

**Annual Accessibility Plan
for the**

**BRUCE-GREY CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

September 2007 - August 2008

Prepared by
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board
Accessibility Working Group

This publication is available on the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board's Website
(www.bgcdsb.org Website)
and in accessible formats upon request

September 2007

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Aim
2. Objectives
3. Commitment to accessibility planning
4. Description of the Accessible School Board
5. The Accessibility Working Group Members
6. Recent barrier-removal initiatives
7. Preventing new barriers
8. Barrier-identification methodologies
9. Barriers identified
10. Summary of Barriers Identified in the 2006 – 2007 Plan
11. Summary of Barriers to be removed/prevented in 2007 – 2008
12. Review and monitoring process
13. Communication of the plan

Executive Summary

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) was 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.

The ODA required 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.

Bill 118, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), was passed by unanimous vote by the Ontario Legislature on May 10, 2005, and subsequently received Royal Assent. This new law is intended to be more proactive in achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in Ontario. The AODA, 2005 establishes a process to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards relating to services, facilities and employment. The AODA, 2005 more broadly defines "organization" to include a greater number of Ontario's organizations. Although portions of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* were repealed, the planning requirements of the ODA, 2001 will not be repealed until they have been replaced by standards under the new AODA, 2005. As such, there will be a transition period during which the Board will continue to have planning and other obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

The Board plan for 2007-08 will report on:

- (1) the measures that the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board has taken in the 2006-07, and
- (2) the measures that the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board will take during the year (2007 - 2008) to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The Bruce-Grey Catholic 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 Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board Annual Accessibility Plan is posted on the board website at www.bgcdsb.org.

1. Aim

This plan describes the measures that the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board has taken in the past and measures that will be taken during the year (2007 - 2008) to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities who work in, use or attend school board facilities and services.

2. Objectives

This plan:

1. Describes the *process* by which the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
2. Reports the results and reviews efforts at the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities during the past year.
3. Lists the policies, procedures, programs, practices and services that the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board will review in the *coming year* to identify barriers for people with disabilities
4. Describes the *measures* the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities
5. Describes how the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board will make this accessibility plan *available to the public*

3. Commitment to Accessibility Planning

On May 27th, 2003, the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board reviewed the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and passed the following motion:

The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board is committed to:

- *Establishing an Accessibility Working Group*
- *Consulting with people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans*
- *Ensuring school board policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility*
- *Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community*

The Board has authorized the Accessibility Working Group to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board to meet these commitments.

During 2004-05, the Board approved a policy on Accessibility Planning reinforcing their commitment to improving opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

4. Description of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

The Bruce-Grey Separate School Board was formally established in 1969. In 1998, the Bruce-Grey Separate School Board became The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board.

Presently, the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board serves 3,800 students through 2 secondary and 11 elementary schools. The vision statement of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board is

We, the students, staff, trustees, families and parishes, in partnership with our communities, will provide a Catholic education which nurtures the development of the whole student by: celebrating the Sacraments, embracing the teachings of Christ and giving witness to Gospel values.

The Board is committed to offering accessible programs in accessible settings through accessible services to all students.

5. The Accessibility Working Group Members

The accessibility working group consists of the following members:

List of working group members		
Working Group member	Department	Contact information
<i>Jim Aitken</i>	<i>Plant Operations/Maintenance</i>	Jim_aitken@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 229
<i>Joyce Benninger</i>	<i>Payroll & Employee Benefits</i>	Joyce_benninger@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 258
<i>Cathy Colton</i>	<i>Business/Finance</i>	Cathy_colton@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 230
<i>Sam Finnie</i>	<i>Trustee Special Education Advisory Committee</i>	Sam_Finnie@bgcdsb.org
<i>Edward Goetz</i>	<i>Principal</i>	Edward_goetz@bgcdsb.org 364-2760
<i>J u l i e s Vanhaelemeesch</i>	<i>Trustee</i>	Jules_Vanhaelemeesch@bgcdsb.org
<i>Suzanne White</i>	<i>Human Resources</i>	Suzanne_White@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 232

<i>Catherine Penner</i>	<i>APSSP Special Education Advisory Committee</i>	Catherine_Penner@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 242
<i>Kathy Knapp</i>	<i>CUPE-Clerical</i>	Kathy_Knapp@bgcdsb.org 364-5820 Ext 0

6. Recent Barrier-removal Initiatives

Over several years, there have been a number of initiatives at Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

- Accessibility has been facilitated with the inclusion of automatic door openers on exterior doorways;
- Accessibility has been improved by the addition of elevators and lifts in all schools with multiple stories;
- All facilities have been upgraded with ramps and accessible washrooms;
- All renovation, addition and construction of new school projects have architectural features that incorporate principles of universal access;
- Current renovations to existing buildings have accessibility for people with disabilities addressed in the plans.
- Signage and lighting has been improved in parking lots, front entrances, washrooms to indicate accessibility.

