



AP 1-311 – ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE

BASELINE REPORT

Western School Division is located in Morden, Manitoba, Canada, a prosperous community in South-Central Manitoba adjacent to the United States border. Western School Division operates a system of five schools and an adult education centre that serves the City of Morden and a rural area of approximately 400 square kilometres. Our student population is composed of over 2300 students, both urban and rural. Western School Division is committed to an educational philosophy that recognizes the fundamental equality of all people. Respect for diversity – individual's characteristics and abilities – and the process of making education reflect a belief in the fundamental equality of all people is woven into the everyday learning environment. It supports and facilitates acceptance, respect, and appreciation for all people and their individual characteristics and abilities. Western School Division is committed to continually improving on and meeting the diverse needs of all learners – customers and clients – by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers that discourage accessibility.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Western School Division is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for all society members, including staff, students, and people with exceptional needs. We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion. We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing, and preventing these barriers while meeting the Accessibility of Manitobans Act's requirements.

ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES

Accessibility Coordinator

Responsible for coordinating accessibility initiatives.

Accessibility Committee

Responsible for representing various branches and/or functions within the organization and participating in the development of the Accessibility Plan and Procedures.

Timeframes Legend:

- **Completed**
- **Ongoing**
- **Short Term - (Completion expected within 12 Months)**
- **Mid Term - (Completion expected in 1 to 3 Years)**
- **Long Term - (Completion expected in 3 to 5 Years)**
- ***New Item**



Procedures

The Western School Division developed and adopted the following procedures to identify, remove, and prevent potential barriers while addressing inclusion and providing resources.

AP - 1-300	Respect for Human Diversity and Equity Education
AP - 1-310	Accessibility Plan
AP - 1-312	Accessible Employment
AP - 1-313	Accessible Communication and Information
AP - 7- 000	Facilities and Transportation
Appendix C	Accessibility Request and Feedback Form

ACTIONS

The Western School Division has implemented the following steps utilizing the principles outlined in the Accessibility of Manitobans Act, namely: **Access, Equality, Universal Design, and Systemic Responsibility**.

General Accessibility

Initiatives	Action	Status
Establish an Accessibility Committee	An Accessibility Committee was created to represent various branches and functions within the Division to participate in the development of the Accessibility Plan, Procedure and Policies.	Completed
Assign an Accessibility Coordinator	The Accessibility Coordinator Role was adopted to coordinate the Accessibility Plan initiatives.	Completed
Establish and Maintain an Accessibility Plan	The Accessibility Plan has been developed and posted on the Western School Division's Website.	Completed
Review WSD policies, procedures, programs, and practices from a disability perspective.	Review current policies and procedures. Develop an Accessible Employment Procedure. Develop and address workplace emergency response plans and information for persons with disabilities. *Develop an Accessible Transportation Procedure	Ongoing Completed Ongoing Mid Term
Implement steps to ensure accessibility during school events/assemblies	The Western School Division will take into account the accessibility for persons with disabilities in the initial stage of organizing any events within our facilities. The barriers will be identified and removed. In the case where identified barriers cannot be removed, alternate access will be provided through assistance, accommodation, or equipment, such as a wheelchair. The public will be informed about the availability of accommodation for people with disabilities so they can attend the events.	Ongoing
Ensure accessible transportation is available for students with disabilities in order to attend school.	The Western School Division provides integrated, accessible school transportation for students with disabilities. The Division offers alternative options where the existing service is not feasible due to the students' unique condition or safety concerns.	Ongoing



Establish the conditions and environment to ensure people that require service animals are welcomed to enter facilities where the public is generally allowed.	Develop and update administrative procedures for the use of service animals.	Complete
	Develop the training for custodial staff on how to assist people with disabilities using service animals.	Mid Term

Physical and Architectural

Initiatives	Action	Status
Install elevators or lifts to ensure full or partial access is provided for people with needs.	There are five locations identified within the Western School Division Facilities where elevators or lifts are needed. Four elevators and stairlifts were installed in the Ecole Morden Middle School and the Morden Collegiate Institute. There is no access to room 001 in the basement of Morden Collegiate Institute. Other practical solutions will be considered if the elevator or lift installation is not feasible to implement in the identified location.	Completed Long Term
Identify the areas, exterior entrances or hallways where ramps, additional rails or other solutions are required.	The Western School Division has identified the exterior entrance and interior areas where ramps, additional rails or other solutions are required. *The Piping Shop has merged with the Welding Shop in the new MCI Technology Centre building; the new entrance is constructed with a ramp and automatic door opener. The outdoor classroom at EMMS needs a ramp to be accessible. Three outside ramps were installed with auto door openers in Morden Collegiate Institute. One ramp was installed in the Maple Leaf School building, and all portables are equipped with ramps. *Resurface the sidewalk on the West side from the MCI/EMMS. The sidewalk has been replaced from Gilmour Street to the EMMS West entrance. Repairs are needed at the EMMS West entrance area and parts of the bus loop sidewalk.	Complete Mid Term Completed Completed Completed Mid Term
Install an automatic door opener at the required entrance for accessibility	*A power door button has been installed at the main office of Morden Collegiate Institute to allow individuals with needs to open the door and have access to the building. Multiple automatic door openers need to be installed within our facilities. Maple Leaf's east entrance has a ramp but needs an auto door opener. It is a student entrance from the huts to the Maple Leaf School Building. Minnewasta west entrance needs an auto door opener. It is a student entrance from the playground area. Automatic door openers were installed at the main entrance of Maple Leaf, Ecole Morden Middle School, Morden Collegiate Institute and the Division Office.	Completed Ongoing Mid Term Mid Term Completed



