



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

Annual Accessibility Plan
for the
Renfrew County District School Board
September 2011 - August 2012

Submitted to the

Accessibility Directorate of Ontario

September 2011

Prepared by the

Renfrew County District School Board
Accessibility Working Group

This publication is available on the Renfrew County District School Board' website at
www.renfrew.edu.on.ca
and in accessible formats upon request



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Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
Aim.....	2
Objectives	2
Commitment to Accessibility Planning	2
Description of the Renfrew County District School Board.....	3
The Accessibility Working Group Members	3
Recent Barrier Removal Initiatives.....	3
Preventing New Barriers	4
Barrier-Identification Methodologies	4
Barriers Identified.....	5
Barriers to be Addressed in 2011 - 2012	6
Customer Service Standards – As per Regulation 429/07	7
Review and Monitoring Process	7
Communication of the Plan.....	7



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

- 1 -

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (O.D.A.) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to enable their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the O.D.A. requires 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.

This is Year NINE for the annual plan (2011 - 2012), up-dated by the Accessibility Working Group of the Renfrew County District School Board. The plan describes:

1. the achievements and measures that the Renfrew County District School Board (R.C.D.S.B) has taken in 2010 - 2011 to implement its accessibility plan, and
2. the measures that the Renfrew County District School Board will take during the 2011 - 2012 school year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities (subject to the availability of resources).

The R.C.D.S.B. remains committed to continual improvement of access to school board facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parent / guardians, volunteers, and members of the community with disabilities. As evidence of this commitment, the plan provides for the participation of people with disabilities, or those community-based agencies who advocate on behalf of those with disabilities, to contribute to the development of its annual accessibility plans.

While the Accessibility Working Group identified categories of barriers to be addressed during the annual plan, it has also emphasized the necessity of maintaining a measure of flexibility for response to site-specific accessibility issues as circumstance may warrant.



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

- 2 -

1. **Aim**

This plan describes the measures that the Renfrew County District School Board has taken in the past and measures that will be taken during the next year (2011 - 2012) 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 Renfrew County District School Board will identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
2. Reviews efforts at the Renfrew County District School Board to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities during the *past year (2010 - 2011)*.
3. Lists the policies, procedures, programs, practices, and services that the Renfrew County District School Board will review in the *coming year* to identify barriers for people with disabilities.
4. Describes the *measures* the Renfrew County District School Board will take in the coming year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
5. Describes how the Renfrew County District School Board will make this accessibility plan *available to the public*.

3. **Commitment to Accessibility Planning**

The Renfrew County District School Board is committed to:

- (a) Establishing an Accessibility Working Group
- (b) Consulting with people with disabilities, or those community-based agencies that advocate on behalf of those with disabilities, to contribute to the development and review of its Annual Accessibility Plan
- (c) Ensuring school board policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility
- (d) Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents / guardians, volunteers, and members of the community.



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

- 3 -

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Working Group to prepare an Accessibility Plan that will enable the Renfrew County District School Board to meet these commitments.

4. **Description of the Renfrew County District School Board**

The Renfrew County District School Board was established in 1969 as a result of the amalgamation of individual school boards throughout Renfrew County. Presently the Renfrew County District School Board serves 9,211 students through 7 secondary, 4 adult, 24 elementary schools and 1 JK-12 school. Our schools vary in size ranging from very small rural schools to mid-sized schools in more populated areas. The Renfrew County District School Board's motto "Education for Life, Opportunities for All" is apparent in all our settings. The philosophy of the Renfrew County District School Board is to develop each student to his / her greatest potential as individuals within our society. All students, regardless of special talents or challenging needs, can grow and they can grow best by attending schools which offer accessible programs in accessible settings through accessible services.

5. **The Accessibility Working Group Members**

The Accessibility Working Group was formally constituted in September 2002 and consists of the following members:

Member	Department	Contact
Ivan Saari (Chair)	Operations Leader	735-0151 (ext. 3316)
Loran Young	Principal, Adult & Continuing Education Department	735-0151 (ext. 3323)
Marjorie Doering	Trustee	735-0151
Bill Murray	Plant Manager (Interim)	735-0151 (ext. 2265)
Jodie Barrett	Supervising Principal for Special Services	735-0151 (ext. 3320)

6. **Recent Barrier Removal Initiatives**

During the last school year, there have been a number of formal and informal initiatives at the Renfrew County District School Board to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities. These initiatives include:

- A) The R.C.D.S.B., through its Special Education Plan 2005 - 2006 has addressed access for students with disabilities through modifications and accommodations of programs and services. The Special Education Plan is available on the Board website at www.renfrew.edu.on.ca.



