



BRANDON
SCHOOL DIVISION
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ACCESSIBILITY IN BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Date of First Approval: January 11, 2017
Date of Update: April 12, 2021
Years Applicable: January 2021 – December 2023

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Brandon School Division (BSD) is a diverse community of learners. With 24 facilities, over 8,900 students and in excess of 1,500 staff members BSD has developed a network of resources and expertise to meet the educational and operational needs of students, parents/guardians and staff in an agile fashion.

Brandon School Division provides a wide range of programming in both the English and French Immersion Academic Diploma Programs. Additionally, the Division provides program streams in the Technology/Vocational Diploma area, as well as, the Mature Student Diploma and Individualized Senior Years Programs. Individual needs are also addressed through Advanced Placement programming and alternative education models.

As part of our learning and work environment, Brandon School Division has worked diligently to provide an inclusive environment for all and strives to ensure that all instructional and public spaces within our facilities are fully accessible. Our schools are an integral part of the communities that they serve and are widely used by community groups.

ACCESSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Brandon School Division recognizes and supports the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Brandon School Division believes that every child is entitled to a quality education free from discrimination irrespective of race/colour, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, physical/social/emotional/intellectual development, disability and beliefs. Brandon School Division policies and administrative procedures promote principles of fair and equitable access.

Brandon School Division has a solid history of strong policies and administrative procedures that support the dignity and needs of the diverse community that it serves including fair and equitable access. We have several policies and administrative procedures that promote accessibility, which can be easily found on our website at the links below:

- [1000 Series – Foundations and Commitments](#)
- [2000 Series – General Administration](#)
- [3000 Series – Fiscal Management](#)
- [4000 Series – Program and Instruction](#)
- [5000 Series – Human Resources](#)
- [6000 Series – Students](#)

- 7000 Series – Facilities
- 8000 Series – Transportation

Brandon School Division continues to maintain and develop its facilities in a prudent and thoughtful manner to incorporate design and technology, in order to facilitate and support access by individuals with temporary or permanent disabilities. Brandon School Division will remain committed to working towards full accessibility within all of our facilities and services.

To that end, we have continued our work towards:

- Approval of the Board's Capital Reserve request through The Government of Manitoba's Department of Central Services:
 - to establish an Accessible Washroom Reserve to provide for universally accessible washrooms within our facilities;
 - for accessible grooming rooms with five schools identified as requiring grooming rooms or grooming room renovations.
 - In early 2021, we received approval from The Department of Central Services for the design phase of the following capital projects: Grooming room and building access upgrades to both Riverview School and J.R. Reid School.
- All accessibility related funding requests are based on needs assessment data provided by our Student Achievement Support Services Department on an annual basis.
- The Facility Accessibility Working Group continues to focus on the following:
 - accessible parking spaces;
 - consistent handicapped signage in parking areas;
 - consistent access to main entrances that includes appropriate ramps and power doors;
 - consistent universally accessible handicapped washrooms for the public;
 - addition of accessible playgrounds.
- Our facility department continues to identify physical barriers within our schools and Divisionally owned properties. Renovations to buildings are completed to code with attention to a barrier free design. As well, there is increased accessibility at entrances at several schools, with more in the upcoming school year.
- The designs and planning of new facilities will be in compliance with Manitoba's Building Code and the regulations for Accessibility.
- The Accessibility Committee has developed a process for responding to requests for accessibility supports and services and has communicated this process to all staff and community.
- Continuing to support an educational philosophy and practice of inclusion in our school programming.
- Our Communications Office has developed Clear Print Guidelines as a reference tool for our staff to use when preparing documentation, brochures and communication items that are shared with our school communities. These materials are reviewed and updated on an annual or as-needed basis to ensure they meet proper guidelines.

- The Division has installed paging solutions that offer additional accessibility benefits such as scrolling text display and flashers to communicate with individuals with a hearing impairment into five schools with a plan for further implementation.
- The Committee continues to track progress on challenges, and requests for accommodations with budgetary implications.

BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY

Barriers to education can take a variety of forms. They can be cognitive, physical, technological, systemic, financial, or attitudinal, or they can arise from an education provider's failure to make available a needed accommodation in a timely manner. When students are identified as requiring additional support, multi-disciplinary teams develop Student Specific Plans to identify learning needs, specific outcomes as well as strategies and interventions required to support learning. A continuum of supports is available depending on identified needs. Facility enhancements may be required for some students to ensure that the schools and learning spaces are generally accessible. The ongoing development of capital assets will continue to include accessibility considerations.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS

The Brandon School Division is enhancing their Accessibility resources for students through the purchase of technology, which will be used by students and staff to advance student learning and assist with individual needs of students.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Board of Trustees believes that education is a fundamental building block to establishing "equity" rights for all students.

Brandon School Division's Mission Statement reads as follows:

"The Brandon School Division strives to enable each student to achieve maximum intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth. We accomplish this through the provision of programs and services which facilitate the development of students as healthy contributing members of society."

