



# **Upper Grand District School Board**

## **Multi-year Accessibility Plan**

**For the Period January 2013 to January 2018**

**Prepared by**

**Upper Grand District School Board  
Accessibility Steering Committee**

**In accordance with  
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005  
Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards**

This publication is available through the Upper Grand District School Board's website [www.ugdsb.on.ca/accessibility](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/accessibility) or in other accessible formats upon request

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## Introduction/Aim

The Upper Grand District School Board believes in providing an environment in all of its facilities that builds independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for our students, parents/guardians, staff and the public. To this end, the Board is committed to the goal of giving persons with disabilities the same opportunity of access to its services in the same location and in a similar way as these services are available to all others we serve.

This multi-year Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). It incorporates the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA). The Plan describes the measures that the Board will take over the five year period from 2013-2018 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work, learn and participate in the School Board community and environment including students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and visitors to the Board and its schools. The plan will be guided by the Board's Accessibility Standards Policy.

## Objectives

This Plan:

- describes the process by which the Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities;
- reviews recent efforts of the Board to remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities;
- describes the measures the Board will take in the period 2013-2018 to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities;
- makes a commitment to provide an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the multi-year accessibility plan;
- makes a commitment to review and update the multi-year accessibility plan at least once every 5 years; and
- describes how the Board will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

## **Commitment to Accessibility**

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

- maintaining an Accessibility Steering Committee and implementing the ongoing plans of the committee;
- continuing the process of consulting with SEAC and with persons with disabilities;
- ensuring, wherever practicable, that Board policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and inclusive/universal design;
- improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Steering Committee to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that will enable the Upper Grand District School Board to meet these commitments.

## **Description of the Board**

The Upper Grand District School Board serves approximately 32,000 students through 60 elementary school and 11 secondary schools in the City of Guelph, County of Wellington and County of Dufferin.

Student Success is the goal for more than 3,000 dedicated teaching and support staff who are aided by the contributions of caring volunteers and service providers. The board has 10 elected trustees and 2 student trustees.

The operating budget for the 2012 - 2013 school year is \$326,631,216.00, including approximately \$380,000 dedicated to accessibility. Additional funds are allocated to assist with accessibility through capital, renewal, Full Day Kindergarten renovations, and the Special Education Department.

## **Accessibility Steering Committee**

The Accessibility Steering Committee will provide input regarding accessibility issues, where appropriate, with regard to new policies and procedures and to those under review. Consideration of ongoing identification of barriers will be the

responsibility of the committee and will, wherever practicable, be incorporated into the multi-year plan.

Members of the Accessibility Steering Committee as of January 2013:

David Gohn, Trustee  
Bruce Schieck, Trustee  
Bonnie Talbot, Superintendent of Education  
Denise Buhrow, Human Resources  
Mark Weidmark, Communications  
Andrew Pasiciel, Information Technology  
Deirdre Pyke, Health, Safety and Disability  
Ted Brown, Information Technology  
Sandra Szpular, Special Education  
Blair Capling, Facility Services  
Lidia Halyk, Purchasing  
Jeff Weddig, Secondary  
Paul Huddleston, Elementary  
Julie Bodiam, Continuing Education  
Greg Seguin, Student Transportation  
Donna Gerber, Equity

The Accessibility Planning Committee held four meetings between September and December 2012 to develop the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2013-18.

## **Prevention and Removal of Barriers**

Since 2001, the principles of inclusionary practice, freedom from barriers and accessible environments have informed the Board's policies, programs, procedures and services. Through the annual accessibility plan implemented under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, the Board's programming, policies and practices have been assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

This process will continue and will be guided by this multi-year accessibility plan which places particular emphasis on the provisions of the regulations made under AODA with regard to customer service, information and communications, employment and school transportation.

## **Identification of Barriers**

A variety of accessibility initiatives continue to be addressed through various departments including the Director's, Program, Plant Operations, Program Services/Special Education, Human Resources, Information Technology and the Student Transportation Consortium.

The Accessibility Steering Committee uses the following methods to identify barriers to accessibility:

### **Presentations**

Presentations to trustees, senior administration, principals and SEAC provide an opportunity for input prior to approval and posting of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan on the board website.

### **Feedback**

Feedback forms are available in all school and board offices. These are reviewed monthly by the Accessibility Steering Committee. Responses are created as appropriate.

The Board also welcomes feedback by email, telephone and an online form.

### **Staff Training**

Customer Service training is mandatory for all employees. Completion is tracked and data is reviewed monthly by the Accessibility Steering Committee.

