

**Annual Accessibility Plan
Bluewater District School Board
2020-2021**



Prepared by

Bluewater District School Board
Accessibility Executive Committee

This publication is available on the Bluewater District School Board website at:

<http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/AODA>

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Description of Bluewater District School Board

Bluewater District School Board provides public education to families in Bruce and Grey counties in southwestern Ontario. The two counties of Grey and Bruce cover an area of 8,673 square kilometers. As of March 31, 2021, the District was comprised of 43 locations with an Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) of 12,405 students in the elementary panel and 4,143 students in the secondary panel.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Purpose of the AODA

Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* is to benefit all Ontarians by:

- developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

Definition of Disability

The AODA defines a disability as meaning,

- 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*.

Definition of Barrier

The AODA defines a barrier as meaning anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability including: a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or a practice.

To this end, the AODA requires each school Board to prepare an Annual Accessibility Plan, to consult with people with disabilities in the preparation of this plan, and to make the plan public.

AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)

The AODA is comprised of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations which currently cover the areas of:

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service

Please refer to [Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations](#) for website links and more specific information on the IASR content.

About the Annual Accessibility Plan

This is the seventeenth Annual Accessibility Plan (2020-21) prepared by the Accessibility Executive Committee of the Bluewater District School Board. This Annual Accessibility Plan is in compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001) and is consistent with the belief statements outlined in the Strategic Plan. It serves as a resource for addressing accessibility issues for the students, staff and members of the community.

Bluewater District School Board Commitment

Bluewater District School Board is committed to:

- maintaining an executive committee to recognize compliance issues and forward to appropriate partners for action;

- consulting with people with disabilities, as well as people working with the disabled in the development and review of its Annual Accessibility Plan;
- providing ongoing support and training for administrative staff, managers, and supervisors; and
- holding regular committee meetings to:
 - review the annual accessibility plan
 - ensure compliance with accessibility legislation
 - address accessibility issues
 - ensure improved access to facilities, policies, programs, employment, practices and services for staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community.

Annual Accessibility Plan Explanation of Contents

The Annual Accessibility Plan includes:

- a report on the measures the organization has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities;
- the measures in place to ensure that the organization assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- a list of the by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that the organization will review in the coming year in order to identify barriers to persons with disabilities; and
- the measures that the organization intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

Communication of the Annual Accessibility Plan

The Bluewater District School Board's Annual Accessibility Plan is posted on the public Board website at www.bwdsb.on.ca/AODA and is available to employees on the AODA and Accessibility SharePoint page. It is also available in a variety of accessible formats upon request. Please contact the Accessibility Executive Committee to request an alternate accessible format.

The Accessibility Executive Committee

The Bluewater Accessibility Working Group was formally constituted in September 2004 and evolved into the Accessibility Executive Committee in 2011.

Accessibility Executive Committee Mission

The Committee will develop in consultation with stakeholders' recommendations to continuously improve the conditions of access at Bluewater District School Board. This will be achieved by meeting or exceeding the standards outlined in the AODA.

Committee Mandate

To recommend to Bluewater District School Board the prevention and removal of barriers that persons with disabilities may encounter at any Bluewater DSB sites through programs, education, practices and services provided by the Board.

Accessibility Executive Committee Members 2020-2021

Rob Cummings	Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer
Anna Gowan	Human Resources Services Manager
Lindsay Greig	Chair; Human Resources Services Officer
Sara Morrow	Administrator
Andrew Chittka	ETFO Occasional Teachers Union President
Jayne Bastarache	Supervisor, Project Development
Sabrina Osborne	System Special Education Lead Teacher
Deborah Joseph	Systems Engineer
Josie Becker	Executive Assistant Human Resources Services

Contact for Accessibility Executive Committee

Lindsay Greig – Human Resources Services Officer
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Prevention and Removal of Barriers to Accessibility

Physical and Architectural Initiatives

The following work has been completed and forms work under the ACCESSIBILITY PLAN, PLANT, CAPITAL RETROFITS, and meet all requirements of the Ontario Building Code as amended, specifically Section 3.8.

Update on Completed Projects for 2019-2020 and New Projects for 2020-2021

Projects Completed 2019-2020	Status
Hillcrest Central School, Teeswater <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible parking spaces, walkways and student drop off area created with minor alterations and resurfacing of parking lot and bus loop • Installation of new barrier free doors with power door operating system at main entrance • New accessible walkway to new front entrance 	Completed in Summer 2020
Mildmay-Carrick Public School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door hardware updated to lever sets • Flooring updates in some classrooms highlighting doorways and contrasting walls and trim. • Some interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast 	Completed in Summer 2020
Sullivan Community School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door hardware updated to lever sets • Flooring updates in some areas of school highlighting doorways and contrasting walls and trim. • New interior doors installed with windows for accessible viewing • Some interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast • Installation of new barrier free doors with power door operating system at main entrance 	Completed in Summer 2020
Owen Sound District Secondary School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new barrier free washroom and additional physio space for Specialized Education 	Completed in December 2020
Projects to be Completed 2020-2021	Status

