

**ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
SECTION D: STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE	POLICY
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board to provide an environment in all of its facilities that builds independence, dignity and respect for our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff. Further, we are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to our services in the same location and in a similar way as these services are available to all others we serve. The key principles of integration and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environments, and our conduct will demonstrate our belief in the strength that diversity brings to our communities.

POLICY GOALS:

1. The Board will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all policies, practices and procedures from the date of this policy forward are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity to all, with particular attention for persons with disabilities.
2. The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of persons with disabilities. Such service shall incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of assistive devices and service animals.
3. To ensure greater awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, the Board will provide appropriate training for all staff and service providers who deal with the public.
4. Training as identified in No. 3 will be provided to all staff and, when appropriate, to volunteers. As new staff are hired, the training will become a component of their orientation training and will be provided within a reasonable timeframe.
5. 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 also ensure there is capacity to provide communication about these policies and procedures in a format that takes into account a person's disability.
6. When services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice will be posted at the site and on the Board's website.
7. In order to monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Accessible Customer Service Standard, the Board will develop a process for receiving and responding to feedback. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and will allow people to provide feedback using a number of methods.

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8. So that adherence to this policy can be achieved efficiently and effectively, the Board and all its managers and school-based administrators will take into account the impact on persons with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.
9. The Board will create a feedback process that will review the implementation of this policy with the Board's various constituency groups such as Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Employee associations and unions, and citizens' groups. Methods of feedback would include use of electronic means such as websites.
10. The Board will also establish a process for consulting with frontline staff and volunteers who have a role in implementing the expectations and procedures established under this policy to review its effectiveness.

DEFINITIONS:

Disability - any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes: a) diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
d) a mental disorder,
e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; ("handicap").

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 daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic 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.

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USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC	PROCEDURE
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:

The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities. Such services incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of assistive devices.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that staff are trained to support parents and the general public who may use assistive devices while accessing board services. Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices.
- 1.2 Students and staff have separate and specific procedures related to their personal use of assistive devices.
- 1.3 Supervisory Officers, Principals or Managers responsible for a board facility that is open to the public shall ensure a notice is posted in their respective facility in the front office/reception welcoming and encouraging the use of assistive devices and encouraging users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it. A sample notice is provided in Appendix A.

2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 The board website and each school website will indicate that all board facilities provide services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities and offer services that include the use of assistive devices.
- 2.2 The board website and school websites, will indicate the availability of a staff person to assist in provision of services to people with disabilities. e.g., school registration

3.0 Additional Information

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

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4.0 Definitions

Disability - any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes: diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
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APPENDIX A

Accessibility for Customer Service

It is the policy of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board to provide an environment in all of its facilities that builds independence, dignity and respect for our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff. To this end, the Board welcomes individuals with disabilities:

- to use assistive devices
- to be accompanied by a support person
- to be accompanied by a service animal
- to seek support from staff and volunteers

The Board's policy with respect to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service can be found on our website: www.st-clair.net

Feedback regarding the way the St. Clair Catholic District School Board provides services to people with disabilities can be made verbally, by email or in writing directed to Supervisor – Communications and Community Relations, at the Catholic Education Centre, 420 Creek Street, Wallaceburg, ON, N8A 4C4.

Tel: 519-627-6762 Ext. 243 or
Toll Free: 1-866-336-6139 or feedback@st-clair.net

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USE OF SUPPORT PERSON BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC	PROCEDURE
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:

The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities, such service to incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of support persons.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that staff receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing board services accompanied by a support person.
- 1.2 Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the Superintendent, Principal or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure, A sample of a consent document is provided below in Appendix A.
- 1.3 The parent/guardian must provide documented consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person.
- 1.4 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- 1.5 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/board office by the Principal or Superintendent.
- 1.6 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Board and/or school premises with his or her support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures. This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or board offices where the public does not have access.

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- 2.2 Where a support person attends a school, family of schools or board-organized event at school or Board facilities for which a fee is charged, such fee will be waived for the support person who accompanies an individual with a disability who has paid a fee for attendance.
- 2.3 The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

(NOTE: This would be a highly rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill the Board's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.

It is further noted that people with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health and safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health and safety before you can require one – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means. Any considerations on protecting health or safety should be based on specific factors and not on assumptions. Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean they're not capable of meeting health or safety requirements.

3.0 Additional Information

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

4.0 Definitions

Disability - any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes: diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
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d) a mental disorder,
e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; ("handicap").

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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. A support person is chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services and could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CONSENT FORM

I, (parent/guardian) consent to the sharing of confidential information by (name of principal/teacher/other staff member) related to my child/ward (name) in the presence of my support person (name).

My support person (name) consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.

Affirmation of consent:

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Parent/Guardian) _____

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between (school staff) and (parent/guardian) for whom I am a support person.

Support Person

Signature _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Support Person) _____

Signature of Witness –

Principal/Staff Member _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Staff Person)

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USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS BY GENERAL PUBLIC	PROCEDURE
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:

The Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities, such service to incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of service animals.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal
- 1.2 Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the school or board staff member may ask the person using the service animal for a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the animal is needed because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the animal is needed or how it is used.
- 1.3 Where the person using the service animal regularly attends at the school or board facility, the principal or manager may request to keep a copy of the letter described in section 1.2 on file but only as long as required by the circumstances. Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to bring a letter with them on occasions when they visit the premises. The principal or manager shall preserve the confidentiality of the letter and information contained in the letter, and shall not use or disclose the letter or information except as provided for in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, cM56, or as otherwise required by law.