### **Continuous Review of Standards**

The Accessibility Steering Committee is kept abreast of all regulatory requirements by attending conferences and reviewing information as it becomes available. The Accessibility Steering Committee makes use of the resources provided by the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Education Services Corporation.

### **Compliance to AODA standards**

Each department within the board provides the Accessibility Steering Committee with monthly updates regarding compliance to the standards.

### **Accessibility Handbook**

Staff awareness of accessibility issues is increased through the use of a handbook. It is found on the staff web portal.

### **Audit of Board Facilities**

An audit of all board facilities was completed in 2010. The Accessibility Steering Committee uses the findings to prioritize accessibility projects.

## **Collaboration with Plant Operations and Special Education**

The Accessibility Steering Committee collaborates with Plant Operations and Special Education staff to identify and select accessibility projects. As often as possible, projects are planned in conjunction with other projects in order to save on costs and to capitalize on existing manpower.

## **Achievements 2008-2012**

### **Policy, Plans and Practices**

In the development and review of all policies, plans and procedures, the Board endeavors to ensure that we are respectful and inclusive of all students, staff, volunteers and community members.

Policy #504, Equity and Inclusive Education was adopted in 2010 and revised in 2011. This policy endeavors to ensure that the Board provides and maintains a learning and working environment that promotes fairness, justice and equality for its staff, students and community.

Policy #211, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, has been in effect since 2009. This policy will be rescinded in 2013 and replaced by Policy #214, Accessibility Standards. The new policy will cover the AODA requirements in the areas of: Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation requirements.

In 2006, the Board adopted the Protocol for Service Dogs in Schools for Students With Special Needs.

Collaborative Agreements have been established with community agencies to augment services for students including:

Dufferin Child and Family Services, Homewood Community Addictions Services, Trellis Mental Health and Developmental Services and Kerry's Place Autism Services.

### **Physical**

The Special Education Department monitors the needs of individual students with disabilities and works with Plant Operations to prioritize modifications as required. Student specific equipment, such as change tables and equipment for students who are deaf or hard of hearing or for students who are blind or have low vision are purchased through Special Equipment Amount (SEA) grants. Many of these modifications also reduce barriers for staff and other persons with disabilities.

In 2010 – 2011 the Board completed an audit of all board sites to identify existing physical barriers. The Accessibility Steering Committee and Plant Operations use the audit to plan renovations or upgrades to meet accessibility requirements.

New elementary and secondary schools are designed to aid access for students, staff and members of the public with physical disabilities including barrier free entrances with automatic door openers, accessible washrooms and designated accessible parking spaces.

The Guelph Board Office was renovated in 2009. Enhancements included automatic door openers, accessible entrance, four accessible washrooms, and a voice amplification system in the board room.

Accessible washrooms have been added to: Brant Avenue Public School, Central Public School, Centre Dufferin District High School, Drayton Public School, Edward Johnson Public School, Orangeville District Secondary School, the Orangeville Board Office, Ottawa Crescent Public School, Ponsonby Public School, Rockwood Centennial Public School and Victoria Terrace Public School.

Automatic Door Openers have been added to: Centennial CVI, Centennial Hylands Elementary School, Centre Dufferin District Secondary School, College Heights Secondary School, Drayton Public School, John F Ross CVI (2 entrances), Orangeville District Secondary School and Priory Park Public School (2 entrances).

Accessible parking spaces have been added to a number of schools, including: Drayton Public School, Orangeville District Secondary School and Ponsonby Public School.

Upgrades have been made to front entrances at school locations to allow for barrier free access: Centennial Hylands Elementary School, Central Public School, Credit Meadows Elementary School, Edward Johnson Public School, Hyland Heights Elementary School, Jean Little Public School Minto Clifford Public School, Montgomery Village Public School, Rockwood Centennial Public School and Salem Public School.

Driveway and sidewalk upgrades have been made at the following locations: College Heights Secondary School, Drayton Public School and Minto-Clifford Public School.

Curb Cuts were installed at Orangeville District Secondary School and Westwood Public School.

An accessible kitchen was added to a DD classroom at Orangeville District Secondary School.



A new DD area with an accessible kitchen and washroom was created at Centre Wellington District High School.

Accessible washrooms have been added to DD rooms at Priory Park Public School.

An elevator was added to Centre Dufferin District High School.

A stage lift was installed at Orangeville District Secondary School.

A lift and automatic door opener was added to Orangeville Board Office. The parking lot was repaved and accessible parking spaces were added.

