

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education  
Supervisory Officers  
Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities

**FROM:** Barry Finlay  
Director  
Special Education Policy and Programs Branch

**DATE:** September 20, 2010

**RE:** The Canadian Hearing Society  
Barrier Free Education Initiatives

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I am writing to update you on the Barrier Free Education Initiatives, funded by the Ministry of Education and delivered to school boards by the Canadian Hearing Society (CHS).

The Barrier-Free Education Initiatives Project is intended to provide professional learning opportunities to educators and support staff in building a classroom environment that best supports the needs of students who are Deaf and/or hard of hearing. Since the beginning of this project (October 2008), fifty two school boards have benefited from participation in this project. This year, your Board also has the opportunity to reap those benefits.

There are two services available and delivered at no cost to the school boards as follows:

- Professional Development Workshop (one day):  
The Professional Development component of this initiative is specifically designed to provide accessibility information to school and school board decision-makers who are involved in the long-term planning toward Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards. The Professional Development Workshops will focus on:
  - AODA standards for school's built environments;
  - The Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy and Guidelines on the *Duty to Accommodate* for persons with disabilities;
  - Accessible education and the *Duty to Accommodate* Students with Disabilities; and
  - Audism and Ablesim and how to remove barriers for all students but more specifically for students who are Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.
  
- Accessibility Review (half day):  
Accessibility Review Consultants will tour schools and review the accessibility features in place to respond to the needs of Deaf and hard of hearing students. It is expected that these consultants will be accompanied by an educator from the school or school board who is knowledgeable about the Deaf and hard of hearing students as well as equipment, technology, and other accommodations at that site.

Upon completion, results of the review will be shared with each participating board. The ministry anticipates receiving a comprehensive report for each participating school that will contain analysis and recommendations on the following:

- Description and recommendations of the build environment;
- Identification of safety issues and recommendations on emergency protocols;
- Description and recommendations on communication devices;
- Description and recommendations on education and training;
- Language and communication supports for Deaf students; and
- General recommendations for enhancing accessibility for Deaf and hard of hearing students.

Boards have a unique opportunity to partner with CHS to meet the needs of students who are Deaf and/or hard of hearing. For those school boards that have not yet participated, I once again encourage you to take full advantage of this opportunity while it is still available. CHS will come directly to your board and deliver the workshop, on a Professional Development day, customized to fit your board's specific needs. CHS will arrange workshops to accommodate your board's schedule from October 2010 to May 2011. If you wish to participate in the already scheduled Fall 2010 workshops, please visit the CHS website for the Workshop Registration form and instructions at: <http://www.chs.ca/en/barrier-free-education.html>

Upon receipt of your request to participate, the project manager, Dr. Barbara O'Dea, will be in touch with you to schedule a Professional Development Day or a School Accessibility Review visit. You may also contact CHS for further information at:

The Canadian Hearing Society  
Gary Malkowski  
Special Advisor to the President, Public Affairs  
TTY: 416-928-2527  
[gmalkowski@chs.ca](mailto:gmalkowski@chs.ca)

The Canadian Hearing Society  
Barbara O'Dea  
Project Manager  
416-928-2500 Ext. 301  
Cell: 647-216-7906  
[BODea@chs.ca](mailto:BODea@chs.ca)

The Regional Office Special Education Leads are also aware of these initiatives and would be happy to provide you with further information.

I thank you again for your support of this project. Your participation will ensure that we continue to provide barrier-free education to all students attending Ontario's publicly funded schools and further support our commitment to high quality professional learning for teachers, administrators and support staff.

Sincerely,

***Original signed by***

Barry Finlay

Attachment: Barrier-Free Education Initiatives Participants (October 2008 to present)

cc: Gary Malkowski – The Canadian Hearing Society  
Kit Rankin, Director, Field Services Branch

## **BARRIER-FREE EDUCATION INITIATIVE PARTICIPANTS**

October 2008 to Date

	Name of School/Board	PD-Day	Accessibility Review
1	Algoma DCB	√	√
2	Algonquin and Lakeshore CDSB	√	√
3	Avon Maitland DSB	√	√
4	Bluewater DSB	√	√
5	Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB	√	√
6	Bruce-Grey CDSB	√	
7	CSD du Grand Nord de l'Ontario	√	
8	CSD du Nord-Est de l'Ontario	√	
9	CSDEC du Sud-Ouest	√	
10	DSB of Niagara	√	
11	DSB Ontario North East	√	√
12	Dufferin-Peel CDSB	√	
13	Durham Catholic DSB	√	
14	Durham DSB	√	√
15	Greater Essex County DSB	√	
16	Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB	√	√
17	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	√	
18	Hastings and Prince Edward DSB	√	
19	Huron Perth CDSB	√	√
20	Huron-Superior CDSB	√	
21	Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB	√	
22	Keewatin-Patricia DSB	√	
23	Kenora CDSB	√	
24	Lakehead DSB	√	√
25	Lambton Kent DSB	√	√
26	Limestone DSB	√	√
27	London DCSB	√	
28	Moose Factory Island DSB	√	√
29	Moosenee DSB	√	√
30	Near North DSB	√	
31	Niagara CDSB	√	√
32	Nipissing-Parry Sound CDSB	√	
33	Ottawa-Carleton DSB	√	√
34	Ottawa CSB	√	
35	Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington CDSB	√	√
36	Peel DSB	√	
37	Rainbow DSB	√	
38	Rainy River DSB	√	
39	Renfrew County DSB	√	√
40	Simcoe County DSB	√	√
41	Simcoe Muskoka CDSB	√	√
42	St Clair CDSB	√	√
43	Sudbury CDSB	√	√
44	Toronto DSB	√	√ (2)
45	Toronto CDSB	√	
46	Trillium Lakelands DSB	√	√
47	Upper Canada DSB	√	√
48	Upper Grand DSB	√	√
49	Waterloo CDSB	√	
50	Waterloo Region DSB	√	√
51	Wellington CDSB	√	√
52	York Region DSB	√	√ (2)