Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

for the period
December 2012 to December 2017

Prepared by

Accessibility Working Group

In accordance with
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

Availability of the Plan:

1. On the Board's website www.tbcdsb.on.ca
2. At the Catholic Education Centre
3. In accessible formats upon request:
    contact Karen McKissick, Safety Officer at (807) 625-1515 or
    kmckissick@tbcdsb.on.ca

November 29, 2013

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1.0   Purpose

This multi-year Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the Integration Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). It outlines the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA). The Plan describes the measures that the Board will take over the five year period from 2013-2017 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work, learn and participate in the school board community and environment, including students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and visitors to the Board and its schools. The plan will be guided by the Board's Accessibility Standards-Policy Statement.

2.0   Objectives

This Plan:

2.1   Describes the process by which the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers;

2.2   Reviews recent efforts of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board to remove and prevent barriers;

2.3   Describes the measures the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board will take in the period 2012-2017 to identify, remove and prevent barriers;

2.4   Makes a commitment to provide an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;

2.5   Makes a commitment to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every 5 years;

2.6   Describes how the Thunder Bay Catholic School Board will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

3.0   Commitment to Accessibility Planning

This plan will be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee, and Accessibility Working Group. It will be presented to the Board for approval. The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board is committed to:

3.1   Maintaining an Accessibility Working Group;

3.2 Continuing the process of consulting with persons with disabilities in the development and review of the multi-year plan;

3.3 Ensuring, wherever practicable, that Board policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and universal design. Where appropriate, the Accessibility Working Group will provide input with regard to new policies and procedures and to those under review;

3.4 Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and members of the community. Ongoing identification of barriers will be the responsibility of the Accessibility Working Group and will, wherever practicable, be incorporated in the multi-year plan.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Working Group to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan which will enable the Board to meet its commitments.

4.0 Description of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board can trace its roots as far back as the mid 1800's, when Jesuit Missionaries established schools at the Fort William Mission. Schooling was continued by the Sisters of the Order of the Daughters of Mary, who arrived in 1870. The Sisters of St. Joseph arrived at Prince Arthur's Landing in 1881 and immediately began teaching in the new Catholic school, which was opened in 1880 in the St. Andrew's Church Sacristy.

In 1885, the Order of Daughters of Mary was recalled to their order in France, and the Sisters of St. Joseph assumed the responsibility for both the school and the orphanage.

Soon, a number of Catholic school boards were created. The Port Arthur Roman Catholic School Board was established on January 2, 1885. The Fort William Roman Catholic School Board was formed on April 10, 1901, and the Roman Catholic Separate School Board No. 6 McIntyre was established on January 1, 1957. The Combined Roman Catholic Separate School Board of Neebing, Paipoonge and McIntyre was formed on January 15, 1967.

On January 1, 1969, the four school Boards were amalgamated in accordance with the Government of Ontario's plan to reduce the number of school Boards in the province. The newly amalgamated Board became known as the Lakehead District Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

As a consequence Bill 104 - Fewer School Boards Act, 1997, the Lakehead District Roman Catholic Separate School Board was designated by Ontario regulation in May 1997 as District School Board #34A. The regulation governing the establishment and areas of jurisdiction of District School Boards was further amended and the Board received notification from the Education Improvement Commission that its name had been approved. Effective January 1, 1998 the Board officially became known as the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board.

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board employs approximately 1,416 employees and serves 8,400 students through two secondary, three senior elementary and fifteen elementary schools. The Board offers a complete French Immersion program at two of its schools. Physically, our schools are primarily conventional school structures, typically constructed with brick and metal cladding, and they vary in age from the late 1920's to as recent as 1999. Most of the buildings have been renovated and occasionally required the addition of portables to support the student population.

During the past year, the Board has entered into a long term accommodation planning process. There have been significant renovations and additions at a number of schools. Each project has been considered in light of our objectives under the AODA.

The Board's vision is "**Educating for Christian Values and Academic Excellence**". The philosophy of the Thunder Bay Catholic School Board is best described by its Mission Statement:

Mission Statement

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board is committed to providing quality education which combines academic excellence with a concern for the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and physical growth of the student.

