



The
Teach**Able**
Project

Introduction

“Schools Lead the Way”
Message to Ontario
School Boards,
Spring 2012

Video Transcript

[narrator] Schools lead the way in character education, equity and inclusion, safe and caring environments which are important supports for student achievement. Accessibility is also a vital part of this student success continuum.

That is why we have involved board staff, students and community, in a transformative initiative to make Ontario fully accessible by 2025.

This video is a sneak peak of The TeachAble Project website. The project is a remarkable collaboration of Ontario's four school systems, teacher federations, program superintendents, students and other community members.

In the same way that OESC provided resources for AODA Customer Service in 2009, TheTeachAbleProject.org will be the go-to resource for classrooms, staff and boards, as we keep pace with Ontario's Accessibility Legislation.

Starting September 2012, The TeachAble Project site will offer accessibility training for classroom staff and provide ongoing support.

[Jennifer Lisowski] We've been working on creating lesson plans for classroom teachers, uh, that address specifically, uh, the issue of accessibility.

[Marguerite Campbell] The bottom line to this, and, part of the whole thing that I got involved with the project, is that we need to normalize it. If we don't start with the students in the classroom, um, it's not going to go anywhere.

[Renée Zarebski] So how can we, um, support teachers in teaching the information they need to teach, but also include underlying beliefs and, um, concepts about accessibility in a natural way.

[Deb Thomas] And for the teachers, I think we need to give them the tools that help them feel comfortable more quickly.

[Sonya White] We know we have to, um, differentiate our instruction. We know we have to use our best teaching practices, and maximize the technology that is available to us.

[Deb Thomas] So, that may be classroom lessons, uh, resources online, uh, connections to community sources through web links.

[Melanie Tait] Accessibility awareness is not simply for the teachers who are working with special needs students. It's for everybody - it's for every child.

[Wayne Hobbs] Now, those children will be adults and, uh, they will have, um, a completely different appreciation and understanding of some of these barriers.

[Gail Anderson] We're very proud that we have this wonderful site. It's in English and French. It will provide a wealth of resources for teachers right across the province in both languages. So it's a collaboration across ministries, with advice from the Ministry of Education and many others involved in accessibility, breaking down barriers, and, uh, and education.

[narrator] Here's how we've organized TheTeachAbleProject.org for you. There are four main hubs.

"Introduction" offers a collegial greeting from the Lieutenant-Governor, The Honourable David Onley. His Honour also offers a personal and inspiring view on how accessibility changes lives.

[David Onley] My high school principal, uh, was quite a mentor, just for one simple conversation that he had with me. Ah, and that was my final day of high school when I was about to go out the door. The reality is - is you go through life even as a young person in high school, look to be that kind of person yourself.

Look to say that one sentence, that one moment 'cause you just don't know, uh, how it's going to stick, uh, in their minds for the rest of their lives.

[narrator] You'll find information on the accessibility legislation and a professional learning tool we call Accessibility Continuum.

This series of self-reflections will build awareness and inspire conversations about accessibility in the board, school, and classroom. The Lesson Plan hub offers lesson plans for a range of grades. They can be read online and downloaded. The Accessibility Plus hub offers links to highly regarded sites and backgrounders on accessibility issues.

We know you'll consider The TeachAble Project a valuable resource that supports the work of school boards. Come September 2012, you'll want to visit The TeachAble Project beta site and start planning PD sessions in your board. The full version of The TeachAble Project site will be ready January 1st, 2013.

Meanwhile, we invite everyone in the educational community to keep the conversation going.

Visit TheTeachAbleProject.org or contact us by e-mail. We are confident that through initiatives like this, we can achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. We invite you to use The TeachAble Project to strengthen the connections between accessibility and student success and build a better place for all Ontarians.