and assessment accommodations the student requires;
- current level of achievement for each modified subject/course/alternative program area;
- annual program goals, learning expectations and strategies;
- assessment methods;
- documentation of parent consultation;
- transition plan for students 14 years of age and older; and
- a safety plan (if applicable)

During the 2019/2020 academic year, to assist in elimination of barriers in the students' learning environments, the Ministry of Education approved 2,117 SEA claims. The equipment includes devices such as positioning devices and amplification systems. SEA claims may also may include computers and software that facilitate access to curriculum such as word prediction programs, speech-to-text programs, text-to-speech programs and movement-to-text programs through computer-generated prompting methods.

On a continual basis, Administrators (Principals/Vice-Principals) work to identify physical barriers in schools that hinder the learning of students with special needs. Providing ramps, electronic door openers, lifts and hand rails in bathrooms are examples of some physical changes to buildings that the Planning Department have implemented on an individual needs basis. The removal of physical barriers is facilitated through local-level discussions with the Environmental Support Services and/or Capital Development Asset Management and Renewal Department, the school Principal and the Area Superintendent of Education.

## **Health & Safety**

### **Student & Employee Emergency Evacuation Response Plan(s)**

In accordance with the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, the Toronto Catholic District School Board developed Individual Emergency Evacuation Response Plans for all students and staff members with disabilities or limitations which may hinder their ability to exit the building in the case of an evacuation.

The individual Emergency Evacuation Response Plan is customized by the school administrator, for students, or by the employee's manager, to incorporate the mobility or capacity limitations into a site based plan to ensure that the individual's safety, in case of an emergency evacuation, is of the highest consideration. The individual Emergency Evacuation Response Plan also provides information and instructions to those individuals assigned to assist the disabled student and/or employee, if necessary, on the protocol and methods to meet the individual's special needs for evacuation. The Emergency Evacuation Response Plan template document can be found on the Board's intranet website portal under the Health & Safety Department's drop-down menu.

## **Human Resource Services**

### **Workplace Accommodations for Disabled Employees**

As part of the Human Resources Division, the Benefits Department continues to develop customized individual workplace accommodations for employees with both temporary and permanent physical and cognitive limitations, restrictions and

impairments. The workplace accommodation process is described in the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Workplace Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities Policy- H.M.38.

Through the Functional Abilities Form (FAF) and additional medical documentation provided by the employee, from their treating Physician or licensed Medical Practitioner, the Disability Management Team may arrange for workplace site assessments, ergonomic assessments, and accessibility assistive devices to determine the accommodation required for the employee and what equipment or job duty changes may be appropriate for their particular physical and/or cognitive disability. Through the intensive workplace assessments conducted by the Disability Management Team, it may be ultimately determined that modified work is appropriate or that the employee be permanently accommodated in the workplace to address their individual physical or cognitive impairments.

In compliance with the January 1, 2014 deadline under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation of the AODA, the Benefits Department has developed standardized workplace accommodation documents that detail the employee's physical and/or cognitive limitations and impairments in relation to the required duties of the employee's job classification, while ensuring confidentiality of the employee's medical condition. A detailed description and outline of the employee's accommodation within the job classification and/or alternative job classification, if found to be completely disabled from the employee's original job class, is documented by the Disability Management Team on the Workplace Accommodation document. In accordance with the Board's Workplace Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities Policy, the workplace accommodation plan is discussed in collaboration with the disabled employee, Board Management and our Union partners for those employees who are a member of a bargaining unit.

### **Accessible Recruitment Practices**

The Recruitment Services Department of the Board's Human Resources Division aims to promote and provide all candidates, both internal and external, with an opportunity to request an accommodation during the recruitment process.

As of January 1, 2014, Recruitment Services is proud to offer individualized accommodations for current employees or external candidates during the interview and/or skills testing processes for vacant positions. The candidate is required to request an accommodation before being interviewed and/or tested for the position to which they

have applied. The candidate may also be asked to provide details regarding how to appropriately accommodate their disability during an interview process and in a skills testing environment. In some circumstances, which may be dependent on the nature of the disability identified, the applicant may be required to produce medical documentation to support their request during the recruitment process. The medical documentation provided by the applicant will provide direction and clarity to the Recruitment Department in order to appropriately accommodate the applicant's physical and/or cognitive disabilities. Accommodations implemented during the recruitment process are completed centrally, at the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Catholic Education Centre (Board Office), as well as at schools sites and the Regional Facilities Offices.

