

Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2021

Working Document



Mission Statement

The Niagara Catholic District School Board, through the charisms of faith, social justice, support and leadership, nurtures an enriching Catholic learning community for all to reach their full potential and become living witnesses of Christ.

Prepared by:

The Niagara Catholic Accessibility Planning Committee-November 2019

In accordance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, O.Reg. 191/11



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Rationale

The Provincial government enacted *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) in June 2005 for complete accessibility in Ontario by 2025. The purpose of the AODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate fully in the life of the province with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodations, employment, buildings, structures and premises through the removal and prevention of barriers.

The AODA requires each school board to prepare an annual accessibility plan; to consult with people with disabilities in the preparation of this plan, and to share the plan with the public.

Niagara Catholic Commitment to Accessibility Planning

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the Board is committed to fostering a caring, safe, inclusive and accepting learning and working environment for all students, staff, parents/guardians and community members involved in Board and school programs, events and activities. The principles of inclusionary practice, freedom from barriers and accessible environments informs all Niagara Catholic District School Board policies, programs, procedures and services.

Niagara Catholic recognizes that further steps will need to be taken for the ongoing identification, removal and prevention of barriers in its elementary and secondary schools, Alternative and Continuing Education sites, and other facilities in order to provide greater equity for all in accordance with *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA).

The Niagara Catholic District School Board *Strategic Directions* and *System Priorities* support accessibility, equity and inclusivity for all members of the Niagara Catholic community:

Strategic Directions:

- Build Strong Catholic Identity and Community to Nurture the Distinctiveness of Catholic Education
- Advance Student Achievement for All

System Priorities:

- Provide Supports for Success,
- Enhance Technology for Optimal Learning,
- Building Partnerships and schools as Hubs
- Strengthen Human Resources Practices and Develop Transformational Leadership,
- Create Equity and Accessibility of Resources,
- Ensure Responsible Fiscal and Operational Management, and
- Address Changing Demographics.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board demonstrates its commitment to accessibility through:

- an Accessibility Planning Committee that addresses accessibility issues, consideration of ongoing identification of barriers be incorporated in the multi-year plan;
- continued consultation with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and with persons with disabilities;
- Board policies, procedures and practices that are consistent with the principles of accessibility and inclusive/universal design; and,
- access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community.

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2021

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has been developed in accordance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and policies of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

The plan incorporates the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, describes the actions that the Board has taken through the assessment, evaluation and review of policies, programs and practices, and will continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work in, use or attend Board schools/sites, facilities and services.

This process has been implemented through the establishment of the Board's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the AODA: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, (School) Transportation and Design of Public Spaces.

Accessibility Planning Committee

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Planning Committee to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that will enable the Niagara Catholic District School Board to meet commitments and obligations. Recommendations made by the Accessibility Planning Committee will be presented to Senior Administrative Council and to the Board of Trustees.

Accessibility Planning Committee 2018-2021

Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells	Superintendent of Education
Scott Whitwell	Controller of Facilities Services
Teresa Claxton	Coordinator of Human Resources Services
Jim Martinson	Coordinator of Health and Safety
Theo Dagenais	Elementary Principal
Kelly Majka	Secondary Vice-Principal
Lori Ziraldo	Executive Director, Niagara Student Transportation Services
Mark Ferri	Administrator, Purchasing Services
Grant Frost	Chief Information Officer
Karen Desjardins	Coordinator of Library Information Centres
Christine Battagli	Consultant of Research, Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
Jennifer Pellegrini	Communications Officer
Cathy McMullin	Applied Behaviour Analysis Supervisor, Special Education
Dan Giancola	Coordinator, Special Education
Tara Formisano	Teacher, Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Dorothy Harvey	Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Jennifer McArthur	OECTA Elementary Representative
Lisa Bowers	OECTA Secondary Representative
Anna Maxner	CUPE Representative
Shonna Daly	Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