This education is provided in a Christ-centered environment where Catholic faith and life are integrated into the total curriculum and school day. Through the ministry of teaching, the Board fulfills its mandate from parents, from the Ministry of Education, and from the Church.

5.0   Members of Accessibility Working Group

Working Group Member	Department	Contact Information	
Pino Tassone	Director of Education	Phone:	625-1567
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Chris Hanley	Manager – Information Technology	Phone:	625-1524
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6.0 Strategy for Prevention and Removal of Barriers

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board has established a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan placing particular emphasis on compliance with AODA regulations related to customer service, information and communications, employment and school transportation.

7.0 Barrier Identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Planning Committee uses the following barrier-identification methods:

Methodology	Description	Status
Presentation to Senior Team	Opportunity for input and feedback	Ongoing
Special Education Department	Opportunity for input and feedback	Ongoing
Presentation to SEAC	Present plan to the Special Education Advisory Committee asking them to share the plan with the associations they represent for input into following plans.	Yearly
Presentation to Board of Trustees	For information.	Yearly
Working Group Brainstorming	Respond to input from stakeholder groups named above.	Yearly

8.0 Recent Barrier Removal Achievements

The most recent Annual Accessibility Plan developed in accordance with the Ontarians with Disability Act (ODA) identified a range of barriers and appropriate strategies for their removal. The resulted actions are set out in the following chart:

School	Accomplishments
Bishop E.Q. Jennings	• The music room carpeted floor and stage was removed and new floor tiles installed. • Sound field infrared amplification system in seven classrooms. • Accommodate the light sensitive students with UV filters on the windows and florescent lights changed out (now removed due to students moving to St. Ignatius). • Curriculum carts added to support the use of assistive technology. • Two accessible calming rooms constructed in the Life Skills Class. • Accessible washrooms with appropriate signage. • Lifting device installed for accessibility to gym stage (pre 2008).
Bishop Gallagher	• Two accessible entrances.
Corpus Christi	• With new construction/addition, all classrooms are entirely accessible. • Washrooms upgraded to be accessible.

School	Accomplishments
	• New lift installed. • Lever door handles installed.
Holy Cross	• With the new addition, all classrooms are now in the main building. • The main entrance is now accessible, as is the whole school, except for two classrooms • Washrooms upgraded to be accessible.
Holy Family	• Push button handicap door openers were installed on two more exterior entrances. • Washrooms upgraded to be accessible.
Our Lady of Charity	• Curriculum carts added to support the use of assistive technology. • Relocation of Learning Centre and change facilities to ensure easier access. • Calming room added. • Fenced playground area added.
Pope John Paul II	• With the new addition and the installation of an elevator, the entire school is accessible. • Washrooms upgraded to be accessible. • Ramp installed at front entrance. • Curriculum carts and Braille system added to support the use of technology. • Lever door handles installed. • One accessible calming room constructed. • Accessible Eye Wash Station • Accessible Science Station • Accessible Culinary Arts work table
St. Ann	• Accessible washrooms JK/SK
St. Bernard	• 75% of the school is accessible including the office, library, and gym. • Washrooms upgraded to be accessible. • Automatic handicap door openers installed in front entrance of the school. • Ramp constructed in front of school at Kiss and Ride drop off area. • Calming room constructed. • Kiss and Ride drop off area created in the front of the school for safety and accessibility. • 4 classroom addition fully accessible.
St. Elizabeth	• Accessible calming room constructed with specialized wiring and large doorways.
St. Francis	• Two accessible calming rooms constructed.

