



Annual Accessibility Plan

for

Upper Canada District School Board

2011 - 2012

Prepared By

**The Upper Canada District School Board
Accessibility Committee**

This publication is available on the UCDSB web site www.ucdsb.on.ca and in accessible formats on request.

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1. **History and Purpose**

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the ODA requires each school board to prepare an annual accessibility plan; to consult with people with disabilities in the preparation of this plan; and to make the plan public.

This plan was prepared by the Upper Canada District School Board Accessibility Committee and will be updated annually to reflect the current needs of the board. The plan describes: (1) the measures that the Upper Canada District School Board has taken in the past, and (2) the measures that the Upper Canada District School Board will take during the year to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. The Accessibility Committee will forward recommendations to be included in the annual planning process.

Upper Canada District School Board is committed to the continual improvement of access to school board facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities.

The Upper Canada District School Board plays a crucial role in ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to services, programs, and opportunities.

2. **Definition of Disability**

The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code. "Disability" is:

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 co-ordination, 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.
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
4. a mental disorder, or
5. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997.

3. **Aim**

The ODA builds on practices that currently exist by requiring Boards to:

- Prepare and update an annual Accessibility Plan;
- Make the plan public;
- Appoint and consult with an Accessibility Committee.

The Ontarians with Disability Act allows organizations the flexibility to determine their own priorities. The ODA expects organizations to develop and implement accessibility plans within existing planning processes and using existing resources.

4. **Objectives**

This plan:

- Describes the process by which the Upper Canada District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
- Reviews efforts that the UCDSB has made to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities during the past year(s).
- Lists the policies, procedures, programs, practices and services that the Upper Canada District School Board will review in the coming year to identify barriers for people with disabilities.
- Describes the measures that the Upper Canada District School Board will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
- Describes how the Upper Canada District School Board will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

5. **Commitment to Accessibility Planning**

The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to:

- Maintaining a Steering Committee
- Ensuring school board policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility
- Address children's' rehabilitation through accessibility
- Consulting with people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and members of the community.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Committee to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Upper Canada District School Board to meet these commitments.

6. Description of the Upper Canada District School Board

The Upper Canada District School Board is a diverse, public educational organization in Eastern Ontario. It consists of dedicated individuals committed to quality education that fosters lifelong learning for all, through creative and challenging learning experiences.

The Upper Canada District School Board is geographically one of the largest public school boards in Ontario. It comprises the counties of Lanark, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott, and Russell. The Board covers 12,000 square kilometers and is bordered by the St. Lawrence River to the south, Quebec to the east, Ottawa-Carleton to the north, and the lake district to the west.

Presently, the Upper Canada District School Board serves approximately 20,000 elementary students and 12,000 secondary students in 100 schools, and 37 alternative/continuing education campuses. The UCDSB employs almost 5,500 staff.

7. UCDSB Mission Statement

The Upper Canada District School Board believes that individual learning styles should be respected and accommodated; that all individuals have a right to learn and work in a safe and clean environment; that physical and emotional well-being must be promoted; and that respect for diversity strengthens society.

8. Accessibility Committee Members

UCDSB Members

The 2011-2012 Accessibility Committee is presently working under the direction of the Superintendent of School Effectiveness, Susan Edwards.

NOTE: With the emerging provincial accessibility standards, the composition of the committee will need to change to reflect all board departments, and to ensure accessibility compliance throughout the Upper Canada District School Board.