New school construction has adhered to the current building code and includes level access to schools, automatic door openers, elevators or lifts in schools of more than one floor, accessible washrooms, designated accessible parking spaces (for example, Rickson Ridge Public School, John McCrae Public School, Ken Danby Public School, Westminster Woods Public School and King George Public School).

New barrier free Enviro-Centres were constructed at Island Lake Public School, J.D. Hogarth Public School, Minto Clifford Public School and Rockwood Centennial Public School.

A lift was installed to allow wheel chair access to the stage at Hyland Heights Elementary School and King George Public School.

## **Information & Communication**

### **General**

The Board endeavors to ensure that all persons are able to access information provided by the board in a manner that is fair, empathetic, respectful and timely. The use of plain language and the acquisition of services, technologies and other resources that accommodate all persons' needs help eradicate informational barriers.

Third party Sign language interpreters have been hired to assist parents and other community members to participate in parent teacher interviews and various school events (for example, graduations, concerts, school plays).

A sound system was installed throughout College Heights Secondary School and Kortright Hills Public School to assist students with hearing impairment. This equipment improves the sound quality for all students and teachers benefit since there is less strain on their voices.

The Special Education Report was revised to improve the use of plain language and converted to an accessible format.

The Parent Guide to Special Education was revised to improve the use of plain language and converted to an accessible format.

Information regarding pre-school to school transitions has been made available in a DVD format in addition to the print format.

In 2011, four pilot projects investigated the use of technology and equipment to assist students in learning and communication. These included: IPADS and apps, supports for vision needs, resources for self-regulation and supports for reading, writing and mathematics.

## **Websites**

Adobe Acrobat 10 software was purchased and installed at all elementary and secondary school offices and select offices in the two Board Offices (140 licenses in all) to assist in creating accessible documents and websites.

A training program for Adobe Acrobat 10 is planned for all school Office Coordinators and several Board Office staff.

The Board Website was updated and most sections now meet WCAG 2.0 Level A guidelines.

The Human Resources section of the Board website is in accessible format. The information pages are accessible and job postings are in process of being converted to an accessible format.

Fifty of the 71 school websites have been upgraded with accessibility improvements. The Web Support and Accessibility Developer is in the process of checking all school websites for accessibility.

## **Attitudinal**

The goal is to ensure greater awareness and responsiveness to the needs of all individuals so that dignity is respected and there is a Board-wide commitment to equity for all. The key to the removal of attitudinal barriers is awareness and training.

The Board has provided training in Customer Service Standards for all employees and volunteers. The Accessibility Steering Committee tracks this training for employees. The training is also included in the orientation for new employees. As of June 2012, 82% of employees were trained.

The Accessibility Steering Committee designed, produced and distributed accessibility posters for all sites (schools and Board Offices) to increase awareness of the Board's commitment to accessibility.

Workshops were provided for staff to promote greater understanding of how to support students with special needs (for example, mental health needs, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Tourettes, Development Disabilities and low vision).

Presentations have been provided for students to promote peer understanding of students with special needs (for example, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Tourettes).

Workshops were provided for staff and presentations for students to increase awareness and promote equity and inclusion and bully prevention and intervention.

In 2011, Program Services provided the resource “Making a Difference” for all schools and a workshop for teachers, Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators, Child and Youth Counselors, and Social Workers to promote greater awareness of and understanding of how to support students with mental health needs

MyHealth Magazine has been made available to staff and secondary students. It is an online interactive tool designed to promote a greater awareness and understanding of health and mental health issues

### **Education and Training**

Since 2008, in excess of 1250 Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims have been processed to enable students to attend school and to access the curriculum, programs and resources. SEA claims have provided hardware and software for students (for example, laptops, iPads, text to speech and speech to text software). Other types of equipment purchased through SEA funding include hearing systems and associated equipment for deaf and hard of hearing students, as well as other equipment to address physical or sensory needs of students.

The Board purchased a board-wide license for Speak Q, thus enabling all students and staff to access this voice to text software.

Students and staff have been trained in a variety of software to assist students with accessing information and curriculum including assistive technology (for example, Dragon Naturally Speaking, Kurzweill, Word Q).

Textbooks and other educational materials have been made available in alternate formats (for example, digital books, Braille). UG2GO also provides many resources in a variety of formats.

### **Employment**

Procedures and a flow chart were developed to ensure that all employees receive information about Emergency Response Plans and that employees with disabilities

are aware of the opportunity to request an Individualized Emergency Response Plan in an accessible format if required.

