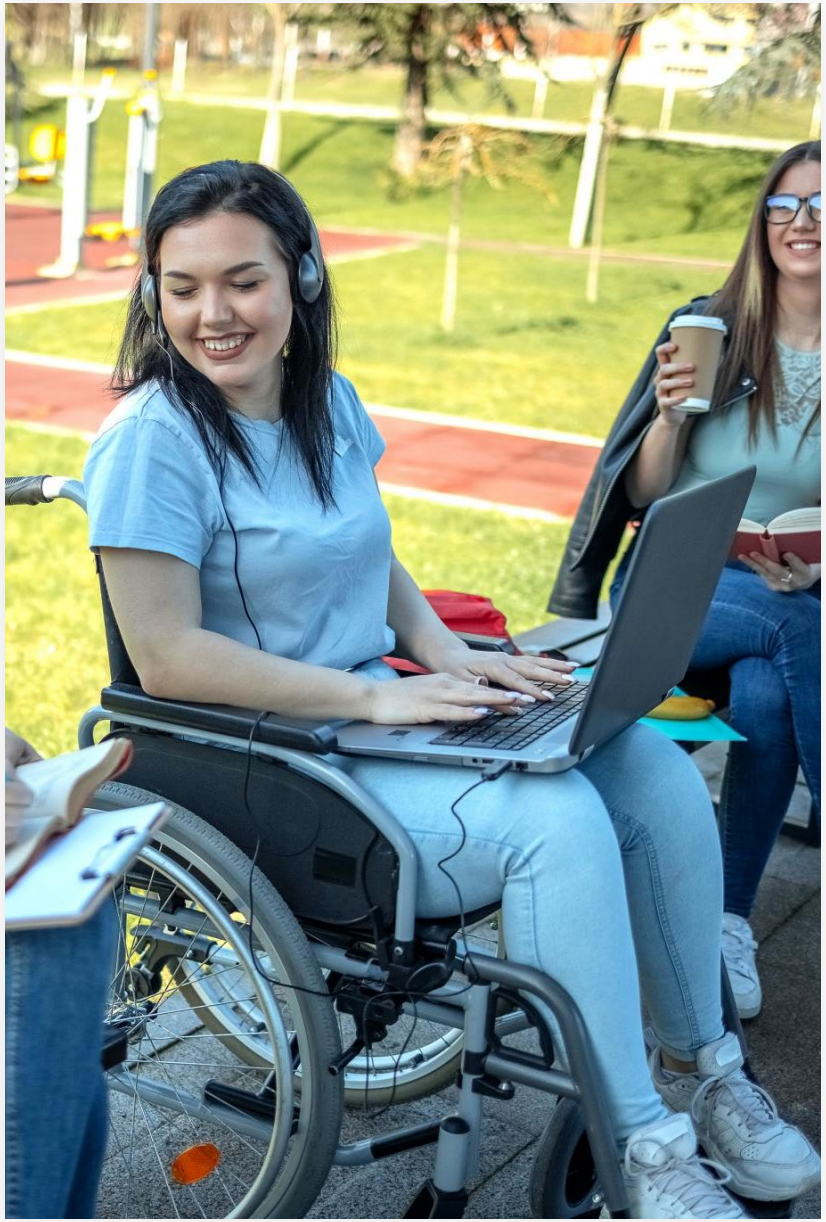
SUMMARY OF APPROVED BARRIER GRANTS 2025-2026

Overview of funding allocations and projects secured

INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW OF APPROVED MINISTRY PROJECTS

Project Goals and Accessibility

Projects focus on enhancing accessibility and promoting inclusive education for students with diverse learning needs.

Collaborative Partnerships

Initiatives are developed in collaboration with educational institutions, community groups, and specialized foundations.

