



MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

FOR THE PERIOD January 2018 TO DECEMBER 2021

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

UPPER CANADA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

January 2018-December 2021[†]

**Prepared by the
Accessibility Committee**

**In accordance with
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation**

January 30, 2019

Revised: June 28, 2019

This publication is available through the Upper Canada District School Board's:

- website (www.ucdsb.on.ca → BOARD → Accessibility)
- In accessible formats upon request

2018-2021 Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The Upper Canada District School Board is a diverse, public education organization in Eastern Ontario. It consists of dedicated individuals committed to quality education that fosters life-long learning for all, through creative and challenging learning experiences.

Our MISSION: We prepare all students for a successful life.
Our VISION: Creating Futures, Leading and Learning for All.
Our VALUES: Caring, Empathy, Fairness, Generosity, Honesty, Perseverance, Resilience, Responsibility, Respect.

Geographically, the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) is one of the largest public school boards in Ontario covering 12,000 square kilometers (18 times the size of the Toronto DSB). Our area includes the counties of Lanark, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russell. We are bordered by the St. Lawrence River to the south, Quebec to the east, Ottawa-Carleton to the north and the lake district to the west. A wide, diverse background of cultures and activities for people of all ages can be found in the region.

As of December, 2018, 17826 students were enrolled in our elementary schools and 8146 students enrolled in our secondary schools. 1033 students are enrolled in alternative/continuing education. We employ approximately 4191 permanent and occasional staff. All 79 of our school facilities are available for public use after the instructional day is completed, through the Board's Community Use of Schools

The Upper Canada District School Board strives to meet the needs of its employees, students, and community members with disabilities and is committed to meeting its obligations as a public sector organization to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Our Board is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). This accessibility plan outlines the steps that the Upper Canada District School Board is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Commitment to Accessibility Planning

This plan will be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee, and the Board's Accessibility Advisory Committee. It will be presented to the Board for approval. The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to:

- Maintaining an Accessibility Committee which will meet three times each year (January, May, and October) to review the progress of the plan, and provide recommendations about Accessibility Plan.
- Continuing the process of consulting with the Special Education Advisory Committee and with persons with disabilities;
- Ensuring, wherever practicable, that Board policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and inclusive design;
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community with due regard to the availability of resources.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Committee to review and to provide recommendations to update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, to ensure that our school district's focus on accessibility remains current, relevant, and compliant with provincial standards and expectations.

Legal Framework

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
[Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

Cross-Referencing

[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service – Policy 437](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.1 - Monitoring and Feedback](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.2 - Notification of Disruption of Service](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.3 - Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.4 - Use of Service Animals](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service – Procedure 437.5 – Use of Support Persons](#)
[Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – Policy 438](#)

Section One: Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers since 2012

- Development of a multi-year Accessibility Plan.
- Formation of an Accessibility Committee, representative of teaching and non-teaching staff, administrative and management staff, and students, to provide input into the Accessibility Plan development and implementation.
- Mandatory staff training related to accessibility, including the recognition and prevention of barriers is ongoing for all staff.
- The training is mandatory for all staff, including all those newly hired to the Upper Canada District School Board.
- Training is accessible to employees through a professional development software program, which offers a platform for the delivery of training modules and tracks the completion rates for all staff.
- All new construction projects in the school district adhere to the most recent accessibility standards and retrofit construction to the respective OBC (Ontario Building Code).
- A link to Accessibility is present on the home page of the Upper Canada District School Board Web Page. This link provides access to information about accessibility, including the Board's multi-year accessibility plan.
- Concerns or questions related to accessibility can be relayed to the Accessibility Committee through an email address linked to the Accessibility area of the board web site.
- The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Accommodations to address potential barriers in employment competitions and in the daily work for employees with accessibility challenges are available.
- Technology advancements and the availability of wifi in all school board sites permits easy access to print materials in an accessible format. Software innovations since the inception of the initial plan also permit print materials to be read to individuals should a visual impairment create accessibility challenges.
- Engagement of an external consultant to review the implementation of the 2012-2017 Accessibility Plan and to make recommendations for next steps.