Barrier Identification Methodologies

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

Methodology	Description
Accessibility Planning Committee	The Accessibility Planning Committee is comprised of representatives to support stakeholders to identify barriers to accessibility.
Accessibility Planning Committee Meetings	The Accessibility Planning Committee will meet regularly during the school year to identify barriers, review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of barrier-removal and prevention strategies. The Accessibility Planning Committee will present recommendations to Senior Administrative Council and the Board of Trustees.
Communication Steps: Board, SEAC, Employee Groups, Student Voice, Community Partners	Accessibility related assessment data will be collected from a variety of sources to identify barriers and recommend the removal of such barriers.
Consultation	All stakeholders are invited to address concerns or provide feedback about accessibility at Niagara Catholic schools and/or Board sites by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reviewing information available through the accessibility link on the Board website 2. in writing to the Niagara Catholic District school Board, or 3. calling 905.735.0240 ext. 297
Accessibility Compliance Report	The Niagara Catholic District School Board will complete and submit an Accessibility Compliance Report as required.

Priority Barriers to be Addressed Through the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2021

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2021 includes both new and continuing priorities and commitments that will support the Niagara Catholic District School Board's goal towards identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.

Integrated Accessibility Standards (O. Reg. 191/11) under, the AODA has identified specific requirements for School Boards 2020-2025 as follows:

- Information and Communications Standard-School Information Centres are to provide digital and multimedia resources in accessible format by 2020.
- Producers of print-based education supplementary learning resources are to provide accessible or conversion-ready versions.
- All internet websites and web content are to conform with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA by 2021.

2018-2019

Regulation Standard	Requirement	Action	Responsibility	Compliance Date	Status
Integrated Accessibility 191/11 Information and Communications	Section 17, Producers of educational or training materials	Upon request accessible or conversion ready versions of printed based educational or training supplementary learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 18, Information Centres of educational or training institutions	Provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion ready format of digital or multimedia resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online digital resources with text to audio option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 14, Accessible websites and web content	All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2021	In progress

2019-2020

Regulation Standard	Requirement	Action	Responsibility	Compliance Date	Status
Integrated Accessibility 191/11 Information and Communications	Section 17, Producers of educational or training materials	Upon request accessible or conversion ready versions of printed based educational or training supplementary learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 18, Information Centres of educational or training institutions	Provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion ready format of digital or multimedia resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 14, Accessible websites and web content	All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2021	In progress

2020-2021

Regulation Standard		Action	Responsibility	Compliance Date	Status
Integrated Accessibility 191/11 Information and Communications	Section 14, Accessible websites and web content	All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2021	In progress
		<p>Continued commitment towards identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility</p> <p>Commitment to meet expectations identified beyond 2021.</p> <p>Review, monitor and evaluate ongoing programs to ensure continued compliance describes the actions that the Board has taken through the assessment, evaluation and review of policies, programs and practices, and will continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work in, use or attend Board schools/sites, facilities and services</p>			

Proposed Accessibility Projects 2019-2021

SN#	Facility	Description
116	St. Joseph (Stevensville)	provide lift to stage, revise interior ramp for minimum 1:12 slope
128	St. Patrick (NF)	provide elevator
129	Loretto Catholic	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
139	Monsignor Clancy	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
148	St. Kevin	provide barrier free access to second floor
171	Assumption	provide barrier-free lift for stage
175	St. Alfred	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
176	St. Ann (SC)	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
179	St. Denis	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
181	St. Nicholas	provide barrier free access to second floor
182	St. Peter	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
183	St. Theresa	provide lift to stage
184	Mother Teresa	provide sensory room
197	St. Mark	install 2 sets of magnetic hold-open devices
197	St. Mark	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
220	Saint Michael	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
230	Saint Paul	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
250	Notre Dame College	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
250	Notre Dame College	provide barrier free access to second floor
260	Denis Morris	install automatic door openers at main office and attendance office
260	Denis Morris	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
270	Holy Cross	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor
280	Saint Francis	retrofit to allow barrier free emergency evacuation from second floor

Communication of the Plan

The Niagara Catholic District School Board Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the Annual Status Report on the progress of the plan will be posted on the Board website at www.niagaracatholic.ca.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board provides accessible formats upon request and welcomes comments and feedback about accessibility concerns at Niagara Catholic schools and/or Board sites. To request accessible formats or address a concern or provide feedback, please contact accessibility.compliance@ncdsb.com or the Communications Department at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland, Ontario 905.735.0240 ext. 297.