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

- 4 -

B) Accessibility has been facilitated through the following achievements in 2010 - 2011:

- Installation of accessible washroom at Fellowes HS, modifications to Special Education Room
- Installation of door operators at Walter Zadow PS, Champlain Discover PS, Mackenzie Community School, and Palmer Rapids PS

7. **Preventing New Barriers**

As of September 2002, all school board programs, policies, practices, and services will be subject to the guiding principles of inclusionary practice. We will strive to create an environment that is accessible to all people, regardless of age or ability. Through the annual accessibility planning process, Renfrew County District School Board's programming, policies, and practices will be assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility. For example, when the JK-12 school (Mackenzie Community School) was built/modified, accessibility was a key consideration.

8. **Barrier-Identification Methodologies**

The Accessibility Working Group will use the following barrier-identification methodologies:

Methodology	Description	Status
Presentation to Senior Administration / Principals	Opportunity for input and feedback	March 2012
Community Consultations	Meetings to solicit input from local agencies and the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee	Monthly



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

9. Barriers Identified

The Accessibility Working Group identified a number of barriers in the initial Accessibility Plan for 2003 - 2004. The Accessibility Working Group has decided to focus on the following, subject to the availability of resources:

Type of Barrier	Description	Strategy for Removal / Prevention
Physical: (<i>Mary Street</i>)	The front doors of some schools are heavy and may be difficult to open for a wheelchair user or someone with limited strength	Install power-operated doors
Physical: (<i>Mary Street</i>)	Ramps are required at some sites; some sites require ramps to be upgraded	Install ramps and upgrade
Physical: (<i>Madawaska Valley, Fellowes</i>)	Technical equipment not accessible in some schools	OYAP Coordinator and Technology Department Heads
Physical: (<i>Fellowes</i>)	Music room not accessible	Re-consider location of music room in light of vacant space
Architectural: (<i>Mary Street</i>)	No Lift / Lack of Elevator	Re-deploy public meetings to area schools, as required.
Architectural: (<i>Mary Street, Sherwood</i>)	Washroom accessibility for wheelchairs	Renovate washrooms as part of Capital Improvement plans
Architectural: (<i>Fellowes, Central, Mary Street</i>)	Basement level not accessible at these sites	Install Lift / Motorized Stair Climber
Architectural: (<i>Madawaska Valley, Fellowes, RCI</i>)	Weight room not accessible	Create alternate space to accommodate needs
Communication / Information	Board policies / resources were not accessible in alternate format (i.e. large print, Braille, audio)	To extend alternative format to documents other than the Board's Special Education Information materials, such as board procedures and policy manual, school year calendar document



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

10. Barriers to be Addressed in 2011 - 2012

The Accessibility Plan seeks to address the following categories of barriers during the coming year, subject to available resources:

Barrier	Objective	Means to Remove / Prevent	Performance Criteria	Resources	Timing	Responsibility
Physical	To install automatic door openers and ramps as required To install handicap parking signage in school parking lot		Walter Zadow PS RCI, RCIS, MCS, KPS RCI	General Maintenance Budget	On-going	Plant
Architectural	To Install an elevator in a site identified in Item 9 of the Accessibility Plan To assess and improve exterior lighting Seek estimate for elevator or lift To install a wheelchair-accessible washroom		Mary St. Ed. Centre Central PS Palmer Rapids PS	Facilities Renewal Budget	-On-going	Plant
Attitudinal	Survey community partners		Survey designed and administered		Spring 2012	Spec. Ed., Plant



RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2011

- 7 -

11. **Customer Service**

Under subsection 14 (1) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the act) people and organizations to whom an accessibility standard applies were required to file an accessibility report with an appointed director. The act provides for the appointed director to specify when accessibility reports are to be filed by those persons and organizations. Designated public sector organizations were required to submit their first accessibility report indicating compliance with the Customer Service Standard by March 31, 2010. Confirmation of successful submission of RCDSB's report has been received. This said, organizations that have submitted in 2010 will not be required to file a subsequent report in 2011. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario will communicate any new reporting requirements for the Customer Service Standard and other future accessibility standards as they come into effect.

12. **Review and Monitoring Process**

The Accessibility Working Group endeavours to meet regularly during the planning year to review progress. Throughout the year, evaluation of effectiveness in implementing the barrier - removal and prevention strategies will be ongoing in preparation for the next year of accessibility planning.

13. **Communication of the Plan**

The Renfrew County District School Board's accessibility plan will be posted on the Board's website at www.renfrew.edu.on.ca and hard copies will be available in schools.