



TDSB Annual AODA Status Report 2021

Accessibility Accomplishments in 2021

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Accessibility Note:

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Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB), hereafter known as the Board, is committed to upholding a learning and working environment that actively promotes a culture of accessibility for its entire community. This includes actively removing visible and invisible barriers to accessibility.

The Board has numerous policies, procedures, programs, and initiatives that nurture an accessible environment and maintain compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. (AODA). Our latest Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) 2020-2025 outlines our compliance with the AODA.

Status Report

According to section 4(1) of Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards, in the AODA the Board is required to publish reports on the measures adopted to implement the priorities outlined in the MYAP

Accessibility Achievements in 2021

General

- [Multi Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#) reviewed and updated in 2020
 - The AODA Office received updates from key contributors to the MYAP
 - will communicate any changes made to the MYAP where applicable.
- [TDSB's 2021 Accessibility Compliance Report](#) filed with the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility
- Modifications to Accessibility Policy #P069 will result in TDSB enhanced clarifications for Employment Standards relating to: Policy Updates Re: Training Refer to S. 80.49 (6) Accessible Employment Policies Refer to S. 27(2-4)
- Created and implemented a 12 Module series on Digital Document Accessibility Training at the Board with options to review the customized training in a self-paced Web Based Option or a Virtual Classroom session with an online instructor. Feedback highlighted the following:
 - I found the videos useful: 4.48 out of 5, I am satisfied with the pace of the instructor-led online session: 4.19 out of 5, The training can make an impact in the work I do: 3.61 out of 5, I would recommend the training to my peers: Yes (93.44 %) vs. No at (6.56%)

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- Customized Digital Document Accessibility Training is offered and provided to individuals or departmental groups
- Development an internal Accessibility Portal - transition of content to the public site continues
- Development of FAQs Regarding Digital Accessibility
- Creation of an @TDSB_AccessAb twitter account to disseminate and deliver information
- Development of a NEW Procedure (PR) to post Digital Documents online - which will clarify responsibilities and provide accurate instructions to all TDSB staff
- Continued to incorporate accessibility features into our procurement and acquisition of goods, services, and facilities wherever applicable.
- Resources:
 - Hired 2 (two) casual employees to train people on document remediation and support, train, collaborate with departments on ensuring digital accessibility compliance.
 - Hired an Accessibility Consultant to specially participate in the Special Education Advisory Board (SEAC) and the TDSB AODA Advisory Board
- Creation and distribution of customized departmental Word processing templates

Customer Service Achievements

The Board developed a Compliance and Mandatory Training Matrix, a Compliance Training website, and resources for specific employee groups including all educators in the following courses:

- AODA for Customer Service
- AODA General Awareness (The Code and the AODA)
- AODA for Educators

Ongoing training for new employees and volunteers exists in the following areas and the tracking of completion and maintenance of records for compliance purposes.

- The Purchasing Department has incorporated in both the Request for Tender (RFT) and Request for Proposal (RFP) documents a clause regarding AODA compliance. The Purchasing Department has created sub-committees to be proactive when dealing with accessibility and equity concerns.

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Information and Communications Accomplishments

- The public website, and school websites on the Board's web platform, have had their templates remediated for AODA compliance in accordance with the WCAG 2.0's AA guidelines, except where it is deemed impossible.
- All HTML content on the Board website is routinely checked and remediated to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0 AA guidelines. Compliance is monitored using Site Improve and ongoing efforts are made to ensure compliance levels stay above industry standards.
- Document content is kept AODA compliant in collaboration with the Accessibility staff, along with all other business units.
- International Students and Admissions Office are currently going through all the web documents that are at tdsb.on.ca and making them all AODA compliance.
- The Board knows that your feedback is important to help us identify barriers that limit or prevent you from interacting with us or receiving our services in an accessible format. The Board is committed to improving our services for people with disabilities. Please provide your feedback by using the following collection options:
 - Visit the [Contact link on the Accessibility Website](#) for:
 - Request for Documentation in Alternative Format Form
 - Barrier Identification at the TDSB Form
 - Email: accessibility@tdsb.on.ca
 - Telephone: (416) 397-2401
 - Mail: Accessibility Office, 17 Fairmeadow Avenue Room 109, Toronto, Ontario, M2P 1W6
- Post training document accessibility support is available to staff
- All documents being posted to the TDSB website through the web team have its accessibility checked and support is given if any issues are found
- Accessibility support for TDSB google sites
- Development of TDSB internal and public accessibility websites to provide better information and resources to the public
- Utilization of Remediation Software (Equidox) to make TDSB documents accessible:
 - Documents have proper tags on headers, lists, tables, images, hyperlinks, etc.