Identify the washroom facilities that require modification to ensure accessibility	The bathroom adjacent to the resource classroom at Maple Leaf School was renovated and spaced out to allow individuals with needs to access the washroom facility on wheelchairs.	Completed
	A power door device will be installed in the washroom at the resource classroom at Maple Leaf School.	Mid Term
	The following areas are not wheelchair accessible: Minnewasta – main student, washrooms, Kindergarten room. Maple Leaf – south Kindergarten room, staff washrooms, office washroom, gym change room washrooms EMMS – staff washrooms, east hallway washroom Morden Collegiate – main washrooms on the first and second floor, staff washrooms, locker room washrooms	Long Term
	Designated accessible washrooms were identified and equipped in each Western School Division location for persons with disabilities, at the Piping Shop, Welding Shop and Morden Adult Education Center facilities.	Completed
Install visibility signs such as visibility strips to the new and existing stair installations.	EMMS east wing fan room requires a stair strip at the top of the stairs. The Grade 8 hallway at the west end needs an elevation change strip because it has a slope. Most public stairways in the Division have some sort of colored strip on them.	Completed
	The visibility strips and other means of installation that help increase the objects' visibility, such as stairs, will be included in further projects as design standards and maintenance activities.	Ongoing
Provide access to the play structure and outside the classroom.	There are several play structures and outdoor classrooms within the Western School Division's facilities.	Long Term
	Two play structures were equipped with accessibility features at Minnewasta School's playground, and one play structure is accessible at Maple Leaf's playground.	Completed
	EMMS has an aging play structure which they are planning to replace with a new, accessible one.	Mid Term
Ensure emergency exits are accessible	*The back emergency exit at the Division Office is not wheelchair accessible – it would require a ramp down to ground level.	Mid Term

Information and Communication

Initiatives	Action	Status
Develop a system to ensure communication is taking place with a person with disabilities and barriers are removed.	The Western School Division will develop an Accessible Information and Communication Administrative Procedure as a guide to address Information and Communication barriers.	Completed
	Audit of the Division's website on Accessible Information and Communication.	Short Term
	Partner with Website Developer to implement required changes to meet or exceed the WCAG 2 standards.	Short Term
	American Sign Language Training for Front Line Staff.	Mid Term
	The Western School Division will adopt communication means in various formats, including subtitles on online video products and messages informing people with disabilities regarding alternative formats available upon request.	Ongoing



Identify the assistive devices used to remove or reduce communication barriers, such as hearing aid technology and descriptive video.	The Western School Division is exploring available technological solutions to assist persons with disabilities (Blind or Vision impaired), such as hearing aids, read speakers, and sound field systems.	Ongoing
Communicate with the public if accessibility becomes temporarily unavailable.	The Western School Division will inform the public (via available means of communication) if accessibility becomes temporarily unavailable. The appropriate signage will be installed at the locations where the temporary barriers exist.	Ongoing
Develop a process to receive feedback and accommodation requests.	The Accessibility Request & Feedback Form is developed under Appendix C of the WSD Accessibility Plan.	Completed

Attitudinal - Systemic

Initiatives	Action	Status
Create and promote a barrier-free culture to ensure access to services and goods, making sure they are not blocked and are available to everyone as intended.	The Western School Division will develop and communicate projects and programs that promote accessibility and cultural diversity in order to remove attitudinal or systemic barriers within our facilities and increase awareness among our staff members.	Ongoing
Develop an Accessible Employment Procedure to remove barriers during the recruitment and selection process.	The Accessible Employment Procedure has been developed. Western School Division has embedded accessibility practices into the recruitment, selection, and employment processes, informing applicants and WSD employees with disabilities about the availability of accommodations upon request.	Completed
Promote the Return-to-Work program, providing reasonable accommodations and modified light duties.	The Western School Division develops the Return-to-Work Program that enables employees to be back to work as soon as their situation allows, as they perform duties based on their current capacity with modified light duties.	Ongoing
Ensure access to training is available and that accommodation is provided for people with needs.	The public and staff will be informed about available accommodation upon request during the Western School Division's training sessions and within the employees' course of employment.	Ongoing