Information was shared with all managers with the request that managers share it with current employees at the first staff meeting of the school year.

Forms were developed to enable employees with disabilities to request an Individualized Response Plan. Where such plans are requested, a template has been developed for consistent usage across the board.

Human Resources has focused on assisting staff members through Individualized Accommodation Plans. A third party Kinesiologist was hired to assist with workplace design and individual accommodation plans. These plans have included direct and increased access to physiotherapy and massage therapy for rehabilitation and improved function and pain management. Staff have been provided direct access to third party medical assessments. Specific technology and equipment has been purchased in order to support staff. This includes medical chairs, ergonomic office chairs and carts, voice amplification systems, hands free headsets, arm supports, smart boards, printers, projectors, laptops and software.

### **Transportation**

Service de transport de Wellington Dufferin Student Transportation Services (STWDSTS) is compliant with the July 2011 regulations.

If possible students with special transportation needs are transported in our conventional vehicles. Where this is not possible, alternate plans are made. All of our wheelchair and special needs vehicles are integrated with regular education students where opportunities present themselves.

STWDSTS has completed the accessibility training for all bus company staff, school bus drivers and spare drivers.

A total of 681 people have gone through the training program and all new staff and bus drivers are required to take the training.

STWDSTS is updating its web site to make it more user friendly and accessible.

Presently STWDSTS has a representative sitting on a subcommittee of OASBO Transportation "Accessibility Committee." This group is assembling information to assist the student transportation industry across the Province to meet accessibility regulations. The Committee will be using the OASBO website to provide documentation and templates necessary for meeting the regulations.

## **Barriers to be addressed under the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 filed in June 2011 pursuant to the AODA identified specific requirements to achieve accessibility in the areas of:

Information and Communications  
Employment  
Transportation

These requirements build on the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service which came into force in 2007.

The Upper Grand District School Board intends, through this Multi-year Accessibility Plan, to take action to address barriers to accessibility related to the standards identified in the current Regulations. This is in addition to ongoing work the Board is undertaking with regard to identification and removal of barriers in the Board's physical environment.

## **2012-2013**

### **Policy and Plans**

- Rescind Policy #211, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and replace it with a new Policy #214, Accessibility Standards that will encompass both the Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards (including Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation) by January 2013.
- Post the new Accessibility Standards Policy and Procedures on the Board website by January 2013.
- Develop new templates to ensure Board policies and procedures are created in an accessible electronic format. New policies, including #214 Accessibility Standards, will be written using the templates. Existing policies will be converted when they come up for review.
- Develop, implement and monitor a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the board's strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities by December 2012.
- Post the accessibility plan on the Board website and provide the plan in accessible format upon request (ongoing).
- Review and update the plan at least once every five years.
- Update the plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Steering Committee.

- Provide an annual status report on the board's implementation of the plan by November of each year.

### **Procurement**

- Review procurement practices to incorporate accessibility criteria for the purchase of goods and services, facilities by January 2013.

### **Physical**

- Renovations/updates at various sites will include accessibility features (ongoing).
- New school construction will continue to adhere to the current building code and will include accessibility features: level access to schools, automatic door openers, elevators or lifts in schools of more than one floor, accessible washrooms, designated accessible parking spaces and a lift to allow wheelchair access to the stage (ongoing).
- The following new schools are scheduled to open in 2013: Shelburne and Laurine Avenue.
- The following new schools are scheduled to open in 2014: Lee Street (East Guelph), Zaduk Place (South Guelph), Settler's Creek (Orangeville), Rockwood.

### **Attitudinal**

- Deliver training to all employees, volunteers, trustees re: Customer Service Standards using on-line training (ongoing).
- Accessibility Steering Committee to track training, review data and follow up on any gaps in training (ongoing).
- The Accessibility Steering Committee will investigate and decide on a training program for the Integrated Accessibility Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code (to be purchased and ready for September 2013).
- All staff who design, deliver or teach educational programs and courses will undertake accessibility awareness training related to their responsibilities. It is expected that staff will deliver instruction through a lens of accessibility awareness (ongoing).
- The Special Education Department will provide a variety of workshops and presentations for staff to address attitudinal barriers and provide information about issues related to accessibility. Areas of focus include: mental health, self-regulation and developmental disabilities.
- The Accessibility Steering Committee will provide training options and materials for Principals to use with school staff.
- Several teachers K – 12 will pilot Accessibility lessons for the (Ontario Education Services Corporation) (OESC) TeachAble Project (Fall 2012)
- Accessibility lessons created by the (OESC) TeachAble Project will be shared with all staff by January 2013.