References

- [Niagara Catholic Accessibility Customer Service Policy 800.8.1](#)
- [Niagara Catholic Accessibility Standards Policy 800.8](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
- [Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)
- [Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools Guidelines 2014](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [About Accessibility Laws](#)

Questions regarding the Accessibility or Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 can be directed to:

Accessibility Directorate of Ontario
Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure
610 A-777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON
M7A 2JA

Additional Information is available:

Online www.ontario.ca/accession
Phone: 416.849.8276 or 1.866.515.2025
TTY/TDD 416.325.3408 or 1.800.268.7095



NIAGARA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES (NSTS)

Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) is in full compliance with defined standards:

Regulation Standard	Requirement	Compliance Date	On Target	Progress
AODA Requirements Transportation Standard	Provide integrated accessible service	July 1, 2011	✓	Ongoing Compliance
	Provide alternate accessible service if integration is not possible	July 1, 2011	✓	Ongoing Compliance
	Identification of student requiring individualized school transportation plans	January 1, 2014	✓	Ongoing Compliance
	Complete plans including detailed student assistance needs, plans for individual student boarding, securement and deboarding and communicate the plan to required stakeholders	January 1, 2014	✓	Ongoing Compliance

Additionally NSTS has complied with overall requirements in AODA Requirements by:

- Providing notice of temporary disruptions, including delays and cancellations, via website and an email subscription feature;
- Ensuring that compliance requirements are incorporated into contracts with service providers and compliance audits are performed annually; and
- Being in full compliance with current defined website standards.

Appendix A: Multi-Year Accessibility Progress Report

2017-2018

Regulation Standard	Requirement	Action	Responsibility	Compliance Date	Status
Integrated Accessibility 191/11 Information and Communications	Section 17, Producers of educational or training materials	Upon request accessible or conversion ready versions of printed based educational or training supplementary learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 18, Information Centres of educational or training institutions	Provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion ready format of digital or multimedia resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online digital resources with text to audio option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2020	In progress
	Section 14, Accessible websites and web content	All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology Program and Innovation Student Support 	January 1, 2021	In progress

2016-2017

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	On Target	Progress
Systemic	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure all new staff; teaching and non-teaching, complete the Customer Service Training, Accessibility Awareness Training For Educators (where appropriate) and Accessibility Awareness Training as it pertains to the Human Rights Code Training. 	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Systemic	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review status of Board accessibility policies and procedures and update as required. Updated to include Design of Public Spaces Standard. 	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications	School Information Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review status of capacity of school Information Centres to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request. 	✓	In progress (2020 deadline)
Information and Communications	Board-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards. 	✓	In progress (2021 deadline)
Physical/ Architectural	Board Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board intends to comply with the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces. 	✓	Ongoing Compliance

2015-2016

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	On Target	Progress
Systemic	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility Awareness Training for Educators converted to on-line training and is part of Human Resources New Hire package. Accessibility Awareness Training as it pertains to the Human Rights Code is now available as an on-line training program and is completed by all employees both new and existing. 	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications	School Information Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review status of capacity of school Information Centres to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of digital or multimedia resources upon request. 	✓	In progress (2020 deadline)
Information and Communications	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards. 	✓	In progress (2021 deadline)

2014-2015

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	On Target	Progress
Information and Communications	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and have ready access to resources that enable the Board to provide information and communication supports upon request and in a timely manner to persons with disabilities. (Consider access to Board meetings/school events) 	✓	Compliance January 1, 2015
Information and Communications	School Information Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure readiness of School Information Centres to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request. Catholic Resource Centre (CRC) purchase of large print materials, electronic books and digital books which are available to all students through classroom teacher. Sourcing alternative formats throughout school board, public Information Centres and other community agencies to meet student need. Access Learning Video Streaming - Ontario Curriculum content available to all staff and students. Further inquiry to determine if closed captioning and described video available. 	✓	Compliance January 1, 2015
Information and Communications	Board-Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to Board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards. Exploring increased methods of providing accessible ready formats, i.e. verbal descriptions of photos with captioning. All public facing websites are in compliance. Ongoing exploration of school board intranet as it relates to accessibility. 	✓	In progress (2021 deadline)