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Division utilizes a consultation process with the public, employees, students, and visitors regarding the accessibility plan update to identify barriers and the support, format and means that would remove obstacles. The consultation will be available through the following means:

- In-person discussion,
- Request Form: [Accessibility Request & Feedback Form](#)
- Online Survey via the following link: [Western School Division Accessibility Survey](#)
- Organizational Awareness

REVIEW AND MONITORING

Records and Reporting

In compliance with Section 18 of the AMA, the Division will continue to maintain records according to the regulations and make the records available for inspection and examination. These records will be maintained with the Division's Accessibility Plan.

Compliance

The Division will deem to have met the accessibility standards:

Customer Service – "when all persons who are reasonably expected to seek to obtain, use or benefit from a good or service have the same opportunity to obtain, use or benefit from the good or service."

Communication – "when communicating with a person who self-identifies as being disabled by a barrier, the communication is done in a manner that takes into account the barrier."

Built environment – "any aspect of its built environment intended to facilitate barrier-free access to the goods or services it provides are available for use in an intended manner."

Monitoring

From 2016 and every second year thereafter, the AMA requires the Division to prepare an accessibility plan that addresses the identification, prevention, and removal of barriers that disable people in the policies, programs, practices, and services. Therefore, this plan will be reviewed biannually.

FEEDBACK

If you have any questions or comments related to this Accessibilities Update Plan, or how we can further improve accessibility, and/or would like to request an alternate format, please contact:

Accessibility Coordinator at 204.822.4448
email: accesswsd@westernsd.mb.ca



Reference:

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (CCSM C A1.7)

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act – Customer Services Standard Regulation

Respect for Human Diversity and Equity Education

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Manitoba Human Rights Code

Public Schools Act

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act Implementation Guide – Integrated Accessibility Standards:
Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation

Adopted: January 9, 2017

Updated: November 30, 2020

Updated: March 20, 2023

Updated: December 16, 2024



Appendix A – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility Standard	an accessibility standard prescribed under the <i>Accessibilities for Manitobans Act</i>
Accessible Formats	may include, but not limited to: large print, recorded audio, electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons interrupted by a barrier
AMA	<i>The Accessibilities for Manitobans Act</i>
Assisting Device	examples: cane, power driven or manually operated wheel chair
Barrier	for a person who has a physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory disability, a barrier is anything that interacts with that disability in a way that may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis
Communications	the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received
Communication Supports	may include, but are not limited to: captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communication
Conversion Ready	an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversation into an accessible format
Duty to Reasonably Accommodate	the requirement, established by <i>The Human Rights Code</i> (Manitoba), to remove barriers up to the point of undue hardship
EE	Employee
ER	Employer
Extranet Website	a controlled extension of the intranet, or internal network of an organization, to outside users over the Internet
Information	includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.
Service Animal	a service animal as defined in <i>The Human Rights Code</i>



Appendix B – ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Accessibility Coordinator Viktor Chuyenkov, Human Resources Manager

Accessibility Committee	Stephen Ross, Superintendent
	Marianne Fenn, Assistant Superintendent
	Yuriy Lebedyuk, Facilities Supervisor
	Michael Wiebe, Workplace Safety & Health Coordinator
	Parviz Salimi, Director of Information Technology
	Adam Adamson, Transportation Supervisor
	Janelle Chawrun, HR Coordinator
	Member at Large of Organizational Disability Community
	Member at Large



Appendix C: ACCESSIBILITY REQUEST & FEEDBACK FORM

Personal Information

Name _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Request for Documents in Alternate Formats

Name of Document: _____
School: _____
Event (if applicable): _____

Which format would you prefer?

- ☐ Braille
- ☐ Audio
- ☐ Plain Language
- ☐ Large Print: Preferred font size: _____
Preferred font style: _____
- ☐ Electronic:
- ☐ Microsoft Word ☐ HTML ☐ Rich Text ☐ PDF
- ☐ Other: _____

Request for American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter or Captioning:

Date Interpreter Required: _____
Duration Interpreter is Required _____
Type of Meeting _____

Comments – Tell us your story

Tell us about your
experience - when
things go well and when
things could have gone
better. Your feedback
and suggestions are
valued

Completed forms can be submitted in person or by mail to the Western School Division, 4-75 Thornhill Street, Morden, MB, R6M 1P2. They may also be emailed to the Accessibility Coordinator at accesswsd@westernsd.mb.ca

Any questions or comments can be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator at 204-822-4448 or accesswsd@westernsd.mb.ca