



MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2022-2027

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

UPPER CANADA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD 2022-2027

**Prepared by the
Accessibility Committee**

**In accordance with
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation**

March 2023

This publication is available through the Upper Canada District School Board's:

- [Accessibility - Upper Canada District School Board \(ucdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.ucdsb.on.ca)
- https://www.ucdsb.on.ca/our_board/district_plans/accessibility
- Accessible formats upon request

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2022-2027 Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The Upper Canada District School Board is a diverse, public education organization in Eastern Ontario. It consists of dedicated individuals committed to quality education that fosters life-long learning for all, through creative and challenging learning experiences.

Our MISSION: We prepare all students for a successful life.
Our VISION: Creating Futures, Leading and Learning for All.
Our VALUES: Caring, Empathy, Fairness, Generosity, Honesty, Perseverance, Resilience, Responsibility, Respect.

Geographically, the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) is one of the largest public-school boards in Ontario covering 12,000 square kilometers (18 times the size of the Toronto DSB). Our area includes the counties of Lanark, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott, and Russell. We are bordered by the St. Lawrence River to the south, Quebec to the east, Ottawa-Carleton to the north and the lake district to the west. A wide, diverse background of cultures and activities for people of all ages can be found in the region.

As of September 2022, 18064 students were enrolled in our elementary schools and 8324 students enrolled in our secondary schools. 566 students are enrolled in alternative/continuing education. We employ approximately 4000 permanent and occasional staff. All our school facilities are available for public use after the instructional day is completed, through the Board's Community Use of Schools

The Upper Canada District School Board strives to meet the needs of its employees, students, and community members with disabilities and is committed to meeting its obligations as a public sector organization to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Our Board is committed to fulfilling requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). This accessibility plan outlines the steps that the Upper Canada District School Board is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Commitment to Accessibility Planning

This plan will be established, reviewed, and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee, and the Board's Accessibility Advisory Committee. It will be presented to the Board for approval. The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to:

- Maintaining an Accessibility Committee which will meet three times each year (January, May, and October) to review the progress of the plan and provide recommendations about Accessibility Plan.
- Continuing the process of consulting with the Special Education Advisory Committee and with persons with disabilities;
- Ensuring, wherever practicable, that Board policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and inclusive design;
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community with due regard to the availability of resources.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Committee to review and to provide recommendations to update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, to ensure that our school district's focus on accessibility remains current, relevant, and compliant with provincial standards and expectations.

Legal Framework

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
[Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

Cross-Referencing

[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.1 - Monitoring and Feedback](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.2 - Notification of Disruption of Service](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.3 - Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - Procedure 437.4 - Use of Service Animals](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service – Procedure 437.5 – Use of Support Persons](#)
[Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – Policy 438](#)

Section One: Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

- Multi-year Accessibility Plan developed, reviewed, and revised.
- Accessibility Committee, representative of teaching and non-teaching staff, administrative and management staff, and students, to provide input into the Accessibility Plan development and implementation has been established and meets regularly.
- Mandatory staff training related to accessibility, including the recognition and prevention of barriers is ongoing for all staff.
- Training is accessible to employees through a professional development software program, which offers a platform for the delivery of training modules and tracks the completion rates for all staff.
- All new construction builds and extensive renovations in the school district adhere to the most recent accessibility standards and construction design to the respective OBC (Ontario Building Code).
- A link to Accessibility is present on the home page of the Upper Canada District School Board Web Page. This link provides access to information about accessibility, including the Board's multi-year accessibility plan.
- Concerns or questions related to accessibility can be relayed to the Accessibility Committee through an email address linked to the Accessibility area of the board web site.
- The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Accommodations to address potential barriers in employment competitions and in the daily work for employees with accessibility challenges are available.
- Technology advancements and the availability of Wi-Fi in all school board sites permits easy access to print materials in an accessible format. Software innovations since the inception of the initial plan also permit print materials to be read to individuals should a visual impairment create accessibility challenges.
- Accessibility checklist developed and implemented to establish baseline information related to the review of accessibility barriers at school sites.
- Volunteer training material reviewed and made available for individuals volunteering within UCDSB.
- Accessibility guidelines for events planned and hosted by UCDSB sites developed and shared.