<p>Hepworth Central School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door hardware updated to lever sets throughout school • Interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast • Upgrades to existing washrooms including new barrier free sinks, faucets and urinals 	<p>Design in process, anticipated completion Summer 2021</p>
<p>Mildmay-Carrick Public School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new universal washroom • Installation of new barrier free front entrance doors • Expansion of parking lot, creation of barrier free parking spaces, walkways and student drop off area • Some interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast 	<p>Design in process, anticipated completion Summer 2021</p>
<p>Saugeen District Senior School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of 8 new barrier free parking spaces in various parking areas around the school. 	<p>Design in process, anticipated completion Spring 2021</p>
<p>Sullivan Community School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new universal washroom • Upgrades to existing washrooms including new barrier free sinks and faucets • Upgrades and resurfacing of parking lot, creation of barrier free parking spaces, walkways and student drop off area • Some interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast 	<p>Design in process, anticipated completion Summer 2021</p>

Projects for the 2021-2022 school year will be determined in the fall of 2021. Accessible elements will be considered within projects as required and in compliance with the Ontario Building Code.

Information, Communication, and Technology Initiatives

2020-2021 School Year Progress

ICT Services will work with the AODA committee to implement WCAG 2.0 compliancy tools for the Bluewater District School Board websites. Updates have been made to the current website to make it more accessible. ICT Services continues to work with HR and AODA committee to include accessibility compliance tools within a new web platform that was implemented, which includes an accessibility checker.

On-Going Initiatives and Future Plans

ICT Services will continue to provide support of the board to meet the AODA standards. A main area of focus will be to help research further WCAG 2.0 requirements that must be met under the AODA in 2021 and beyond. ICT Services will continue to work HR and the AODA committee on what is needed to meet future compliance.

Human Resources Services Initiatives

2020-2021 School Year Progress

In the 2020-2021 school year, Human Resources Services provided continued support to the AODA committee in reviewing AODA policies and procedures and made appropriate adjustments to meet standards. Human Resources Services is committed to providing and supporting a robust focus on accessibility throughout BWDSB.

The Human Resources Officer responsible for AODA has maintained and updated the AODA and Accessibility SharePoint page to provide employees with access to accessibility resources, news, and support within the BWDSB intranet system. The SharePoint page includes an area of resources created to support staff in creating accessible documents.

Human Resources Services participated in establishing a framework for re-opening schools following closures due to COVID-19. Accessibility concerns were taken into consideration while creating this plan.

Initiatives for 2021-2022

Human Resources Services aims to further develop resources and tools to support accessibility throughout BWDSB. An area of continued focus will be working with ICT Services to ensure accessibility features are available on BWDSB websites in support of WCAG 2.0 requirements under the AODA.

The department will ensure the Accessibility Executive Committee and other stakeholders remain aware of legislative changes and progress, with specific focus on

the requirements of the Education Standard that is currently being developed under the AODA.

On-Going Initiatives and Future Plans

Human Resources Services will provide ongoing monitoring for current accessibility policies, programs and initiatives. The department will provide continued support to the Accessibility Executive Committee as well as BWDSB staff, students, and the public in accessibility efforts and to address accessibility concerns.

Human Resources Services will continue to support, develop, and implement procedures to help ensure BWDSB is compliant with the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations in consultation with various stakeholders. The department will also ensure staff of all levels receive notification of and/or training related to new or updated procedures.

Corporate Services Initiatives

On-Going Action

All board policies and administrative procedures are reviewed according to a set cyclical review process. When policies are brought forward as part of the cyclical review process, and/or are being created, they are posted on the board's website, and also sent to specific groups/committees to solicit feedback (i.e. the Administrative Council, learning services administrators, administrators, managers/supervisors, the Student Senate, union presidents, school councils, the Parent Involvement Committee, the board's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Committee, and other individuals/groups as identified).

The Corporate Services Officer is responsible for coordinating the cyclical review process with the Administrative Council and the Policy Standing Committee. An initial review of policies and procedures will always consider accessibility and equity.

On-Going Initiatives

When policies and procedures are reviewed or drafted, the issue of accessibility will be considered where appropriate.

Plans for 2021-2022

Bluewater District School Board endeavours to ensure ongoing compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Additional information about the AODA and all of the compliance standards can be found at [<http://www.accessON.ca>]

School Transportation Initiatives

The consortium continues to support accessibility generally by providing inclusive specialized transportation for students with special needs that are appropriate for each unique student's needs. Consortium practices meet the AODA Transportation Standard, specifically that pertaining to Student Transportation.

Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations

Clicking each link below will open the applicable website content.