Section Two: Strategies and Actions 2018-2021

Year	Strategy	Actions
2018-2019	Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an accessibility checklist to be used to assess sites within the Upper Canada District School Board to identify barriers to accessibility. • Pilot the accessibility checklist in several sites to ensure that it is effective in identifying potential barriers.
	Review communication related to accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the organization and content of the web site. • Engage in professional development with employees (school administrative staff, principals and vice-principals, administrative staff at the board office) to create an awareness of the Accessibility Plan, the information available on the Accessibility web page and the email address through which concerns related to accessibility can be raised.
	Provide accessibility training to all board employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide training to all staff through the professional development software program.
2019-2020	Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school and board sites, will use the online accessibility checklist to identify accessibility barriers. • Information gathered will be analyzed by the Accessibility Committee to develop a process to remove and prevent barriers.
	Provide professional development and ongoing training in relation to accessibility barriers and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to utilize the professional development software program to train all employees in relation to accessibility standards. • Create and implement professional development in conjunction with Equity and Inclusivity in relation to “invisible barriers”, their identification, removal and prevention.

	Revise training materials related to accessibility standards for volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise and make accessible basic training materials for volunteers. • Communicate to various stakeholders the availability of training materials and the expectations for volunteers of the Upper Canada District School Board.
	Plan school and board events with a view to identifying, removing and preventing accessibility barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a guideline to be used when events are planned at school sites or board sites to address potential barriers to accessibility (e.g., graduation ceremonies, Christmas concerts, professional learning sessions). • Promote the feedback forum (email address linked to the Accessibility web site) to gather information related to accessibility at various school or board events.
	Communicate accessibility standards and requirements with external groups and organizations using board sites through Community Use of Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information, through Community Use of Schools, to potential users, information related to accessibility at sites that they might be considering for use. • Provide a venue, through Community Use of Schools, for groups and organizations to note the accessibility requirements needed in order to be able to use the board site for the purposes of the group or organization.
2020-2021	Assess the implementation of the accessibility plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness of the accessibility checklist in identifying barriers. • Review the effectiveness of the process that was created to remove and prevent identified barriers. • Review the professional development and training offerings to determine what further offerings need to be considered. • Using the information gathered in the first two years of the 2018-2021 plan, determine next steps and create the next multi-year plan.

Appendix A

Definitions

Accessibility — The term accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. It is used to describe how widely a service, product, device, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Accessibility can be seen as the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

Barrier — Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

Disability — Ontario's accessibility law adopts the definition for disability that is in the Ontario Human Rights Code. It defines disability broadly:

- a. "any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997."

Appendix B

Barriers and solutions

Attitudinal barriers may result in people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities.

Informational and communication barriers arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available to others.

Technological barriers occur when technology or the way it is used does not meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Systemic barriers in policies, practices and procedures and result in people with disabilities being treated differently than others or sometimes excluded altogether.

Physical and architectural barriers in the environment and prevent access for people with disabilities.

Appendix C

2018 Accessibility Committee

Name	Position
Deanna Perry (Co-Chair)	Superintendent of Operations, including Accessibility
Eric Hardie (Co-Chair)	Principal of Experiential Learning
Adrienne McEwen	Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Erin Blair	Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
Robert Bowman	Ability Management Specialist
Valerie Horsfall	Elementary Principal
Elpis Law	Secondary Teacher
Julia McCullough	Student Representative
Brad Notman	Manager of Purchasing & Admin Services
Christie Reitsma	Secondary Vice-Principal
Shelley Swerdfeger	Lead Custodian
Carole Airhart	Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
Peter Bosch	Manager of Construction
Jennifer Lloyd	Executive Assistant

Appendix D; Yearly Action Plans

The Accessibility Committee will develop an action plan for each year of the multi-year plan and post it in this appendix.

2018-2019 Accessibility Action Plan			
Initiative	Action	Timeline	Measure
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Develop an accessibility checklist to be used to assess sites within the Upper Canada District School Board to identify barriers to accessibility.	May 2019	Checklist has been developed
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Pilot the accessibility checklist in several sites to ensure that it is effective in identifying potential barriers.	June 2019	Checklist has been piloted in schools
Review communication related to accessibility	Review the organization and content of the web site.	December 2019	Feedback regarding the organization and content of the web site is provided to the Accessibility Committee Web site is updated based
Review communication related to accessibility	Engage in professional development with employees (school administrative staff, principals and vice-	September 2019	Presentation prepared and shared with various employee groups

	principals, administrative staff at the board office) to create an awareness of the Accessibility Plan, the information available on the Accessibility web page and the email address through which concerns related to accessibility can be raised.		
Provide accessibility training to all board employees	Continue to provide training to all staff through the professional development software program.	Ongoing	Number of employees who complete the required training

2019-2020 Accessibility Action Plan			
Initiative	Action	Timeline	Measure

2020-2021 Accessibility Action Plan			
Initiative	Action	Timeline	Measure