Section Two: 2022-2027 Accessibility Plan Actions

The 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan identifies the following actions that will be undertaken during the timelines of the plan. **Each year the Accessibility Committee will identify the specific areas of focus through an annual action plan.**

Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue staff training on accessibility – through Safe Schools.• Work with Equity and Inclusive Education Department to develop and improve:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ professional learning related to awareness and prevention of barriers,○ recognition of invisible barriers, attitudinal factors that create or reinforce barriers.• Grow representation on the Accessibility Committee to include Teaching and Learning and Special Education Departments.• Work to grow representation from individuals with disabilities on the Accessibility Committee (staff, students, parent representation).• Review the checklist – to be used in schools during the 2026 school year to review progress since baseline data collection.• Communications to continue to monitor accessibility features to promote barrier free access to information and communication.• Work with distance learning/digital learning team to promote accessibility features as they are developed by various platforms/software suppliers.• Engage in an annual discussion with SEAC about the Multi-year Accessibility plan, actions, timelines, and progress.• Provide an annual report to the senior team detailing the items above.• Use data collected by UCDSB to identify areas of ongoing challenge related to students with disabilities to develop recommendations to reduce barriers.• Review the Multi-year Accessibility Plan each year to use information collected to develop more precise actions to identify, reduce and prevent barriers.

Appendix A: Definitions

Accessibility — The term accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. It is used to describe how widely a service, product, device, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Accessibility can be seen as the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

Barrier — Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

Disability — Ontario's accessibility law adopts the definition for disability that is in the Ontario Human Rights Code. It defines disability broadly:

- 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."

Appendix B: Barriers and Solutions

Attitudinal barriers may result in people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities.

Informational and communication barriers arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available to others.

Technological barriers occur when technology or the way it is used does not meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Systemic barriers in policies, practices and procedures and result in people with disabilities being treated differently than others or sometimes excluded altogether.

Physical and architectural barriers in the environment and prevent access for people with disabilities.

Appendix C: Accessibility Committee Lists

2022-2023 Accessibility Committee

Name	Position
Jennifer Perry	Superintendent of Special Education and Student Wellness
Adrienne McEwen	Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Peter Lindsay	Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
Erin Hurford	Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
Robb Bowman and Patti McNamee	Ability Management Specialists
Jennifer McMaster	Elementary Principal
Megan Kilby	Student Representative
Brad Notman	Manager of Purchasing & Admin Services
Cary Kronwald	Secondary Principal
Shelley Swerdfeger	Lead Custodian
Peter Bosch	Manager of Design and Construction
Lydia Foley	Executive Assistant (Special Education and Student Wellness)

Appendix D: Yearly Action Plans

The Accessibility Committee will develop an action plan for each year of the multi-year plan and post it in this appendix.

2022-2023 - Accessibility Action Plan			
Initiative	Action	Timeline	Measure
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Review Accessibility Walk results with the committee to determine action items to be included in the new plan	February 2022	School information was reviewed with the committee
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Review the 2018-2021 Plan to determine items that will be brought forward from the current plan into the new 2022-2027 Multi-Year Plan	June 2022	Review complete and elements of previous plan brought forward into the new Multi-Year Plan
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Review the K-12 Accessibility Standards with the Committee	June 2022	Review complete. Committee awaiting further information from Provincial Government on how the document might be implemented.
Accessibility Planning	Work with the committee to identify goals for next Multi-Year Plan (2022-2027)	February 2023 – June 2023	Draft 2022-2027 plan has been developed and next steps identified for the committee.
Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers to Accessibility	Continue staff training on accessibility – through Safe Schools and Equity and Inclusion Departments	September 2022 - December 2023	
Data Collection	Use data collected by UCDSB to identify areas of ongoing challenge related to students with disabilities to develop recommendations to reduce barriers.	September 2022 – June 2023	
Accessibility Planning	Review the checklist – to be used in schools during the 2026 school year to review progress since baseline data collection.	June 2023	
Technological Solutions	Work with distance learning/digital learning team to promote accessibility features as they are developed	September 2022 - December 2023	

	by various platforms/software suppliers.		
Accessibility Planning	Provide an annual report to the senior team detailing the items above.	November 2023	
Accessibility Planning	Review the Multi-year Accessibility Plan each year to use information collected to develop more precise actions to identify, reduce and prevent barriers.	November 2023	
Communication of Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	Engage various stakeholders to communicate the 2022-2027 Accessibility Plan	September 2022 - December 2023	