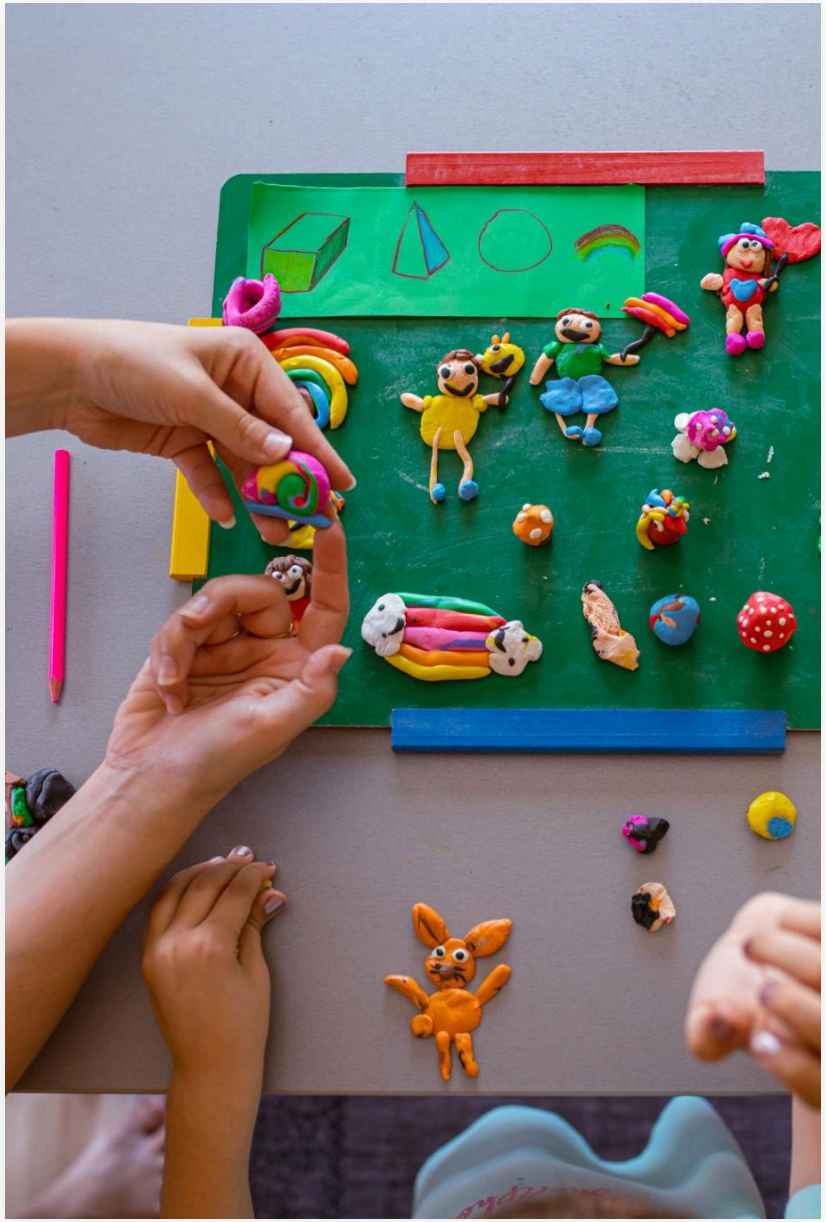
Funding and Commitment

Allocated funding demonstrates a strong commitment to improving educational outcomes and fostering inclusivity.

Targeted Support and Impact

Projects address challenges like literacy support, accessibility and professional development, aiming for meaningful impact.

PROJECT SUMMARIES



ADAPTED LITERACY KITS

INCLUSIVE LITERACY THROUGH SWITCH-ADAPTED KITS FOR STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES.

Inclusive Literacy Kits

Creation of 30 specialized kits to enhance book accessibility using switch technology and tactile interaction for diverse learners.

Collaborative Project

JMCC, JMCC School Authority, and Makers Making Change collaborate to develop and implement the literacy kits.

Educational Impact

Board-wide access to kits improves engagement and accessibility for students with physical disabilities.

Funding and Staffing

Project funded with $46,300 and releases 40 staff members x 1 day, including special education and speech-language professionals.



EMPOWERING TRANSITIONS

BUILDING SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS FOR GRADE 7–8 STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES.

Program Purpose

Supports Grade 7–8 students with Learning Disabilities through the RARC STEPS Program at 13 pilot sites. Builds student self-awareness and advocacy for high school transition.

