



Section N:

Accessibility of School Buildings

We value your feedback! Please click this [feedback link](#) to leave your comments on the Special Education Plan. All feedback must be received by February 28, 2027.

Purpose of the Standard

To provide the ministry with further details of the board's multi-year plan, which was previously submitted to the Ministry of Education for improving accessibility for students with physical and sensory disabilities, and to provide the public with this information

The TDSB is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment which actively promotes and supports human rights and accessibility for persons with disabilities. We are committed to actively removing barriers, whether visible or invisible, so that all members of our community can fully participate in TDSB activities.

The TDSB has a variety of [resources](#) and [policies and procedures](#) in place for staff, students and community members that ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The TDSB's [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) outlines how the Board is ensuring compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians and Disabilities Act and moving towards a more inclusive environment.

The TDSB's Major Capital and Renewal Projects Status Update for improving accessibility to its school buildings, grounds, and administration offices, including resources dedicated to providing barrier-free access, is publicly posted. Summaries of the Board's progress in implementing the capital expenditure plan are outlined in the semi-annual capital projects status update reports. The latest report can be found on the [Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee Post-Meeting Agenda](#).

The TDSB supports accessibility through:

- [Customer Service](#)
- [Information and Communications](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Design of Public Spaces](#)



School Buildings

While all new TDSB schools are designed to meet or exceed current accessibility standards, most of our older schools were not built with accessibility in mind.

Currently, the TDSB has 160 buildings deemed accessible based on having a barrier-free path of travel through the building.

New Schools and Additions

All new schools and additions must meet the accessibility requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The Ministry provides the funding to meet these requirements and, as a result, all new TDSB schools and additions are accessible.

Upgrading Existing Schools

There are several challenges when it comes to making existing schools accessible:

- The amount of funding needed,
- The type of funding the TDSB receives,
- Constraints of existing infrastructure in older buildings

The first challenge is the magnitude of funds needed. An investment of at least \$1 billion would be required to make all existing schools accessible. The second challenge is the nature of the funding that the TDSB receives from the Ministry of Education.

The TDSB receives School Condition Improvement (SCI) funding to address urgent and high priorities in the Board's \$4 billion repair backlog. Investing this money can help improve accessibility. For example, replacing deteriorated parking lots provides opportunities to increase the number and location of accessible parking spaces, and allow for barrier free paths of travel to school buildings.

But there are significant limitations in what can be achieved with SCI. If a space or a building component is not listed in the Repair Backlog, then it is not eligible for SCI funding. For example, if a ramp or elevator does not currently exist, even though they may be needed, school boards cannot use SCI to install them.

Boards may use School Renewal Allocation (SRA) funding to add new accessibility features such as elevators and ramps. TDSB receives between \$45 and \$47 million per year in SRA funding however this funding is needed to undertake health and safety, preventative maintenance, regulatory compliance and local school priority work. SRA does not provide sufficient funding to undertake major accessibility work from year to year.



To address the funding challenge, the TDSB has requested permission from the Ministry of Education to use \$10 million annually from Proceeds of Disposition (POD), which is the money generated from the sale of surplus school properties. Permission to use POD would enable the TDSB to make strategic investments to improve accessibility. To date, the Ministry has approved limited use of POD for a few specific accessibility projects.

On August 25, 2025, the Ministry of Education issued Memo 2025: B03, announcing a total allocation of \$275 million to school boards across the province to support accessibility improvements in schools. As part of this funding, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) received an allocation of \$47,924,668. The funding may be used for priority accessibility upgrades in schools built prior to 2015 including:

- Visual Fire Alarms
- Accessible Washrooms (grab bars, stalls, automatic faucets) and Universal Washrooms
- Interior Barrier Free Path of Travel (including elevators, lifts, ramps, door entrances, removal of transitional barriers and door operators);
- Exterior Barrier Free Path of Travel (including ramps, handrails, door entrances and operators); and
- Accessible Parking

Eligible costs are from May 15, 2025 to August 31, 2026.

