



Ontario Catholic School  
Trustees' Association

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Patrick Daly, *President*  
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February 12, 2018

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Chairpersons and Directors of Education  
- All Catholic District School Boards

**FROM:** Patrick J. Daly, President

**SUBJECT: Education Accessibility Standard Working Group Update**

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As you are aware, the Accessibility Directorate of the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services recently established an appointed working group to assist in the development of an accessibility regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”). The group is called “K-12 Education Standards Development Committee” (“working group”). This represents the second stage of the government’s consultation process, following the July 2017 Discussion Guide that outlined several “themes” an education accessibility standard should address, such as, awareness training, awareness of current accessibility accommodations in schools, communication and inclusive decision making and transition planning. (see attached OCSTA submission).

**Chair and Participants of the Working Group**

The working group is comprised of several groups of education and disability rights stakeholders and is chaired by Lynn Ziraldo, former Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of York Region. OCSTA is represented by Stephen Andrews, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs who was appointed to this working group by the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. In addition, recently retired Dufferin-Peel CDSB Associate Director Sheila McWatters and retired Huron-Superior CDSB Director John Stadnyk were also appointed to the working group. The working group is supported by several staff from the Accessibility Directorate and the Ministry of Education.

**Mandate and Deliverables**

The working group held its first meeting on Monday, February 5, 2018 to discuss the mandate and process of the group. Its’ mandate is to “develop recommendations that address barriers in publicly funded schools” for students with disabilities. The working group will meet every two months and is to prepare a draft work plan, including key milestones and timelines, that identify key policy priorities and make preliminary recommendations for an education accessibility standard or

regulation. The working group will also be responsible for developing a public consultation strategy on the proposed education accessibility standard.

The working group's first task is to deliver a report on key priorities to the Ministers of Consumer and Government Services and Education by October 2018, at which time the report will be posted for public input. The next stage is for the working group to develop recommendations on accessibility regulation similar to the regulations already in place under the AODA. The recommendations are to be received by the Minister 18 months after the priorities report in October 2018.

### **Next Steps**

The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for early April where OCSTA will be present. We would encourage boards to send any issues and concerns about an education accessibility standard to Stephen Andrews at [sandrews@ocsta.on.ca](mailto:sandrews@ocsta.on.ca).

For your information, we have also attached a summary of a survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and the Accessibility Directorate.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Stephen Andrews at [sandrews@ocsta.on.ca](mailto:sandrews@ocsta.on.ca).

*Attachments*