



An EnAbling Change Partnership Project with the Government of Ontario

About Accessful

Reimagining student success through accessibility is the goal of a new initiative being lead by OSSTF and its members in District 19 funded by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

Accessful is an initiative to dramatically improve employment for youth with disabilities, to diversify the workforce and to grow a stronger culture of acceptance within the province, which exemplifies the goals of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Five key audiences are invited to participate: students (identified through IPRC); education support workers and teachers; parents; employers; and social agencies—with the goal of strengthening employability skills and accessing employment opportunities for students in Gr 10 through 12 with learning, physical, and mental health disabilities.

Multi-day conferences, called Symposia, will be held for each of the key Accessful stakeholder groups using Open Space Technology (OST), a method for organizing and running multi-day conferences where participants focus on the important task of identifying 'Barriers to Employment for Youth with Disabilities.'

The project gets underway in November 2018. A website has been developed to promote the activities in the Peel District School Board area. In addition to online resources and in-school programming, organizers will also produce three videos to document the before, during and after stages of the project's progress.

PDSB Participating Schools

Accessful is working with selected students in grades 10-12 from twelve schools. Resources generated from the pilot project will be available for use by all secondary schools through the online content.

School Group 1

Chinguacousy SS
Louise Arbour SS
Sandalwood SS
Castlebrooke SS

School Group 2

Brampton Centennial SS
David Suzuki SS
John Fraser SS
Applewood School

School Group 3

Applewood Heights SS
T.L. Kennedy SS
Rick Hansen SS
West Credit SS



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Who is Accessful?

The Accessful project will be managed by Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) coordinated by Guelph-based communications specialist, Richard Clewes of Clique Communications. In 2012, Richard created an accessibility-awareness site called TheTeachAbleProject.org.

The future of Accessful

The vision for this initiative is to expand from a board-wide pilot project in Peel District School Board to all school boards in Ontario. OSSTF members have the professional influence to empower youth, whose successes will reduce stigma and effect attitudinal and behavioral changes in the workplace.

A few facts

The unemployment rate for youth with disabilities in Ontario was reported to be about 30% in 2012. This is almost 2x higher than that of youth without disabilities. Project Accessful will address this gap in the following ways:

- In-school programming will build strong employability skills before graduation.
- Improve high school co-op experiences for youth with disabilities by expanding the number of employment opportunities and developing stronger relationships with future employers.
- Enable employers to tap into the available workforce of talented youth with disabilities.
- Reduce stigma and myths around hiring youth with disabilities.

Research indicates that having one paid job in high school is the number one predictor of future employment for people with disabilities.*

* Source: *Predictors of Postschool Employment Outcomes for Young Adults With Severe Disabilities*. Journal of Disability Policy Studies. Hammill Institute on Disabilities. University of Wisconsin-Madison.