After internal consultation with various key departments, the TDSB approach is to use the funding to create accessible education pathways within catchment areas, and addressing “somewhat accessible” schools within existing education pathways, to make those schools accessible. The TDSB will require Ministry approval to be able to use POD funding to complete these projects as projects will extend beyond the August 31, 2026 funding deadline.

Prioritizing Investments: Creating Accessible K-12 Pathways at the Catchment Level

The Board has established a strategy to use the Ministry Accessibility Funding, together with Board Proceeds of Disposition (POD), to expand accessible learning pathways. A Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12) accessible pathway allows students to attend school from kindergarten through Grade 12 with the same cohort of peers. While the available funding will not create an accessible pathway for every secondary school catchment, it represents a significant step forward. Through this investment, the Board will increase the number of fully accessible K–12 pathways from 5 to 32 of the Board’s 78 secondary school catchments.



Next Steps

In September 2025, the Board submitted a comprehensive plan to the Ministry of Education outlining the proposed use of accessibility funding. The plan is centered in the two strategic priorities:

- Addressing gaps in accessibility pathways across the system through 19 projects, with an estimated total cost of \$30 million.
- Upgrading schools currently classified as “somewhat accessible” to achieve full accessibility, resulting in 23 projects with an estimated cost of \$40 million.

In total, 42 accessibility projects are proposed, with an overall estimated cost of \$70 million. The Board intends to apply approximately \$48 million in Ministry funding toward these initiatives, with the remaining balance to be funded through Board resources, including proceeds from dispositions.

Designated Accessible Elementary and Secondary School Sites

The TDSB has selected schools throughout the district that are deemed “Designated Sites.” These sites are accessible for students with physical disabilities who require barrier-free access to a school environment to meet their mobility and safety needs. Students may be placed at a designated site once a current medical and TDSB Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy (OT/PT) assessment report outlining needs is submitted to the school principal. The school principal will collaborate with the Family of Schools Superintendent and the Special Education and Inclusion team to respond to the requested needs in a timely manner.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Advisory Committee

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Advisory Committee is a group of staff from a wide range of departments who advise and provide recommendations to the Accessibility Coordinator or other TDSB departments on matters related to accessibility for people with disabilities. The committee is guided by the [TDSB's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) and their role is to help promote inclusive and accessible policies, programs and services, and to develop greater awareness and understanding of accessibility issues, policies, programs and services are inclusive and accessible to all members of the TDSB community, and to identify and address any barriers to accessibility that may exist. This includes reviewing and providing feedback on accessibility standards, developing accessibility plans, and promoting awareness and understanding of accessibility issues.



Accessibility Coordinator

The Board has an Accessibility Coordinator who has the responsibility to address consistency and integration of practices across the TDSB and to provide leadership in all matters related to implementation and compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and related regulations. Currently reporting to the Associate Director of Organizational Transformation and Accountability, the Accessibility Coordinator provides system leadership to ensure awareness of and compliance with AODA legislation, Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Providing subject matter expertise, the Accessibility Coordinator also acts as a system advocate for all aspects related to AODA. Additional responsibilities include, but are not limited to, research and analysis of best practices in accessibility standards, developing, reviewing and updating policies and procedures in accordance with AODA legislation and best practices, as well as fostering equity and inclusion in the development and implementation of programs and services.

Reports

- Information on accessibility and the TDSB built environment, which includes interior and exterior features of schools, is outlined in the report called [“Making School Buildings and Sites More Accessible”](#).
- Accessibility profiles of individual schools are also available on the left hand sidebar of school homepages, available on the [Find Your School website](#)
- [TDSB's AODA Annual Status Report - 2022-2024](#) is available on [Accessibility at the TDSB](#) website.
- 2021 [Accessibility Compliance Report - Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility](#)
- A web page has been set up on the TDSB public website that identifies TDSB's top capital priorities. The business cases describing each capital priority are also included on the [Capital Priorities site](#)