Educational "equity" refers most broadly to a condition of fairness with respect to educational opportunities, access, and outcomes for all people. As applied in education, the legal principle of "equity rights" provides that all students have a right to an education that maximizes opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes as embedded in the mission statement of the Brandon School Division.

To this end, Brandon School Division is committed to maintain and develop its facilities and incorporate design and technology to maximize community accessibility to Divisional services as part of its long term planning.

We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers. We will

do this by identifying, removing and preventing barriers and by adhering to the requirements of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA).

POLICIES

Our Board of Trustees recognizes and accepts its responsibility to provide policy direction and resources to enhance and support quality instruction and learning opportunities that assist schools in closing education achievement gaps by investing strategically in all students.

To demonstrate its commitment to respectful and equitable education in all Board activities, the Board commits to governance decisions that reflect these principles:

- the provision of appropriate learning opportunities for all students;
- the assessment of the effectiveness of programs and services to help students succeed;
- the identification and removal of systemic barriers to student achievement;
- the use of data to inform resource allocation decisions;
- the advocacy for funding and resources to support students in at-risk situations; and
- the advocacy for the enactment and protection of student equity rights.

ACTIONS

ACTION 1 – ESTABLISH ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP	
<p>Initiatives/Actions Senior Administration will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint an Accessibility Coordinator • Establish an Accessibility Working Group • Establish operating parameters for the Accessibility Working Group • Board of Trustees will confirm Division’s commitment to accessibility 	<p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative group will be assigned to the Accessibility Working Group • Operating parameters, expectations and annual reporting will be established by the Accessibility Working Group to govern their work including Accessibility Plan updates as per legislative requirements. • Annual report on progress available

ACTION 2 – ENGAGE IN A FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING PROCESS (BUILD ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION)	
<p>Initiatives/Actions The Office of Facilities & Transportation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion a signage audit • Installation of grooming rooms as identified schools are approved by The Department of Central Services. • Continue progress towards completion of universally accessible washroom 	<p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to all Division facilities • Refine audit of BSD facilities in regards to physical/architectural

<p>upgrades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to install accessible hardware to meet accessibility standards • Install automatic door openers to address facility accessibility needs • Our fleet asset management plan includes plans for replacement of lift buses to improve accessibility. In 2021-2022, We have requested replacement of an older lift bus that will be replaced with a model that meets current code/standards. 	<p>barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise the action plan on a yearly basis
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ACTION 3 – DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STAFF AWARENESS AND TRAINING PROGRAM (CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT)	
<p>Initiatives/Actions</p> <p>The Office of Human Resources, with the support of Student Achievement Support Services will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and track accessibility training for all staff • Continue to implement the customer service and employment standards as identified in the Accessibility of Manitobans Act (AMA) 	<p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to offer accessibility training/awareness to all Brandon School Division employees as per the Customer Service Standard Regulation 171/2015 and Accessibility Employment Standard Regulation 70/2019, by implementing Administrative Procedure 5002 – <i>Accessibility Standard for Customer Service</i> and Administrative Procedure 5003 – <i>Accessibility Standard for Employment</i>

Action 4 – Offer and Provide Information in Accessible Formats (Information and Communication)	
<p>Initiatives/Actions</p> <p>The Office of Management Information Systems Technology (MIST) and the Office of Communications will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the accessibility requirements • Develop a compliance strategy • Establish a sub group consisting of BSD staff, in consultation with various members of the community to execute identified items • Update our website to be Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliant and provide a higher level of accessibility 	<p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide information and support in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Web applications ○ Print media ○ Signage ○ Public communication • Access to information will be formatted to meet needs of students, staff and community members who require supports for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobility ○ Vision ○ Hearing ○ Understanding

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Learning Steering Committee will address student specific needs for Assistive Technology and Augmentative Alternative communication devices as well as universal supports for all learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible learning for all students • Purchase Accessible Learning resources • Access to Assistive Technology (AT) and Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) devices for student trialing or use through the Lending Library • Continue to offer Tier III intervention programming • The Accessible Learning Plan for the Division is developed, delivered and supported by the Accessible Learning Steering Committee
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ACTION 5 - ESTABLISH AN ACCESSIBILITY MONITORING PROGRAM	
<p>Initiatives/Actions The Accessibility Coordinator will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an annual report to Senior Administration to document progress on the Accessibility Plan • Establish a reporting format • Develop and review existing procedures and policies that will increase accessibility • The Accessibility Coordinator with the support of the Office of Communications, will communicate the process to all staff and community 	<p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Administration will monitor progress supporting the effective implementation of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act • Budgetary requirements will be clearly communicated to Senior Administration as part of the annual budget development process • Annual reporting on Accessibility Plan implementation

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Mrs. Elaine McFadzen, Assistant Superintendent
 Accessibility Coordinator
 Mr. Tim Mendel, Acting Director of Human Resources
 Mrs. Caroline Cramer, Director of Facilities & Transportation
 Mr. Brent Ewasiuk, Director of Management Information Systems Technology (MIST)
 Ms. Terri Curtis, Communications Coordinator

Senior Management's Signature: _____ Date: February 2021



Accepting the Challenge

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