2011-2012

Working Group Members	Department
Jeanne Atkins	Manager of Health, Safety and Risk Management
Ron Cotnam	CEO-Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario
Jeremy Hobbs	Chief Information and Facilities Officer
Tim Mills	Executive Director-Upper Canada Leger Centre
John Lalonde	Coordinating Principal, Student Engagement
Tracey Irvine	Spec Ed Route Planner, Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario
Susan Edwards	Superintendent of School Effectiveness
Wayne Kyte	Manager of Laurencrest, Cornwall Youth Residence Inc.
Chantel Boucher	Hearing SERT
Penny Raabe	HR Cultural Development Project Leader
David Holt	Purchasing Officer
Robb Bowman	Rehabilitation Coordinator
Scott Corden	System Principal, Program-Secondary
Beth Armstrong	Secondary Vice Principal
Karen Bryan	Secondary Vice Principal
Beth Garswood	Community Member

9. Barrier Removal Initiatives

Within the last several years, there have been a number of initiatives that the Upper Canada District School Board has identified to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

Physical/Architectural Barriers

- Accessibility for people with physical disabilities has been facilitated with the installation of ramps to facilitate entry to buildings, barrier free parking and the renovations of washrooms for barrier-free access.
- Renovations to existing buildings to necessitate the need for track lifting for students with physical disabilities.

Attitudinal Barriers

- Attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities are being addressed through ongoing staff and student in-service about diversity, assessing diversity policy/procedures and examining other policies and procedures for impediments to accessibility.

10. **Barriers Identified**

In its review, the Accessibility Committee will identify barriers. Over the next several years, the Committee will focus on specific barriers. The list is divided into the following areas:

1. Physical
2. Architectural
3. Information or Communication-based
4. Attitudinal
5. Technological
6. Policies and Practices
7. Communicational

11. **Definitions**

1. **Physical Barrier**- objects added to the environment – doors, windows, elevators, furniture, etc
2. **Architectural Barrier** - building design, area adjacent to the building, shape of room, size of doorways, etc
3. **Information Barrier**- inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, etc
4. **Attitudinal Barrier** – staff who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, staff who refuse to provide service, discriminatory behaviours
5. **Technological Barrier** – computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephone switches, assistive technology

6. **Policy or Practice Barrier** – rules, regulations and protocols that prevent one performing their job satisfactorily, or from serving the public, or that restrict participation
7. **Communication Barrier** – difficulties receiving information in person, or by telephone, difficulties interacting with receptionists or other staff, difficulties receiving training

In the first years of the UCDSB plan we have focused on the immediate needs of students and staff. We will continue to assess the status of our facilities and the accessibility that is provided.

12. **Review and Monitoring Process**

The accessibility committee will meet regularly during the planning year to review progress. Throughout the year, evaluation of the effectiveness in implementing the barrier, removal and prevention strategies will be ongoing.

Methodology	Description	Status
Accessibility Plan approval Trustees	Updated	June 2011
Accessibility Plan Presentation to SEAC	Updated	Fall 2011
Communication to employee groups	For information	As required
Focus groups	Opportunity for input and feedback	As required
Communication with Public	UCDSB Accessibility Plan posted on website. Public Board Meeting	Fall 2011
UCDSB Accessibility Committee	Review plan and make recommendations for next year. Report progress and status	Meet three times 2011 – 2012 school year

13. **Barriers to be Addressed**

1. Continue with the physical and architectural review of our facilities
2. Provide information to employees and students on attitudinal barriers
3. Bring awareness to school personnel of various barriers for individuals who experience these barriers
4. Continue to promote and provide to assist individuals' needs
5. Continue promoting and in-service on assistive technology
6. Continue to develop protocol for Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

14. Communication of Accessibility Plan

The Upper Canada District School Board's Accessibility Plan will be posted on the board website at www.ucdsb.on.ca and hard copies will be available.

ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS

Year	School	Status	Descriptor
2011	Drummond PS	In-progress	Paved and concrete entrance sloped for access to front entrance and gym.
2011	North Dundas HS	In-progress	Barrier free second floor staff washroom
2011	Front of Yonge PS	In-progress	HC Operator front door
2011	St. Lawrence IS	In-progress	HC Operator front door
2011	Glengarry DHS	In-progress	North exterior Bus stairs accessible with ramps
2011	Rideau District HS	In-progress	West entrance ramped to door, accessibility to gym via cafeteria
2011	Vankleek Hill CI	Complete	Accessible to 2006 Building Code
2011	North Grenville DHS	In-progress	Accessible to 2006 Building Code