Collaborative Partners

Key partners include RARC (Regional Assessment and Resource Centre - Queen's University), LDAWE, and School Mental Health Ontario ensuring comprehensive program delivery.

Program Impact

The program fosters student confidence and self-advocacy, guiding smoother transitions to high school.

Funding and Implementation

Funded with $9,240, involving release time for Learning Support Teachers (12 LSTs x 1 day, 12 LSTs x 0.5 day x 5 weeks)

Designated Schools

Piloted in 13 sites, including 12 individual elementary schools and one Family of Schools model that includes three elementary schools and their associated feeder high school (North Star Family of Schools).



EMPOWERING TRANSITIONS

BOARD-WIDE EVENT FOR STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND EDUCATORS TO PREPARE FOR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION.

Purpose and Audience

Board-wide event for students, caregivers, and educators focused on collaboration, IEP understanding, and emotional readiness.

Event Support and Funding

Supported by RARC, LDAWE, and Mental Health Ontario with funding of $37,537.50 for educator participation.

Educational Impact

Improves transition planning and caregiver readiness across the system.

Funding and Implementation

Project funded with $37, 537.50 with release time for 60 educators for 1 day

Date of Event

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at the Ciociaro Club



ANTI-ABLEISM PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

System-wide Professional Learning

System wide professional learning addressing ableism and strengthening inclusive practices through PD, research and student leadership events. Includes PSSP and consultants in a train-the-trainer model.

Collaborative Partnerships

Key partners include the Rick Hansen Foundation, Upper Grand DSB, Western University and University of Windsor APEX Lab

Student Engagement Events

Events like All-Star Baseball Spring and APEX collaborations encourage meaningful conversations on inclusion.

Funding and Impact

Project funded with $147, 400. Release time to be determined based on system PD. The project enhances staff capacity, raises disability awareness, and fosters an inclusive culture across schools.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & TRANSIT ACCESS

ENHANCING INDEPENDENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNERS.

Community-Based Learning

Partnerships with Transit Windsor and Community Living Windsor provide real-life learning through community rotations and job skills training.

Enhancing Student Independence

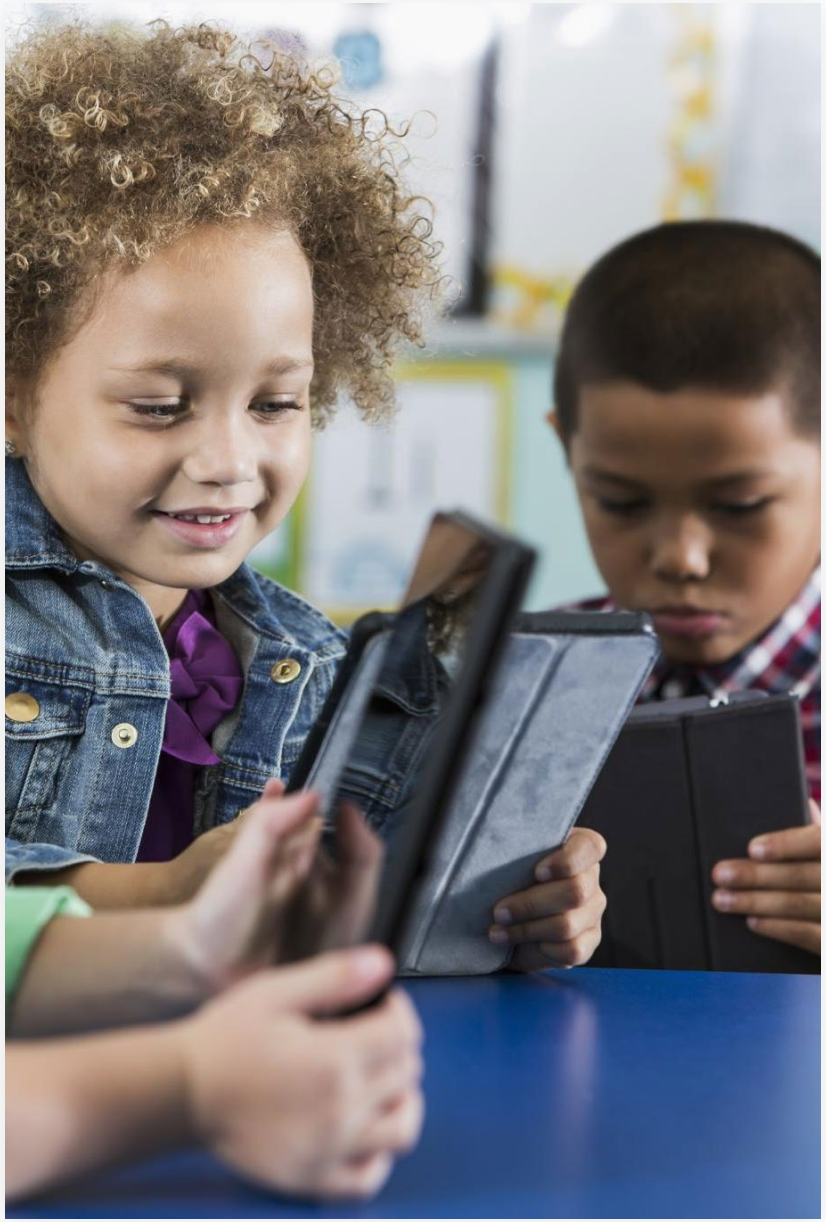
Providing bus passes and transit training fosters students' mobility, autonomy, and confidence in navigating public transportation. Hands-on experiences build essential life and job skills, preparing students for post-secondary life and employment success.

