



The
Teach**Able**
Project

Introduction

A Message from the
Lieutenant Governor
of Ontario The Hon.
David C. Onley O. Ont.

Video Transcript

As the first Lieutenant Governor of Ontario with a physical disability, I have adopted accessibility as the over-arching theme of my term in office. I have defined accessibility as “That which enables people to achieve their full potential.”

J’ai défini l’accessibilité comme « ce qui permet à tous et à toutes, de réaliser pleinement leur potentiel ».

In Canada, we have made great strides in integrating equity of opportunity across races, ethnicities, genders and religions. However, when it comes to people with disabilities we still have some way to go.

A big step in getting there is to make every aspect of our society accessible for everyone, and to a large extent this is happening through accessibility legislation. But the greatest barrier to accessibility lies not in our infrastructure - our buildings, streets and transportation - it lies in our attitudes and our lack of awareness.

Those who work with students as teachers, educational assistants, early childhood educators and administrators have a tremendous ability to influence, lead and inspire. Young people are striving to make sense of their world.

An important part of that process is learning that every individual has the right to achieve his or her full potential.

I’m asking you as teaching professionals to transform attitudes and build awareness by ensuring your classrooms and your schools are places where every student is included and feels welcome. I understand that you are already integrating principles of universal design into your teaching strategies, shaping instruction to meet the different needs of your students. An important extension would be to develop understanding among your students of what accessibility means and how it effects fairness and equity of opportunity for people across the entire spectrum of ability.

The goal is to shape a society in which individuals are appreciated for their intrinsic worth, and the full range of human ability is welcomed and supported. To make it happen, champion the value that says to all students “What you do is important. How you feel is important. You belong.”

En classe, vous avez le pouvoir enviable de contribuer à créer ce climat. Je vous demande de réaliser cet objectif.

In the classroom you have an enviable opportunity to help create this kind of world.

I’m asking you to make it happen.