2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal will be welcomed on Board and/or school premises with his or her service animal and will be accompanied by the service animal while on the premises. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures. This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or board offices where the public does not have access.
- 2.2 This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service animal. Access to classrooms for service animals used by students and staff is covered under separate procedures.

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- 2.3 A service animal can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the *Food Safety and Quality Act*. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g. school cafeteria or lunchroom).
- 2.4 Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service animal, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. It is the Board's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g. creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.
- 2.5 A service animal can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario *Dog Owners' Liability Act* which places restrictions on pit bull terriers.
- 2.6 In the rare instance where a service animal must be excluded, the Board must make every effort to put alternative arrangements in place to provide the services required by the person with a disability. This could involve leaving the animal in a secure area where it is permitted by law and discussing with the person how best to serve them, e.g., a person with a vision disability might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide them.

3.0 Additional Information

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.
- 3.2 The *Health Protection and Promotion Act* can be viewed at the following link: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h07_e.htm
- 3.3 The *Food Safety and Quality Act* can be viewed at the following link: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_01f20_e.htm
- 3.4 The Ontario *Dog Owners' Liability Act* can be viewed at the following link: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90d16_e.htm
- 3.5 The *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* can be viewed at the following link: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90m56_e.htm

4.0 Definitions

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- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
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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.

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NOTIFICATION OF DISRUPTION OF SERVICE	PROCEDURE
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:

When services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice will be posted at the site and on the Board’s website.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals, Managers and/or the Supervisor – Communications and Community Relations will ensure that the users of board and school services are notified when there is a disruption in services that may have an impact on access to services by people with disabilities.

2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at or in the school or at or in board facilities. Other options that may be used include: posting on the board and/or school website; through direct communication with users of the services in accordance with school practices.
- 2.2 Notice will be provided in multiple formats where feasible and reasonable to do so.
- 2.3 If the disruption is planned, notice should be provided in advance of the disruption. If the notice is unplanned, notice should be provided as soon as possible after the disruption has been identified.
- 2.4 The notice of disruption of service must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available. Sample notices are provided in Appendix A.
- 2.5 Generally, disruptions to all of the Board’s services, such as during a major storm or power outage, do not require this special notice. However, if the disruption has a significant impact on people with disabilities, a notice of the disruption should be provided, where reasonably possible.

3.0 Additional Information

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE NOTICES

Sample 1 – Access to School Building

To: Parents, Guardians and Community Users of our School

Maintenance work will make the main door of the school and the access ramp inaccessible from May 1 to May 8. A temporary ramp has been set up that gives access to the door at the east of the school building. We regret this inconvenience. If you have questions or concerns, please contact _____ at [phone number].

Thank you.

Principal

Sample 2 – Accessible Washroom

To: Visitors to the Education Centre

Our accessible washroom is out of service due to a broken pipe. Repairs are underway and the washroom is expected to be usable again by tomorrow. In the interim, we have made arrangements for our visitors to use the accessible washroom at 123 Main Street, which is located next door to our premises. We apologize for this inconvenience.

Thank you.

Manager – Facility Services

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MONITORING AND FEEDBACK ON ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE	PROCEDURE
EFFECTIVE: 2010 01 01 / 2015 04 28	

Applicable Reference from Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy:

The Board will monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy through a process for receiving and responding to feedback. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and will allow people with disabilities to provide feedback using a number of methods.

The Board will create a feedback process that will review the implementation of this policy with the Board’s various constituency groups. Examples include but are not limited to Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Associations, Unions, citizens’ groups. Methods would include electronic means such as websites. Consultation with the Associations and Unions is as **providers** of accessible customer service.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1.0 Responsibility

- 1.1 The Director of Education and/or designates will implement a process for Feedback on Accessible Customer Service that has the following components:
 - a) Information on the Board and school websites inviting users of Board services to provide feedback on their experience with or concerns about access to services for people with disabilities. A sample feedback notice is provided in Appendix A.
 - b) Printed information available through school offices and public offices of the Board to invite people with disabilities to provide feedback on their experience with or concerns about accessibility of services. Consideration should be given to providing information in alternate formats.
 - c) Information on how the Board will respond to feedback.
- 1.2 The Director of Education and/or designates will create a process for reviewing implementation of the policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service that includes consultation with various constituency groups including Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Associations, Unions, citizens’ groups.
- 1.3 The Supervisor – Communications and Community Relations is responsible for receiving and responding to all feedback submitted.
- 1.4 The senior administrator responsible for Human Resource Services is responsible for soliciting and receiving feedback from Association and Union representatives as providers of accessible customer service through their respective joint liaison committees.

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- 1.5 To ensure ongoing efficient and effective adherence to the Board's policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, the Board, its school-based administrators and its managers including those representing the Board in multi-board consortia will take into account the impact on people with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.

2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 A range of methods for soliciting feedback will be employed to ensure optimum access to the feedback process by people with disabilities. These methods could include e-mail, verbal input or written submission.

3.0 Additional Information

- 3.1 The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

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APPENDIX A

FEEDBACK NOTICE

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to ensuring that its services meet optimum standards of accessibility for people with disabilities using the facilities and services of the Board. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the St. Clair Catholic District School Board provides services to people with disabilities can be made verbally, by email or in writing directed to the Supervisor – Communications and Community Relations.

Response to your feedback will be provided by direct response to the individual.