

**AGENDA: 12:00 pm**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda

**DIVERSITY & EQUITY:**

3. Accessibility (Barrier-Free) “Pathways”
4. Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Consent Items:

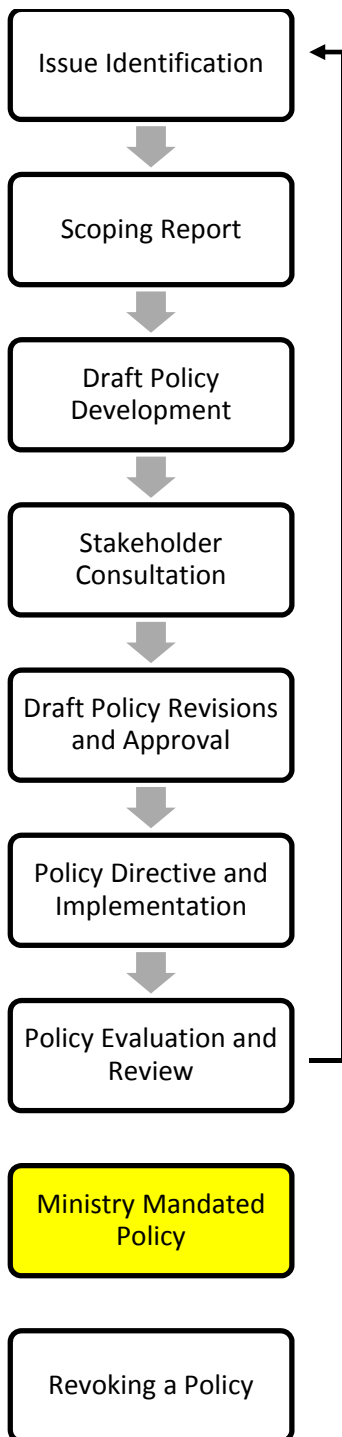
5. Committee Learning – Consent items – procedures – starting in October
6. Next Policy Meeting:
  - a. Healthy Schools & Workplace Pillar (including executive summary of any changes made to procedures)
7. Adjournment

## POLICY COMMITTEE

**Title:** Accessibility (Barrier-Free) “Pathways”

**Pillar Policy:** Equity and Diversity

**Last Reviewed:** 1999



### Recommended Action:

That the Accessibility (Barrier-Free) “Pathways” policy be recommended for approval

### Background:

In 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was introduced with a goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025. At that time, the government announced the development of five standards to be phased in over a 20-year period: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment. The scope of the Final Proposed Standard on the Accessible Built Environment included public and private sector buildings. The standard for the design of public spaces only applies to new construction and major changes to existing features. The requirements under the act started in January 2015.

The original version of this policy was last approved in 1999 and has been updated to reflect the changes within the AODA.




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## Accessibility (Barrier-Free) “Pathways”

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Date Approved:

Projected Review Date:

### PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board believes in providing learning environments for all students, whenever possible, at their home, in-catchment school. The board will strive to provide students, independent, barrier-free access, to all aspects of a school's programs.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Student needs may include physical, behavioural, social, emotional, as well as cognitive/academic.
- When expertise, specialized equipment or a safe, secure environment is not practical at the home, in-catchment, school, parents/guardians/caregivers will be given a choice regarding an alternate site, a “Pathways” school.
- To meet the highly specialized needs of a student, a transfer to other provincial facilities or services provided by other district school boards may be considered.
- Parents/Guardians/Caregivers will be partners in the planning and decision-making for students with special needs.
- HWDSB has a responsibility to use resources in a practical, efficient manner.
- The Board will have an ongoing plan for new construction and renovation projects that includes barrier-free learning environments.

### INTENDED OUTCOMES:

To provide an environment that builds independence, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians/caregivers, the community, and staff.

To provide people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to HWDSB services in a manner that accommodates their disability.

### RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education  
Members of Executive Council

**TERMINOLOGY:**

*Accessibility Working Group:* An internal group made up of staff that meets to review the progress and evaluate the effectiveness and implementation of barrier removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

*Dependent Barrier-free Access:* accepts students with disabilities will require significant ongoing assistance from students and staff to function within a school and on the playground (operating elevators/lifts, opening doors, drinking fountains, etc.).

*Facility Accommodation:* Structural changes to a school such as, but not limited to, installation of ramps, paint or tape to assist with vision, chair lifts, designated parking spaces, barrier free washrooms, etc.

*Independent Barrier-free Access:* accepts that students with disabilities will require minimal ongoing assistance to function within a school and on the playground.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Establish a procedure that facilitates access by people with disabilities to the services and facilities of the Board through:

- Expectations for accommodations
- The steps required for accommodation
- Long-Term Individual Education Plan
- Request for facility accommodation

**PROGRESS INDICATORS:**

<b>Intended Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
To provide an environment that builds independence, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians/caregivers, the community and staff.	This will be monitored by the Accessibility Working Group and an annual status report on the progress of the physical environment at schools will be presented to the Board of Trustees and posted on the Board website.
To provide people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to HWDSB services in a manner that accommodates their disability.	This will be monitored through an annual internal audit of various services.