7. Preventing new barriers

All school board programs, policies, practices and services are subject to the guiding principles of inclusion and integration.

We will strive to create an environment that is accessible to all people, regardless of age or ability.

Through the annual accessibility planning process, Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board's programming, policies and practices will be assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

The design of new schools and renovation and addition projects to existing schools will have architectural features that incorporate principles of universal access. This will be facilitated by adopting the Canadian Standards Association B-651 standards for barrier-free access.

8. Barrier Identification

In 2003, the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board contracted the services Catherine Smart, an Accessibility Consultant for the Ontario March of Dimes to complete a “Points of Public Access” Audit and Report. The report is available on a school by school basis on the Board website at www.bgcdsb.org.

9. Barriers Identified

As a result of the “Points of Public Access” Audit conducted in 2003, some barriers have been identified. Board facilities were found to be moderately accessible and/or accessible and, in general, the committee was very pleased with the results of the report.

In addition to the audit, the committee conducts reviews of schools each year as part of their regular committee meeting. This provides the framework for developing the plan for the subsequent year.

The Accessibility Working Group has decided to focus on the following barriers:

<i>Physical</i>
<i>Communicational</i>
<i>Attitudinal/Communicational</i>
<i>Policy/Practice</i>

10. Summary of Barriers Identified in 2006 – 2007

Plan

The following are the barriers identified in last year’s accessibility planning report and the progress to date in removing and preventing these barriers.

	Barrier	Objective	Means to remove/prevent	Performance criteria	Status
1.	Policy/Practice	Review Board Policies and remove any barriers.	Provide comments to the Board on accessibility issues/barriers	Policies will not prevent access and participation to Board programs and facilities.	Ongoing
2.	School & Board Awareness	Increase School & Board Awareness of Accessibility	Request that accessibility issues be identified and reviewed as part of the annual maintenance tour.	More awareness of accessibility will lead to more clearly identifying the barriers.	Ongoing

	Barrier	Objective	Means to remove/prevent	Performance criteria	Status
3.	Accessibility Plan not readily available to the public.	Provide greater access to the plan.	Place copies of the plan in the schools and promote through community and school newsletters. Copies distributed to community groups that use schools.	Greater awareness and access to the plan and to accessibility issues.	Ongoing
4.	Main entrances to some buildings not accessible	Install automatic door openers.	Install automatic door opener with universal access sign age at two schools	People with disabilities will have enhanced access to the schools.	Ongoing
5.	Ramp at St. Anthony's School does not comply with CSA B-651 standards.	To improve accessibility.	Install a lift that meets the standard.	Improved access to all sections of the school for individuals with disabilities.	Complete
6.	Research information available to assist with removing attitudinal barriers	To improve attitudes that prove to be barriers	Guest speaker to help focus the committee on attitudinal barriers	More discussion and attention to attitudinal issues	Ongoing

11. Summary of Barriers to be removed/prevented in 2007/08

	<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>How to remove/prevent</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
1	Policy/Practice:	Review Board Policies and remove any barriers.	Provide comments to the Board on accessibility issues/barriers.	Policies will not prevent access and participation to Board programs and facilities.	Minimal Cost.	follow schedule for policy review, as determined by the Board.	All members of the Accessibility committee. Reporting to the Board by trustee members of the Committee.
2	School & Board Awareness.	Increase School & Board Awareness of Accessibility Issues.	Request that accessibility issues be identified and reviewed as part of the annual maintenance tour.	More awareness of accessibility will lead to more clearly identifying the barriers.	No direct costs associated with raising awareness.	Spring of 2008 and the May/June maintenance tour.	All members of the Board and school staff.
3	Accessibility Plan not readily available to the public.	Provide greater access to the plan.	Place copies of the plan in the schools and promote through community and school newsletters. Copies distributed to community groups that use schools. Create a link between Community Use of Schools Information and the Plan on the Board website.	Greater awareness and access to the plan and to accessibility issues.	Minimal copying costs.	October 2007 and ongoing	Superintendent of Business.
4	Main entrances to some buildings not accessible.	Install automatic door openers.	Install automatic door opener with universal access signage at one remaining school - Mildmay Jr. The 2007-08 year should complete the entrances to all schools.	People with disabilities will have enhanced access to the school.	Cost to be determined by the Supervisor of Maintenance.	2007-08 school year.	Maintenance Department.
5	Evaluate other school entrances to buildings to determine the need to make more accessible	Install automatic door openers where appropriate Consider additional exterior ramping to auxiliary doors.	Develop a plan to Install automatic door openers with universal access signage at other entrances where it is deemed desirable	People with disabilities will have enhanced access to the school.	Cost to be determined by the Supervisor of Maintenance.	2007-08 school year.	Maintenance Department.
6	Research what information is available to assist with removing attitudinal barriers	Remove attitudes that prove to be barriers.	Research and discuss at accessibility meetings. Consider a guest speaker to assist the Committee.	Possible guests include Community Living, Thames Valley, Ross MacDonald School, Amethyst School.	To be determined.	To be determined.	Accessibility Committee Members