Part 1 General

1. Purpose and application
2. Definitions
3. Establishment of accessibility policies
4. Accessibility plans
5. Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities
6. Self-service kiosks
7. Training
8. Exemption from filing accessibility reports

Part II Information and Communications Standards

9. Definitions and exceptions
10. Application
11. Feedback
12. Accessible formats and communication supports
13. Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information
14. Accessible websites and web content
15. Educational and training resources and materials, etc.
16. Training to educators
17. Producers of educational or training material
18. Libraries of educational and training institutions
19. Public libraries

Part III Employment Standards

20. Scope and interpretation
21. Schedule
22. Recruitment, general
23. Recruitment, assessment or selection process
24. Notice to successful applicants
25. Informing employees of supports
26. Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
27. Workplace emergency response information
28. Documented individual accommodation plans
29. Return to work process
30. Performance management
31. Career development and advancement
32. Redeployment

Part IV Transportation Standards

33. Definitions
34. Availability of information on accessibility equipment, etc.
35. Non-functioning accessibility equipment
36. Accessibility training
37. Emergency preparedness and response policies
38. Fares, support persons
39. Transition, existing contracts
40. Transition, existing vehicles
41. Accessibility plans, conventional transportation services
42. Accessibility plans, specialized transportation services
43. Accessibility plans, conventional and specialized transportation services
44. General responsibilities
45. Alternative accessible method of transportation
46. Fares
47. Transit stops
48. Storage of mobility aids, etc.
49. Courtesy seating
50. Service disruptions
51. Pre-boarding announcements
52. On-board announcements
53. Requirements re grab bars, etc.
54. Floors and carpeted surfaces
55. Allocated mobility aid spaces
56. Stop-requests and emergency response controls
57. Lighting features
58. Signage
59. Lifting devices, etc.
60. Steps
61. Indicators and alarms
62. Accessibility, rail cars
63. Categories of eligibility
64. Eligibility application process
65. Emergency or compassionate grounds
66. Fare parity
67. Visitors
68. Origin to destination services
69. Co-ordinated service
70. Hours of service
71. Booking
72. Trip restrictions
73. Service delays
74. Companions and children
75. School transportation
76. Public sector organizations
77. Ferries

- 78. Duties of municipalities, general
- 79. Duties of municipalities, accessible taxicabs
- 80. Duties of municipalities, taxicabs

Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards

- 80.1 Definitions
- 80.2 Application
- 80.3 Transition
- 80.4 Slope ratios
- 80.5 Schedule
- 80.6 Trails
- 80.7 Beach access routes
- 80.8 Consultation, recreational trails
- 80.9 Technical requirements for trails, general
- 80.10 Technical requirements for beach access routes, general
- 80.11 Common technical requirements, general
- 80.12 Boardwalks
- 80.13 Ramps
- 80.14 Exceptions, limitations
- 80.15 Exceptions, general
- 80.16 Outdoor public use eating areas, application
- 80.17 Outdoor public use eating areas, general requirements
- 80.18 Outdoor play spaces, application
- 80.19 Outdoor play spaces, consultation requirements
- 80.20 Outdoor play spaces, accessibility in design
- 80.21 Exterior paths of travel, application
- 80.22 Exterior paths of travel, general obligation
- 80.23 Exterior paths of travel, technical requirements
- 80.24 Exterior paths of travel, ramps
- 80.25 Exterior paths of travel, stairs
- 80.26 Exterior paths of travel, curb ramps
- 80.27 Exterior paths of travel, depressed curbs
- 80.28 Exterior paths of travel, accessible pedestrian signals
- 80.29 Exterior paths of travel, rest areas
- 80.30 Exceptions, limitations
- 80.31 Exceptions, general
- 80.32 Application, off-street parking
- 80.33 Exceptions
- 80.34 Types of accessible parking spaces
- 80.35 Access aisles
- 80.36 Minimum number and type of accessible parking spaces
- 80.37 Signage
- 80.38 Exception
- 80.39 On-street parking spaces
- 80.40 Application
- 80.41 Service counters
- 80.42 Fixed queuing guides

- 80.43 Waiting areas
- 80.44 Maintenance of accessible elements

Part V Compliance

- 81. Application
- 82. Definition
- 83. Amount of administrative penalty
- 84. Review of order
- 85. Payment of penalty
- 86. Designation of tribunal
- 87. Commencement
- Schedule 2 Administrative penalties for individuals or unincorporated organizations
- Schedule 3 Administrative penalties for corporations

Customer Service Standard

- 1. Purpose and application
- 2. Effective dates
- 3. Establishment of policies, practices and procedures
- 4. Use of service animals and support persons
- 5. Notice of temporary disruptions
- 6. Training for staff, etc.
- 7. Feedback process for providers of goods or services
- 8/ Notice of availability of documents
- 9. Format of documents
- Schedule 1 Boards, commissions, authorities and agencies
- Schedule 2 Broader public sector
- Exemptions