**REFERENCES:****Government Documents**

Human Rights Code

Education Act

Ontario Building Code and its companion acts and regulations (includes Fire Code)

**HWDSB Policies**

Transportation

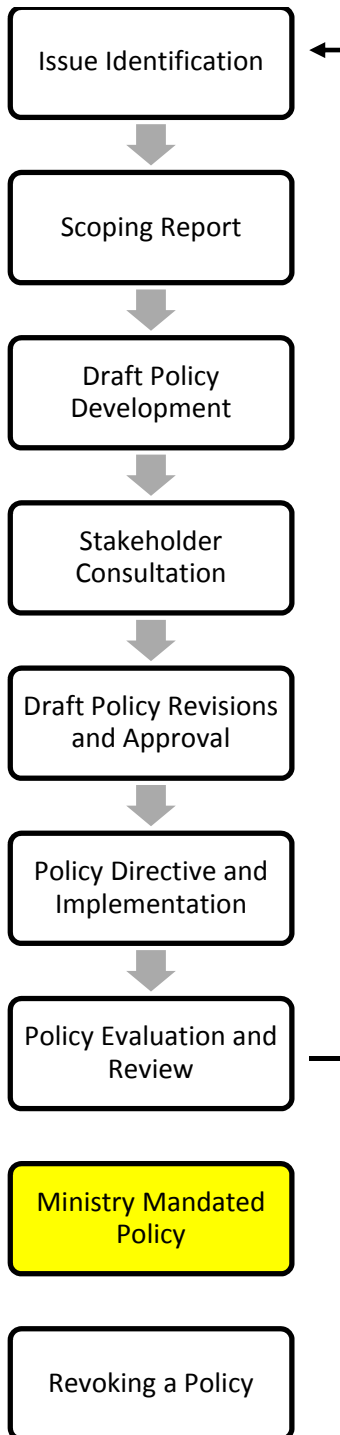
Educational Excursions

## POLICY COMMITTEE

**Title:** Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

**Pillar Policy:** Equity and Diversity

**Last Reviewed:** 2011



**Recommended Action:**

That the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy be recommended for approval

**Background:**

This policy is up for its scheduled review.

Minor changes to the formatting of the policy have been made to update it to HWDSB's current policy template.

This policy is Ministry Mandated as it is a requirement of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).




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## Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

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Date Approved:

Projected Review Date:

**PURPOSE:**

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive the accommodations they require in order to have the same opportunity of access to HWDSB services that are available to others.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

- The Board will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity to all, with particular attention for persons with disabilities.
- The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to HWDSB facilities by committing staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of persons with disabilities. These services are to incorporate measures that include, but are not limited to, the use of assistive devices and service animals.
- The Board will ensure that its policies and procedures related to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* are made available to the public and ensure there is capacity to provide communication about these policies and procedures in a format that takes into account a person's disability.

**INTENDED OUTCOMES:**

HWDSB will provide an environment in all of its facilities that promotes independence, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians, the public and staff.

HWDSB will provide people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to HWDSB services in a way that accommodates their need.

**RESPONSIBILITY:**

Director of Education  
Members of Executive Council

**TERMINOLOGY:**

*Customer:* is any person who uses the services of the school board.

*Assistive Device:* is any device used by people with disabilities to help with their daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic/digital communication devices.

*Service Animal:* is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a medical practitioner.

*Support Person:* is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as they access the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.

*Third Party Contractor:* is any person or organization acting on behalf of, or as an agent of the Board (e.g., bus operators; audiologists; orientation and mobility specialists).

*Accommodations:* is a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the Board.

*Barriers to Accessibility:* means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of the services of the Board. This includes, but is not limited to:

*Architectural barriers:* may result from the design of the building, shape of rooms, size of doorways, or width of hallways.

*Physical barriers:* refers to objects added to the environment, such as doors, windows, elevators, furniture, washroom hardware.

*Information or communication barriers:* barriers which make it difficult for people to receive or send information. For example, a person with a visual disability may not be able to read print materials, read signs, locate landmarks, or see a hazard. A person with an intellectual disability may not understand information that is not expressed in plain language.

*Attitudinal barriers:* refers to persons who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, or persons who display discriminatory behaviours.

*Technological barriers:* refers to devices such as computers, telephones, inadequate or inappropriate assistive technologies.

*Systemic barriers:* can result from an organization's policies, practices and protocols if they restrict persons with disabilities.

## **ACTION REQUIRED:**

- Establish policies, procedures and practices for the provision of services to people with disabilities.
- Use reasonable efforts to ensure that all of the Board's policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles laid out in the Customer Service standard, (*Regulation 429/07*). These principles are dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity.

- Establish a set of procedures that facilitate access by people with disabilities to the services and facilities of the Board, such as:
  - Use of assistive devices;
  - Use of a support person;
  - Use of a service animal;
  - Notification of disruption of service; and
  - Feedback on access to services.
  
- Provide a training program that includes the following components:
  - A review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
  - How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
  - How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, service animal or a support person;
  - How to use equipment or assistive devices available, or that can reasonably be made available on school or board premises, that may help to provide services to people with disabilities;
  - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing school or Board services; and
  - The Board's customer service policy and directives, governing the provision of services to people with disabilities.

## PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcomes	Assessment
HWDSB will provide an environment in all of its facilities that promotes independence, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians, the public and staff.	This will be monitored through consultations with the broader public that utilize or seek to utilize the board's services.
HWDSB will provide people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to HWDSB services in a way that accommodates their need.	This will be monitored through an annual internal audit of various services.

## REFERENCES:

### Government Documents

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)  
 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07  
 Ontario Human Rights Code

### HWDSB Policies

Diversity and Equity Pillar  
 Accessibility (Barrier Free) Pathways  
 Accommodation of Personnel  
 Code of Conduct  
 Employee Support Program  
 Harassment