



THE PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

(NOVEMBER, 2018– NOVEMBER, 2020)

Overview of Programs and Services

Portage la Prairie School Division (PLPSD) serves approximately 3500 students in and around Portage la Prairie, inclusive of the immediate municipalities, the community of Oakville, and ten Hutterite communities. Programs are offered within a community school environment, recognizing specific needs of each school's unique population while also providing programs that are tailored to individual needs.

Portage School Division remains committed to actively fostering each student's personal attributes and talents; supported by a safe, caring, inclusive, and equitable learning environment. The Division not only promotes, but expects, the acceptance and understanding of characteristics that are fundamental to the identity of an individual including ancestry, nationality, ethnic background or origin, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, source of income, political belief, physical and mental disability, and social disadvantages.

PLPSD's commitment reflects a division and school culture in which opportunities for public, employee, and student access to school activities and events are optimized, with an emphasis on the *whole* person. While this may include daily events such as assemblies and concerts, consideration is also given to ease of access to information regarding these events, as well as access to facilities after-hours.

Accessibility Achievements

PLPSD has made inclusiveness and accessibility central to their statements of Mission and Values (Policies AC and ACA).

In addition, the Board's policies, as outlined below, maintain an emphatic commitment to the elimination of impediments to accessing programs and services, note Accessibility Policy FK recently added by the PLPSD board of trustees;

(1) Goals and Objectives	<i>Policy ACB</i>
(2) Non-Discrimination	<i>Policy AD</i>
(3) Respect for Human Diversity	<i>Policy ADA and ADA-R</i>
(4) Student Placement	<i>Policy TDH</i>
(5) Registration Procedures for Students with Special Needs	<i>Policy JBE</i>
(6) Student Assistance Program	<i>Policy JF</i>
NEW (7) Accessibility	<i>Policy FK</i>

Removing Barriers to Accessibility

Budgetary considerations and attitudinal barriers serve as the biggest challenges to overcoming accessibility issues. These challenges that can only be met through effective planning, engagement with stakeholders, the sharing of information, and ongoing professional development.

Statement of Commitment

The Portage la Prairie School Division is committed to ensuring equitable access and participation for all people, regardless of their abilities. The Division is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion. With consideration given to staff and financial resources, the Division is committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing, and preventing these barriers and by meeting requirements of *The Accessibility of Manitobans Act (AMA)*.

Policies

PLPSD has developed *Accessibility Policy (FK)* that commits to providing equity of access to programs and services within our school division, with an ongoing commitment to engaging all stakeholders in a manner that promotes and maintains respectful treatment and integrity of the process for all. We realize that our efforts will need to be fluid in nature, and will need to be a continuing part of our division's strategic plan if we are to address ongoing, and new challenges facing students, staff, and the public.

The PLPSD is committed to addressing the following areas through ongoing training and strategic planning initiatives:

- **Attitudinal barriers** that result from false assumptions, often based on appearance
- **Informational and communication barriers**, such as tiny print or information that is not easy to understand
- **Technological barriers such as websites that do not consider needs of** people who do not use a mouse or who use screen reader software
- **Systemic barriers** are policies or procedures that can exclude some people, for example, when job applicants are required to use online forms.
- **Physical barriers** can be large and small, including walkways that are not shoveled, narrow store aisles, or high service counters.

Actions

Action 1: Accessibility Working Group

<u>Initiatives/Actions</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Management of accessibility initiatives are coordinated by the PLPSD superintendent.- Meet on a regular basis to review initiatives working towards accessibility (w/principals, supervisor of operations, director of student services, SILC, Strategic Continuanace Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review of accessibility opportunities/concerns becomes breakout category under the Division's Strategic Continuanace Committee.- Within the Strategic Continuanace Committee, time-lines and work plans are developed under PLPSD's 3-year plan (2018-2021), for review and implementation by the accessibility working group.- Members actively plan for the renewal of accessibility considerations as a breakout category, as part of the Division's planning cycle.

Action 2: Offer and Provide information in an accessible format on request.

<u>Initiatives/Actions</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Accessibility working group to develop a process for responding to requests for accessible supports and services.- Accessibility coordinator (superintendent/SILC) to communicate process to all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Working to informing stakeholders of the availability of accessibility information in a wide variety of formats.- Development of ongoing review process for communication venues/opportunities.- All PLPSD offices received the “How can I help you” signage to alert customers that supports are available upon request.- The PLPSD website has an “active offer” to assist customers that supports are available upon request. http://www.plpsd.mb.ca/

Action 3: Staff Awareness and Training

<u>Initiatives/Actions</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Senior Administration will confirm PLPSD’s commitment to accessibility in writing.- Senior Administration will offer accessibility awareness training opportunities to staff via professional development.- Senior Administration to share progress in accessibility with staff via varied modes of communication, including the strategic planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- All PLPSD employees completed the Accessibility Training Module (online) and received a certificate of completion (2017)-All new employees must complete the Accessibility Training Module (online)- Customer Service Component training video (http://www.accessibilitymb.ca/online-training.html) reviewed by all employees (November 2018)- Ongoing Accessibility professional development will be included as a part of short and long term planning processes.- Inclusive of policy changes, considerations and expectations around accessibility planning will be communicated to all institutional stakeholders via Admin Council, Principals’ Council, Parent Councils and Division Website.- Staff understanding of accessibility planning and related issues will be supported through continuing availability of training and research.- Progress on implementation and continuing review is available to all staff.- Accessibility issues will be communicated out of the Superintendent’s department, for dissemination to various department leaders such as Student Services, Principals, Operations, and Technology.

Action 4: Monitor Progress

<u>Initiatives/Actions</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superintendent, with cooperation of the working group and the Continuance Committee, will monitor progress re: challenges and achievements, and will continue to plan for accessibility considerations within the budgetary and strategic planning process. - Superintendent, through the Strategic Planning Continuance Committee, to report to the Board of Trustees and school administrators 3 – 4 times per school year, through the strategic planning process. - Future plans and budgets to be integrated into the plans of divisional department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior Admin and the Board of Trustees are aware of the progress regarding AMA guidelines, compliance and future challenges. - Annual strategic planning review includes progress on accessibility - Board of Trustees formed a reserve fund for Accessibility Projects as part of their budget discussions.

Action 5: Removing Physical Barriers

<u>Initiatives/Actions</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLPSD has identified multiple school sites with accessibility concerns that were slated for upgrades in the 2018-2019 budget to allow for improved accessibility. - Identified the need for an additional school bus for students requiring barrier free access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional accessibility upgrades to be presented during annual budget meetings and with Finance Committee and Operations Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new doors and ramps for École Arthur Meighen School North/South Doors. - new accessible main entrance doors at La Verendrye School (2018) - new accessible main entrance doors at North Memorial School (2017) -new accessible main entrance doors and ramp at Fort la Reine School (2018) -new accessible main entrance doors at Yellowquill School (2018) -new accessible main entrance doors at École Crescentview School (2018) - new Accessible Grooming Room at Yellowquill School (2018) - new Accessible Grooming Room at (2018) École Crescentview School (2018) - new accessible entrance doors and ramp at the Portage Collegiate Institute (East) building (2018) - new accessible entrance doors and ramp at the Portage Collegiate Institute (West) building (2018) - 2 new barrier-free access school busses (2018) -Handicapped Parking Signage updated in all PLPSD schools -New Handicap parking areas assigned opposite both new accessibility entrances at PCI. -washroom decals applied to doors to identify wheelchair accessibility in all applicable schools.