Collaborative Partnerships

Key partners include Community Living Windsor and Transit Windsor

Funding and Impact

Project funded with $114,424. Release time for 10 teachers x 1 day/week x 8 weeks. Increases student independence, mobility, and employability through community learning.



LITERACY PILOT 2026 (GRADES 4–8)

STRUCTURED LITERACY COACHING FOR GRADES 4-8 (IN-CLASS SUPPORTS)

Target Student Group

Targets students in Grades 4–8 facing persistent decoding and fluency challenges through an in-class coaching model led by a Literacy Consultant. Emphasizes structured literacy, student identity, and assistive technology integration.

Collaborative Partnerships

Key partnerships include LDAWE and Dr. Todd Cunningham

Funding and Resources

Total funding of $212,603.60 includes: Consultant $144,300, Educator release $16,650 (50 days) – Principal release $7,326 (22 × 1 day) – PD – Dr. Cunningham $15,000

Educational Impact

Strengthens literacy outcomes for struggling readers and builds teacher capacity through job-embedded coaching.

Designated Schools

Anderdon, David Maxwell, Legacy Oak, MD Bennie, Southwood



INCLUSIVE FUTURES

HARNESSING BRAIN COMPUTER INTERFACE TECHNOLOGY FOR AUTONOMY AND ACCESSIBILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Ongoing BCI Collaboration

The project continues collaboration with academic partners to advance BCI technology.

Collaborative Partnership

Key Partners include Holland Bloorview Rehabilitation Hospital and JMCC

Funding and Impact

Funded with $58, 160. Includes purchase of BCI equipment for 2 students, switch adaption costs, release time for training.

BCI project aims to enhance accessibility and communication for students with complex needs. Commitment to integrating cutting-edge technologies in special education settings. The project is forward-looking, anticipating more development and innovation in BCI research.



BREAKING BARRIERS

SYSTEM-WIDE TRAINING ON ACCEPT. IDENTIFY. MOVE (AIM) BEHAVIOUR ANALYTIC SELF-REGULATION CURRICULUM

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

This initiative seeks funding to implement comprehensive, board-wide professional development focused on teaching Child and Youth Workers across the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) to implement Accept. Identify. Move (AIM, Dixon & Paliliunas, 2018) with learners with special education needs.

Funding and Impact

Funded with $185, 000. Includes one year of Behaviour Analyst oversight and program design, release time, material costs and development of train the trainer model.

AIM Program aims to address behavioral challenges and promote positive student behavior. The program supports student well-being through evidence-based, multidisciplinary strategies.



QUESTIONS?