

Greater Essex District School Board

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GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ODA) FOR THE YEAR SEPTEMBER 2025 TO AUGUST 2026

The Ontarians With Disabilities Act 2001 requires that all public organizations such as municipalities, school boards, hospitals, universities, and colleges to prepare a plan that identifies measures the organization has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities and consult with persons with disabilities and others in preparing the plan.

The Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) empowers Regulation 191/11 “Integrated Accessibility Standards” that provides direction for the following areas:

1. Information and Communication Standards
2. Employment Standards
3. Transportation Standards
4. Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)
5. Customer Service Standards

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) must publish this plan by September 30th of each year in accordance with the Ontarians With Disabilities Act. Every year the Ontarians With Disabilities Act Committee must update the plan for the next year.

The ODA Committee would like to provide an on-going opportunity for all staff, parents and community partners of the Greater Essex County District School Board to communicate accessibility concerns to the School Board. To share your suggestion and input, please use the following link:

ODACommittee@publicboard.ca

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Plan In Accordance with Ontarians With Disabilities Act (ODA)
for the year September 2025 to August 2026

1 - List of Barriers, objectives, and responsibilities

Barrier	Objective	Means to Prevent/Remove	Performance Criteria	Resources	Time Line	Responsibility
Updating Building Construction Standards as deemed necessary or when built into funded projects	To ensure that older buildings where feasible are updated with accessible materials	As items are requested for repair or replacement, new and more accessible items are installed (e.g. door handles)	Buildings will be updated as required or students will be accommodated at the closest site that is accessible	Facility Services	2025/26 School Year projects chosen on an "as needed basis" with students as the priority	Facility Services, Special Education Department, Information Technology Services, School Principal
Accessible Washrooms	To provide access and functionality to washrooms	Provide appropriate lifts, sinks, toilets and door operators	Meets the needs as necessary	Appropriate materials required to modify the washrooms	2025/26 School Year projects chosen on an "as needed basis" with students as the priority	Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal
Accommodations for the Visually Impaired as deemed appropriate	Submit request to the Superintendent of Special Education for students and to the HR Wellness Officer for staff	Provide appropriate accommodations	Meets the needs as necessary	As deemed appropriate	2025/26 School Year projects chosen on an "as needed basis" with students and staff as the priority	Facility Services, Special Education Department, Information Technology Services, School Principal, Human Resources Department (for staff)
Automatic Doors – graduated implementation	To provide access to schools for people with disabilities	Install automatic doors, openers and frames as needs are identified	People with disabilities will have access to schools	Doors, openers, ramps, rails and curb-cuts	2025/26 School Year projects chosen on an "as needed basis" with students as the priority	Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal

The ODA Committee has reviewed the ODA Plan for the 2025/26 school year.

In addition to this year's plan, the Committee will be focusing on the following items as the GECDSB strives to identify, address, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

- The ODA Committee will continue to collect information from the various stakeholders in order to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- The ODA Accessibility link on the GECDSB website will be updated yearly to indicate the progress being made by the School Board.
- The ODA Committee will provide a link on the GECDSB website inviting suggestions and input for barrier identification and reduction.

If you wish to provide suggestions and input to the ODA Committee, please click on the given link to send us your message via email. These messages will be presented to the ODA Committee for consideration. For this link, please see page 1 of this report.

2 - Renovations completed at elementary and secondary schools during 2024/2025 school year:

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Renovations completed during 2024/2025 school year</u>
Massey SS	Replacement / modification of 12 interior hallway doors to create a barrier-free path of travel. Replacement of 7 exterior doors / vestibules to meet barrier-free path of travel requirement.
Forest Glade PS	Washroom upgrades which include barrier-free upgrades.
Queen Elizabeth PS	New barrier-free washroom.
David Suzuki PS	New barrier-free washroom.
General Brock	New barrier-free washroom.
Mount Carmel Blytheswood PS	Installation of a new auto operator to create a barrier-free entrance.
Sandwich West PS	Parking lot upgrades which include additional barrier-free parking, and barrier-free path of travel.

3 - Renovations planned at elementary and secondary schools for completion during the 2025/2026 school year:

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Renovations planned during 2025/2026 school year</u>
Margaret D. Bennie PS	Washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 4 exterior

doors and addition of 1 automatic door operator to meet barrier-free path of travel.

Harrow PS New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades.

PASS (formerly Alicia Mason) New barrier-free ramp at main entrance.

Information & Communication:

During the 2021-2022 school year, Communications Team & ITS team migrated board and school websites to a new platform to meet AODA requirements. The AODA scanning tool is used on new sites to ensure compliance with materials included on board and school websites.

Employment Standards:

During the 2022-23 school year, the Board undertook an Employment Systems Review to create a more diverse workforce by evaluating formal and informal policies and practices related to the recruitment, hiring and selection processes. A plan to adopt recommendations is currently being implemented.