	<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>How to remove/prevent</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
7.	Hearing Impairment	to create a learning environment where all students have an improved opportunity to hear clearly	install sound field systems in all classrooms	by way of a universal design, all students will benefit from clear audible sound in all classrooms	Funds will be accessed through a specially funded project through the Council of Directors of Education.	Fall 2007	Contracted services for installation
8.	School and Board Awareness	to increase the awareness of accessibility issues by those involved in planning the new addition to St. Mary's High School	Share copies of the plans with members of the committee and discuss at future meetings	More awareness will lead to less chance or opportunity for additional barriers to be created	Part of Capital Project Planning	Fall 2007	Accessibility Committee Members and Board Staff involved in project planning

12. Review and monitoring process

Since 2003, many physical and architectural barriers have been identified and removed. Appendix A contains an updated summary of the current status of each site.

The Accessibility Working Group meets 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 in preparation for the subsequent year of accessibility planning.

The Working Group reminds staff about roles in implementing the plan. Meetings scheduled for 2007-08 are as follows:

October 17, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. - St. Basil's School, Owen Sound

December 12, 2007 at 10:30 a.m.- Catholic Education Centre, Hanover

April 16, 2008 at 10:30 a.m. - Mary Immaculate School, Chepstow

13. Communication of the plan

The Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board's accessibility plan will be posted on the board website at www.bgcdsb.org and hard copies will be available at each school and the Board Office. The plan can be made available in accessible formats upon request. Any questions about the plan may be directed to the telephone number below.

Contact information for accessible format requests: 519-364-5820 Ext 230.

Appendix A:

Schools	Single storey building	Automatic Door Opener on the main entrance	Exterior Ramp to main entrance	Flat Grade to main entrance	Number of designated Accessible parking spaces	Other ramp locations; if applicable how many:	Automatic door openers in the interior of the school	Accessible cubicles in the washrooms	Separate accessible washrooms	Elevator on site	Elevating lift device	EVAC chairs on site. How many?	Visual Alarm System	Sound Field Systems in classrooms
Catholic Education Centre, Hanover	✓	✓	✓	na	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	na	na	na	na	2
Mary Immaculate School, Chepstow	✓	✓	✓	na	2		no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
St. Peter's & St. Paul's, Durham	✓	✓	✓	na	2	2	no	✓	1	1	na	na	na	✓
Immaculate Conception School, Formosa	2	✓	✓		2		no	✓	no	no	✓	na	na	✓
Holy Family School, Hanover	2	✓		✓	2		no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
St. Anthony's School, Kincardine	1/2	✓		✓	2		no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
Sacred Heart Jr. School, Mildmay	✓	✓	na	✓	2	na	no	✓	no	no	na	na	✓	✓
Sacred Heart Sr. School, Mildmay	✓	✓	na	✓	2	na	no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
St. Basil's School, Owen Sound	✓	✓	na	✓	2	na	no	✓	no	no	na	na	✓	✓
Notre Dame School, Owen Sound	✓	✓	na	✓	3	na	no	✓	1	1	na	na	✓	✓
St. Joseph's School, Port Elgin	✓	✓	✓	na	2	1	no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
Sacred Heart School, Teeswater	✓	✓		✓	2	na	no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
Mother Teresa School, Walkerton	✓	✓		✓	2	na	no	✓	no	no	na	na	na	✓
St. Mary's High School, Owen Sound	2	✓	na	✓	4	na	na	✓	no	no	na	na	✓	✓
Sacred Heart High School, Walkerton	2	✓	na	✓	3	1	no	✓	no	no	na	na	✓	✓