2013-2014

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	On Target	Progress
Systemic - Attitudinal	Board-Wide	Provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on Human Rights Code provisions re: disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training.	✓	Compliance
Information and Communications	Catholic Education Centre	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.	✓	Compliance 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.	✓	Compliance January 1, 2014
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 appraisal, career or professional development, redeployment	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications – Student Transportation	Board-Wide (NSTS, Student Support Department Elementary/ Secondary Schools)	Consult with elementary and secondary parents/guardians and develop individual school transportation plans for students with disabilities, clarifying roles and responsibilities. Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) receives daily student updates through Maplewood. Changes are flagged by NSTS to inform the need for student update.	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications	School Information Centres	Review the readiness of School Information Centres to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request	✓	Compliance 2015

2012-2013

Type of Barrier	Location	Action	On Target	Progress
Systemic	Board-Wide	Develop Accessibility Policy Statement	✓	Compliance January 1, 2013
Attitudinal – Information and Communications	Board-Wide	Develop Administrative Guidelines re: Accessible Information and Communications	✓	Compliance January 1, 2013
Attitudinal – Employment	Board-Wide	Develop Administrative Guidelines re: Accessible Employment	✓	Compliance January 1, 2013
Systemic	Board-Wide	Review procurement practices to incorporate accessibility criteria for goods, services, facilities	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications	Board-Wide	Provide accessibility awareness training for all educators/classroom-based staff on accessible instruction and program delivery.	✓	Ongoing Compliance
Information and Communications	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.	✓	Compliance January 1, 2013

Appendix B: Accessibility Projects Report 2012-2019-Completed

2018-2019

SN#	Facility	Description
119	Father Hennepin	Automatic door operator installation
139	Monsignor Clancy	Stage lift installation
118	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Stage lift installation
176	St Ann (SC)	Accessible washroom construction
128	St Patrick (NF)	Sensory room renovation
290	Blessed Trinity CSS	Automatic door operator installation
250	Notre Dame College	Special needs classroom and washroom renovation
220	Saint Michael CHS	Special needs classroom and sensory room renovation

2017-2018

SN#	Facility	Description
118	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Stage lift installation
119	Father Hennepin	Install automatic door openers at front entrance
119	Father Hennepin	Accessible washroom
127	St Mary-NF	Provide Sensory room
139	Monsignor Clancy	Stage lift installation
176	St Ann (SC)	Provide accessible washroom on second floor
250	Notre Dame College	Added accessible showers-boys and girls change rooms
250	Notre Dame College	Additional accessible washroom on second floor
172	Canadian Martyrs	New accessible washroom stall
129	Loretto Catholic	Elevator upgrade
290	Blessed Trinity	Automatic door operator added to student washroom

2016-2017

210	Lakeshore Catholic	Sensory rooms and accessible washroom construction
144	Holy Name	New sensory and equipment room
125	St. Gabriel Lalemant	Sensory room upgrades

2015-2016

SN#	Facility	Description
133	St. John Bosco	Add personal operator
144	Holy Name	Add personal operator
183	St. Theresa (SC)	Sensory room
198	St. Michael (NOTL)	Sensory room, automatic door opener

2014-2015

SN#	Facility	Description
115	St. Philomena	Accessible washroom renovation, ramp and operator to main entrance
116	St. Joseph	Sensory room
118	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Ramp to gym
145	St. Augustine	Sensory room
180	St. James	Automatic door operator to side entrances, build accessible washroom

2013-2014

SN#	Facility	Description
148	St. Kevin	Sensory room/main entrance automatic door operator
120	Mary Ward	Side entrance accessibility
127	St. Mary (NF)	Automatic door operators-main and playground entrance, renovated accessible washroom
133	St. John Bosco	Automatic door operators-main and playground entrance
132	St. Ann (F)	Ramp to portables
195	St. John (B)	Ramp and operator to main entrance
145	St. Andrew	Automatic door operators-main and playground entrance
280	Saint Francis CSS	Sensory room/accessible washroom/special education renovation

2012-2013

SN#	Facility	Description
127	St. Mary (NF)	Accessible washroom renovation
132	St. Ann (F)	Create new fire exit from classroom
133	St. John Bosco	Accessible washroom renovation
134	St. Therese (PC)	Accessible washroom
198	St. Michael (NOTL)	Accessible washroom renovation
210	Lakeshore Catholic	Elevator installation