School	Accomplishments
	• Automatic door openers installed inside of open concept area and at the front door. • Accessible front entrance.
St. Ignatius High School	• With new addition, an elevation device was installed for partial building accessibility. • UV filters on windows and fluorescent lights installed to accommodate light sensitive students in Like Skills Classroom. • Accessible calming room. • Accessible washrooms with appropriate signage.
St. Jude	• Addition and the installation of an elevation device. • Automatic door openers installed in the front entrance of the school. • Washroom upgraded to be accessible. • Redesign top staircase to allow for great accessibility and safety when accessing elevator in wheelchair.
St. Margaret	• Automatic door opener installed in front entrance. • Accessible calming room constructed. • Kiss and Ride drop off area created in the front of the school for safety and accessibility.
St. Martin	• Accessible calming room constructed. • Kiss and Ride drop off area created in the front of the school for safety and accessibility. • 4 classroom addition fully accessible. • Accessible calming room constructed. • Accessible sensory room constructed.
St. Patrick High School	• Sound amplification system installed. • Staff training for new sound field equipment. • Two accessible calming rooms constructed in the Life Skills classroom. • Retrofit of Special Education washroom • New door retrofit with lever handles throughout school.
St. Paul	• Accessible calming room constructed. • Accessible Day Care entrance constructed.
St Pius X	• With the new addition and the removal of the portables, all classes are located in the main building and are totally accessible. • Kiss and Ride drop off area created in the front of the school for safety and accessibility. • Accessible washroom JK/SK area.
St. Thomas Aquinas	• The entire school has moved to the new location (formally St. Edward School), which is totally accessible.

School	Accomplishments
	• Accessible portable with special key fob access.
St Vincent	• Construction of a new Communication Class with lifting devices, change rooms, calming room, specialized wiring, large doors and accessible washrooms. • New accessible entrance to the school was added, with push button accessible door openers on side entrance. • Paving for transportation and wheelchair access was added.
Catholic Education Centre	• New construction for Education Centre created a fully accessible building, including an entrance ramp and lift. • Lever door handles were added to all doors.
All Schools	• Minimum of two designated handicap parking spaces, with signage located closest to the front entrance.
Transportation	• Board has contracted four wheelchair units to transport special needs students. • Board has contracted three Special Ed vans to transport students. These vehicles pick up and return students to their homes. Vans have lower steps to make loading students easier. • Flexible routing has been added to accommodate students' programs and needs. • Customized routing has been added to reduce ride time for students. • Modified days are used to accommodate schedules of special needs students. • Special "Out of Zone Transportation" allow students to attend special programs or schools. • Special pickup and drop off areas at schools have been designated. • Seating plans on all buses • First Aid and CPR training for all bus drivers. • Transportation Medical Information is documented on the route sheets as required for the individual student.
Special Education	• Laptop, iPads, iPods and Smartboards provided in all schools. • Ongoing purchase of personal care equipment. • Kurzweil on-line library – central data base of scanned materials. • In-service and training of staff for early identification of students (Fair Start, Soundskills, WBTT). • Linking day care facilities to entry of students into school facilitated by Special Education teachers. • Attention to systematic plan for flagging of at-risk students for seamless transition into placement. • Mentoring and coaching by Success by Seven teachers within their schools. Introduction of PALS – reading as a Tier 1 intervention for all K-3 students.

School	Accomplishments
	• Interventions for identified and remedial students based on school data. • Schools supported during EQAO especially with respect to supportive technology. • Student Support Persons provided with strategies and individual programming suggestions.

New school construction has adhered to the current Building Code and includes level access to schools, automatic door openers, elevators/lifts in schools of more than one floor, accessible washrooms.

9.0   Barriers to be Addressed Under the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 filed in June, 2011 pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 identified specific requirements to achieve accessibility in the areas of:

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation

These requirements build on the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service which came into force in 2007.

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board intends, through this Multi-year Accessibility Plan for the period 2012-2017, to take action to address barriers to accessibility related to the Standards areas of current Regulations.   This is in addition to ongoing work of the Board regarding the identification and removal of barriers in the Board's physical environment.

2012-2013

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Systemic	Board wide	Develop Accessibility Policy Statement.	January 1, 2013
Attitudinal – Information and Communications	Board wide	Develop a Procedure re Accessible Information and Communications.	January 1, 2013
Attitudinal – Employment	Board wide	Develop Procedure re Accessible Employment.	January 1, 2013
Systemic	Board wide	Review procurement practices to incorporate accessibility criteria for goods, services, facilities.	January 1, 2013
Information and Communication	Board wide	Provide accessibility awareness training for all teachers, ECEs and SSPs.	Ongoing
Information and Communication	Board wide	Review practices to ensure readiness to provide educational resources or materials, student records and information on program requirements in accessible formats upon request.	January 1, 2013

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Physical	All Schools Board Office (see Appendix A - School Accessibility Inventory)	Installation of accessibility features.	Ongoing

