



Niagara Catholic

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2022-2027

Working Document



We are a Christ-centered Catholic faith community that celebrates diversity and fosters spiritual growth, inspiring all to reach their full potential in mind, body, and spirit.

Prepared by The Niagara Catholic Accessibility Planning Committee

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



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Rationale

The Ontario 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 fully participate 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 environments 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 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 to provide greater equity for all, in accordance with *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board's [*2021-2026 Strategic Plan, Called by Name, Listening, Learning, and Leading*](#) supports accessibility, equity and inclusivity for all members of the Niagara Catholic community through the following Strategic Directions:

Niagara Catholic's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan Called By Name: Listening, Learning and Leading

- *Advance Student Achievement for All Students*
- *Celebrate the Richness of Our Catholic Faith and Our Holistic, Value-Based, Catholic Education*
- *Foster Inclusive, Equitable, and Safe School Communities Where All are Welcomed and 'Called By Name'*
- *Manage Our Resources Effectively to Build a Sustainable Catholic School Board in the Niagara Region*
- *Foster Authentic Relationships with All Our Staff to Strengthen Our Work with Students*

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

- the Accessibility Planning Committee, that addresses accessibility issues and the ongoing identification of barriers, that may where possible be incorporated in the multi-year plan;
- ongoing consultation with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and with persons with disabilities;
- Board policies, procedures, and practices wherever possible, 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 the community.

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022-2027

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was 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 sets out how the Board intends 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 steps the Board will continue to make to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work in, use, or attend Board schools/sites, facilities and services.

Accessibility Planning Committee

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

Accessibility Planning Committee	
Battagli, Christine	Consultant of Research, Assessment, Evaluation & Reporting
Black, Danielle	Coordinator of Library Information Centres
Cipriano, Camillo	Director of Education
Dagenais, Theo	Elementary Principal
Davies, Elizabeth	Administrative Assistant to Gino Pizzoferrato
DiGioia, Jim	Coordinator of Student Support
Di Toro, Anthony	Coordinator of Student Support
Euale, Clark	Controller of Facilities Services
Ferri, Mark	Administrator, Purchasing Services
Formisano, Tara	Teacher, Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Forsyth-Sells, Lee Ann	Superintendent of Education

Frost, Grant	Chief Information Officer
Giancola, Danny	Coordinator of Student Support
Kerr, Amy	Coordinator Purchasing Services
Magnotta, Arnie	It Business Systems Manager, Administration
Majka, Kelly	Secondary Vice-Principal
Martinson, Jim	Coordinator of Health and Safety
Maxner, Anna	CUPE Representative
McArthur, Jennifer	OECTA Elementary Representative
McMullin, Cathy *Retiring	Applied Behaviour Analysis, Lead, Student Support Services
Palujanskas, Brian	Elementary Principal *2023-2024 (APC Co-Chair)
Pellegrini, Jennifer	Communications Officer *2023-2024 (APC Co-Chair)
Piccoli, John	OECTA Secondary Representative
Pizzoferrato, Gino	Superintendent of Education
Rocca, Patsy	Superintendent of Education/Human Resources
Rylett, Janet	Student Support Facilitator
Sandhu, Sarb	Executive Director, Niagara Student Transportation Services
Sandel, Roseanne	Elementary Principal
Somma, Monique	Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC Chair)
Vernelli, Carrie	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 meets three times during the school year to identify barriers, review progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of barrier removal and prevention strategies. Recommendations will be presented 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 2022-2027

The Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022-2027 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 Regulation (IASR) 191/11 and Accessibility Accomplishments (to date):

- Accessibility Planning Committee meets three times per school year to report on and ensure compliance with all IASR requirements
- Main entrance at Catholic Education Centre unlocked during business hours
- Continuation of individual student transportation plans
- Onboarding process includes training for all new employees on the IASR, Human Rights Code and accessibility awareness
- Online training modules for current staff on IASR, Human Rights Code and education awareness training where applicable
- Information Technology Services and Communications employs a platform called *Accessible* on websites which automatically generates websites that are AODA/IASR compliant
- Facilities projects 2021-2022; accessible washrooms, stage access, special education renovations, accessibility in public areas
- The Recess Project to support and strengthen inclusion with healthy, inclusive, and compassionate interactions
- The Tripartite Intervention: a 12-lesson program for students in Grades 4, 5, and 6, aimed at enhancing students' attitudes toward disability. Start: December/January 2022; Expected End: August 31, 2023
- Internal Human Resources processes, including but not limited to, accommodation plans, emergency response, return to work plans

Ongoing Accessibility Commitments and Priorities

- Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) will continue to consult with elementary and secondary parents/guardians to develop individual student transportation plans, clarifying roles and responsibilities, receipt of daily student updates through online system with changes flagged for NSTS
- Information Technology Services and/or Communications will continue to upload messages on to school board website to ensure that all families can access information through translation tool
- Information Technology Services and/or Communications will continue to receive monthly compliance reports and able to generate point-in-time compliance reports on demand
- Facilities projects 2023-2024: special education upgrades, access to stage, weight room, change room
- Expansion of [The Recess Project](#) into additional school communities
- Ongoing recognition of days relevant to accessibility on Board website and social media channels
- Accessibility Planning Committee (APC) will develop and share an online educator resource with information and suggested activities that will promote awareness and inclusion within their schools and communities

→ Accessibility capacity building opportunities throughout all schools to continue to strengthen awareness, knowledge and inclusion opportunities ex. Expansion of All Access HOME Conference which included parents, educators, community partners and students made possible with funding from B1 Project Plan – Supporting Students with Disabilities

Communication of the Plan

The Niagara Catholic District School Board's *Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* and the *Annual Status Report* on its progress 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