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- Added Alternative text to supplement important images such as maps, graphs, screenshots, diagrams, logos, photographs, etc.
- Utilized the optical character recognition tool on text that is unrecognizable for screen readers.
- Gather document accessibility information from Site Improve
- Created Training tutorials to train staff on making documents accessible
- Created procedures to track progress of documents being made accessible and to log errors that need to be resolved

Employment Accomplishments

Fine tuning of items 17. Job Applicants Accommodation, 18. Employee Accommodation, 19. Accommodation Records, and 20. Return to Work in the current [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) regarding responsibilities and procedures in place. When a change is required, it would be reflected in the current review of PR716 ([Return To Work for Employees with Disabilities](#)) and PR717 ([Workplace Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities](#)) to better reflect the requirements.

Transportation Achievements

The previous student transportation (Request for Proposal) RFP had a requirement for a percentage of large capacity school buses to have integrated configurations to accommodate students in wheelchairs and available for school charters. This has been achieved.

Design of Public Spaces Achievements

- Rest Areas: The design of all projects involves extensive consultation with a team from the school led by the Principal. Understanding the needs of persons with disabilities is an explicit part of the consultation process.
- Parking Facilities: All projects meet or exceed AODA design standards.
- Service Counters and Fixed Queuing Guides: All projects are designed to meet the accessibility requirements of the AODA and the Ontario Building Code.
- Emergency Prevention and Maintenance: Fire Safety Plans are in the process of being updated to reflect Toronto Fire an approved process for evacuation. Areas of Safe Refuge are being created where required.
- Temporary Disruptions: A communique draft has been drawn to reflect Facilities-related service disruptions and will be issued when approved.

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- Continue to monitor, maintain, and repair the accessible elements of public spaces.

Summary of Consultations

The Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Consultant participate in the following committees:

- Web Services working group
- Business, Operations and Administrative Technology (BOAT) Committee Meeting
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- K-12 Education Standards Committee (Special Education and SEAC)
- Congregated Sites, Special Needs School Grounds Committee
- K-12: Standards Education Standard Committee

Next Steps

- Ongoing review and updating/enhancing of AODA Policies:
 - PR716 (Return to Work for Employees with Disabilities) and PR717 (Workplace Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities)
 - PR ###: Digital Document Accessibility (in Development)
- Strengthen the existing AODA Advisory Board
- Incorporating existing internal delivery mechanisms
- Align TDSB's Digital Accessibility requirement with a deliverable of Service Excellence Communications and added to the Service Excellent "[Best Practices for Business Communications](#)" publication**
- Align the Digital Document Accessibility Training Certification with Service Excellence learning opportunity initiative to "improve our work culture and in turn how we serve schools and one another."

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Policy Updates

[Policy 069 Review](#) schedule to enhance both changes regarding: Training Refer to S. 80.49 (6) and Accessible Employment Policies Refer to S. 27(2-4) policy enhancements:

- Phase 1, Prepare a Policy Review Work Plan for (GPC) Governance and Policy Committee/Board approval (GPC - September 7; Board September 28)
- Phase 2, Revisions – a draft with the Ministry’s proposed changes as well as anything additional recommended by staff
- Phase 3, Internal Review/Sign off – review the revised draft Policy internally for sign-off and Submit to Executive Council
- Phase 4, External Consultations – Posted September 28 until November 11 (45 days)
- Phase 5, Draft revised Policy submitted to Committee/Board for Approval (GPC – November 22 Board – December 7, 2022)

With public consultations and based on the above, the Policy would be approved by the Board on December 7, 2022.

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