For the 2019-20 Academic Year, a review of the data regarding requests for accommodations during the recruitment and selection process indicates that there was only one (1) request made in December 2019 by an applicant in a selection process for Caretakers. The accommodation solution involved taking steps during the assessment process to ensure that the candidate was fairly assessed.

### **Accessibility Awareness Training for Educators**

In accordance with the statutory obligations of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation of the AODA, since the 2012/2013 academic year the Toronto Catholic District School Board has delivered accessibility awareness training to its educators (as defined under the AODA) including: Superintendents of Education, Principals, Vice-Principals, Teachers, Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Workers, Early Childhood Educators, Social Workers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Psycho-educational Consultants, Psychologists, Attendance Counselors, Secondary School Student Supervisors, International Language Instructors, Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) Instructors and Adult ESL Nursery Instructors.

The accessibility awareness training reviews the obligations under the AODA which impact the Board's program and classroom staff. The training specifically focuses and provides reference and resource materials that are designed to assist student based educational staff in developing strategies for educating all students regarding accessibility awareness. In addition, the training provides the educator staff with academic tools to design lesson plans that integrate accessibility awareness into the grade level curriculum.

### **Human Rights and Accessibility Training for Support Staff**

In accordance with the statutory obligations of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation of the AODA, since January 1, 2014, the Toronto Catholic District School Board has delivered accessibility awareness and human rights training to its support staff, volunteers and co-op students (staff members not defined as “educators”).

The accessibility awareness and human rights training was developed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and reviews the obligations under the AODA and the *Ontario Human Rights Code* which impact the Board’s staff, volunteers, co-op students. The training specifically focuses on the rights of employees to workplace accommodations and the barriers in the workplace relating to accessibility and all disabilities which have been recognized by the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

The TCDSB has also ensured through its community partnership programs, joint ventures, and external contractors that the partner and/or contracted organization is responsible for the deliverance of accessibility awareness and human rights training through amendments to the TCDSB’s community partnership agreements and vendor contracts.

## **Accessible Formats**

### **Educational & Training Materials**

The Board is dedicated to providing staff, students and members of the public with accessible and conversion ready print based materials, upon request. Members of the community are encouraged to contact the TCDSB site Manager, Principal or Superintendent to make the necessary arrangements to receive accessible format print materials. In accordance with the Board’s Workplace Accommodation for Employee with Disabilities Policy, staff who require accessible format work materials and/or educational and training materials are advised to request a workplace accommodation in accordance with the Board’s policy. Students who require training and/or educational material in an accessible format are recommended to go through the Special Education Services department and through the IEP process, materials will be provided by the Board’s school-based educator staff to meeting the student’s unique accommodation requirements.

### **Communication Materials**

Upon request, any communication material produced by the Board, with the exception of video or audio streaming content delivered through the Board’s internet or intranet website, will be converted into an accessible format based upon the accessibility need of

the community member, volunteer, staff member or student. The Board may require documentation to support the request in order to tailor the accessibility requirement to the individual's needs. Individuals requiring communication materials to be converted into an accessible format are recommended to contact the site Manager, Principal, Superintendent or the Board's Communications Department to arrange for the communication material(s) to be converted.

Teachers in central positions, from Curriculum Learning & Innovation, Student Success, Special Services, and the Equity, Diversity, Indigenous Education and Community Relations departments, have received initial training on accessibility considerations when creating and delivering presentations. Further workshops will also be planned for these groups to ensure awareness about accessibility needs and how to ensure workshops are accessible.

All online registration forms for professional learning, within the above mentioned departments, will now include an accessibility question that allows participants to indicate if accommodations are necessary.

The statement is: "The TCDSB is committed to creating an inclusive, barrier-free environment. Please indicate any accommodation requirements that would help facilitate your attendance at this event. Please note that we may require specific information relating to your noted accommodation to best inform our intervention."

### **Covid 19 – Clear Mask Distribution**

TCDSB has been provided with an allocation of 36,288 ClearMask™: Transparent Face Mask with EZ-Adjuster brand of clear mask based on the number of students with certain exceptionalities (i.e. Deaf/Hard of Hearing, or having a Speech or Language Impairment), either as reported by the board, or predicted based on provincial prevalence rates for these groups of students.

Students and the staff who support them (1 teacher and 1 EA per student) are allocated 1 mask per day. This clear mask has been authorized by Health Canada under medical devices (other than testing devices) for uses related to COVID-19.