



Date of first approval:

Date updated: October 31, 2024, December 19, 2024

Years Applicable: 2025-2026

Contact person: Mrs. Pamela Garnham, CEO/ Superintendent

Contact information: (204) 857-8756 or email: pam.garnham@plpsd.net

Accessibility Working Group members: Workplace, Health and Safety Committee

Senior Manager's Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pamela Garnham', written over a horizontal line.

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 the requirements of The Accessibility of Manitobans Act (AMA).

Policies/Procedure

PLPSD has developed an Accessibility Procedure (formerly 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.

Summary of Actions to Remove Barriers to Date:

- Development of an Accessibility Policy (FK) for PLPSD

- Development of a divisional Accessibility committee (representation from each school) for the purpose of reviewing, reporting progress and/or areas requiring attention, and action planning
- Training procedures established to ensure all PLPSD employees have met the training requirements required for their assigned role in response to the Accessibility for Manitobans Act [Act Standards | Province of Manitoba](#)
- PLPSD website has been redesigned to enhance accessibility.
- Addition of an elevator at the Portage Collegiate East building.
- Prioritizing accessible play structures (completed at Ecole Arthur Meighen, Fort la Rein, and Crescentview Schools)
- Addition of a fob system (keyless entry) into all schools.
- Addition of a strobe light alarm notification in the automotive area at Portage Collegiate Institute in response to an identified need.
- Flashing lights during a fire alarm at each school
- Divisional licensing of Google Read and Write for student use
- Signage to indicate Handicap parking
- Underway-a revision of divisional policy to procedures for clarity with communication

Action : 1

Initiative/Actions	Divisional system for communicating and responding to matters of accessibility.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To develop a procedure that gives all PLPSD employees means to request a consultation meeting with a building administrator as well, an individual plan to respond to an identified barrier, if relevant. ● To enhance the language options on the website in response to high number of employees who speak languages other than English. ● To increase the annual meeting to discuss general matters of accessibility to four meetings per year.

Action 2:

Initiative/Actions	Enhanced communication, resources, and increased awareness of accessibility matters among PLPSD employees.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a direct link to access to Accessibility News provided by Accessibility Manitoba for all employees (Monday Morning Memo link). ● Monitor required training for all staff at the beginning of each year and upon hire.

Action 3:

Initiative/Actions	Ensure accessibility matters are included in the discussion to inform to budget decision making.
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Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Divisional accessibility items will be addressed with a timeline for consideration. ● Accessibility items will also be discussed by the Board of Trustees Continuance Committee at the annual Strategic Planning and Review Day in October. ● School administrators will seek feedback from their staff regarding accessibility matters to inform budget items from the school level. ● Applications for additional funding will be sought if relevant.
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Action 4:

Initiative/Actions	Enhance technological accessibility for public communication and student support
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gradual reformat of public documents, including the divisional website, to align with the standards for accessibility. ● 1 FTE Technology person assigned to educating PLPSD teachers about tools to support learners with identified needs (e.g. Google Read and Write). ● Continue to shift from policy structure to procedures at the divisional level for language clarity. ● Enhance accessible options for application to job postings as well include a statement to welcome persons with identified barriers to apply.

Action 5:

Initiative/Actions	Consult with persons with identified barriers or who represent persons with identified barriers to review the Accessibility Plan.
Consultation meetings	<p>Consultation with persons disabled by barriers and representation from both an external organization (Visions of Independence-Portage la Prairie) and individuals within the school division to invite feedback has taken place on the following dates:</p> <p>Nov.13 Jennifer Adamson, Administrator of Student Services Nov.14 Jennifer Bjordfjord, Technology Coordinator Nov.14 Christopher Boschman, an employee who identifies as having a significant physical barrier. Nov. 14 Erin Mauws, Principal advocate for accessibility matters. Nov. 14 Sherri Knott, Operations Stock Clerk who advocates and supports the Operations staff with language and physical barriers that have been identified. Nov. 14 Parker Garnham, Supervisor of Operations Nov.14 Rick Boak, Assistant Supervisor of Operations Nov.14 Adam Thompson, Supervisor of Transportation Dec. 18 Visions of Independence-Irene Boyse</p>

For more information or to request alternate formats, contact:

Name: Pamela Garnham

Title: Superintendent-Secretary-Treasurer/CEO

[Portage la Prairie School Division](#)

535- 3rd St. N.W.

Portage la Prairie, Manitoba

R1N 2C4
(204) 857-8756