2014

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board wide	Provide training to all staff and volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on Human Rights Code provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.	January 1, 2014
Information and Communication	Board Offices	Review process for receiving/responding to feedback to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities and readiness to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Notify the public re: above.	January 1, 2014
Information and Communications	Board wide	Review Board and school websites to assess level of accessibility. Ensure that new sites and web content published after Jan 1, 2012 meet WCAG 2.0, Level A standards.	Completed – January 2012
Systemic - Employment	Board wide	Review and update Human Resources procedures and practices with regard to recruitment, job accommodations, alternative accessible formats and communication supports, individual accommodation plans, return to work, performance appraisals, professional development, and redeployment.	January 1, 2014

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Information and Communication – Student Transportation	Board wide (Student Transportation and Special Education)	Consult with parents and develop individual school transportation plans for students with disabilities, clarifying roles and responsibilities.	January 1, 2014
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review the readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request.	Ongoing
Physical	Schools Board Office (see Appendix A - School Accessibility Inventory)	Installation of accessibility features as identified.	Ongoing

2015-2016

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Systemic	Board wide	Review status of accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff has been trained.	Ongoing - completed upon hire
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of digital or multimedia resources upon request in anticipation of 2020 deadline.	Ongoing - preparation for 2020 deadline
Information and Communication	Board wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards.	Ongoing preparation for 2021 deadline
Physical	Schools Board Office (see Appendix A - School Accessibility Inventory)	Installation of accessibility features as identified.	Ongoing 2015-2016

2016-2017

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	Effective Date
Systemic	Board wide	Review status of accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff has been trained.	Ongoing 2016-2017
Systemic	Board wide	Review status of Board accessibility policies and procedures and update as required.	Ongoing 2016-2017
Information and Communication	School Libraries	Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request.	Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline
Information and Communication	Board wide	Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards	Ongoing preparation for 2021 deadline
Physical	Schools Board Office (see Appendix A - School Accessibility Inventory)	Installation of accessibility features as identified	Ongoing 2015-2016

10.0 Review and Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Working Group meets twice during the school year to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of barrier-removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

The Accessibility Working Group will ensure that in respect of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan the following steps take place:

(a)   An annual status report on measures taken to implement the plan is prepared.

(b)   At least once every five years the plan is reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee and with other relevant committees.

11.0 Communication of the Plan

In addition to the public availability of the Plan as noted on the cover, an annual status report of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Board's website. The Board will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

Questions, comments and feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:

Accessibility Working Group
Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board
459 Victoria Avenue West
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 0A4

Phone: 807 – 625-1555
Fax: 807 – 625-8601

APPENDICES

A   Inventory of Accessible Facilities

Inventory of Accessible Facilities

School		Type of Structure	Accessible Entrance Ramps	Door Operator		Elevators/ Lift	Stage Access	Instructional Areas Not Accessible	Barrier Free Washroom
				Front	Alternate				
Bishop E.Q. Jennings	(7-8)	Single	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Bishop Gallagher	(7-8)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	*no (75% accessible)	no
Corpus Christi	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	yes	yes
Holy Cross	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	*no (90% accessible)	yes
Holy Family	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	yes	yes
Our Lady of Charity	(JK-6)	single	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	*no (95% accessible)	yes
Pope John Paul II	(7-8)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	*no (95% accessible)	yes
St. Ann	(JK-6)	Multi-level	no	no	yes	no	n/a	*no (50% accessible)	no
St. Bernard	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	no	*no (80% accessible)	yes
St. Elizabeth	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	yes	no
St. Francis	(JK-6)	Single	yes	no	yes	n/a	n/a	yes	yes
St. Ignatius High School	(9-12)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	main - yes alt - no	*no (50% accessible)	yes
St. Jude	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	gym-not accessible	yes
St. Margaret	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	no	no	n/a	*no (85% accessible)	yes
St. Martin	(JK-6)	Multi-level	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
St. Patrick High School	(9-12)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
St. Paul	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	yes	yes
St. Pius X	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	yes	yes
St. Thomas Aquinas	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	yes	yes
St. Vincent	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	*no (50% accessible)	yes
Catholic Education Centre		Multi-level	yes	yes	no	yes	n/a	yes	yes

*no further improvements planned at this time