### **Educational and/or Training Materials**

- Provide educational resources or materials in accessible formats upon request to persons with disabilities by January 2013.
- Begin a five year plan to update technology for Special Education Classrooms and Programs. The first year will focus on classes for students with developmental disabilities.
- Review the types of technology provided through Special Equipment Amount Funding for students. Investigate more effective alternatives and create a plan to implement findings.
- Conduct an inquiry project based on concepts from Learning for All, at J.D. Hogarth Public School, Elora Public School and Centre Wellington District High School to examine how to promote the use of technology in classrooms in Grades 7-10 with an emphasis on reducing barriers for students with special needs who require technology.

### **Information and Communication**

- Develop procedures covering Information and Communications Standards by January 2013.
- Provide student records and information on program requirements in accessible formats upon request to persons with disabilities by January 2013.
- Review Board and school websites to assess level of accessibility and upgrade in advance of compliance dates to meet WCAG 2.0, Level A accessibility standards (ongoing).
- Provide staff training to Office Co-Ordinators and Clerical staff in accessibility techniques for software applications including Adobe Acrobat 10.
- The Web Support and Accessibility Developer will provide coaching and instruction on web accessibility to school and Board office staff (ongoing).
- Publish and maintain resources on the UGDSB Staff Web Portal that includes techniques for web accessibility and for creating documents in accessible electronic formats (ongoing).

### **Employment**

- Ensure that Emergency Plans for persons with disabilities are prepared, in an accessible format, upon request by January 2012 and ongoing.
- Develop Procedures for Accessible Employment by January 2013.

## **Transportation**

- Review transportation procedures to ensure compliance with AODA standards: integrated accessible transportation or alternative transportation where integrated services are not possible (ongoing).

## **2013-2014**

### **Attitudinal**

- Provide training to all staff, volunteers on Integrated Accessibility Standards requirements and on Human Rights Code provisions re disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training (beginning in September 2013 and then ongoing). Track this training of employees.
- The Special Education Department will offer a variety of workshops and presentations for staff to address attitudinal barriers and provide information about issues related to accessibility. Areas of focus include: mental health, learning disabilities, blind and low vision.

### **Educational and/or Training Materials**

- The second year of the Special Education Technology Refresh Plan includes: Resource Rooms for teacher use and instructional use for the first half of the schools.
- Purchase technology provided through Special Equipment Amount Funding for students based on findings from 2012-2013.
- Review findings from Learning for All projects, make adjustments and expand strategies and supports as feasible to examine how to promote the use of technology in classrooms in Grades 7-10 with an emphasis on reducing barriers for students with special needs who require technology.

### **Information and Communication**

- Review readiness to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request to persons with disabilities in preparation for the January 2015 compliance date.
- Ensure all new websites launched after January 1, 2014 and all new web content on those websites meet WCAG 2.0 Level A guidelines.

### **Employment**

- Review and update Human Resources procedures and practices with regard to recruitment, job accommodations, alternative accessible formats and communication supports, individual accommodation plans, return to work,



performance appraisal, career or professional development, redeployment by January 2014.

### **Recruitment**

- Notify employees and the public re availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities in recruitment process
- Notify that accommodations are available in recruitment process re materials or processes to be used
- Consult with applicants and arrange accommodation in a way that takes into account accessibility needs due to the disability
- Notify the successful applicant of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities

### **Job Accommodations**

- Inform employees of policies used to support employees with disabilities including job accommodations – provide information to new employees as soon as practical after hiring and provide updated information to employees when there are changes to existing policies.

### **Alternative Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees**

- The Board will consult with employee and provide/arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for information needed to perform the employees job and for information generally available to employees in the workplace.
- The Board will consult with employee regarding the suitability of accessible format or communication support.

### **Individual Accommodation Plans**

- Develop a written process for developing documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- Process will include: manner for employee to participate; means of individual assessment; manner for employer requesting outside medical evaluation; manner for employee to have union or other representation; steps to protect privacy; frequency of review and how it will be done; if plan is denied, how reasons will be provided; and means for providing plan in accessible format.
- Plan will include, on request, information re accessible formats and communication supports provided, individualized workplace emergency response information if required and shall identify any other accommodation to be provided

### **Return to Work**

- Put in place a Return to Work Process for employees absent due to disability and who require accommodation upon return to work.
- Document the Return to Work process, outlining steps employer will take to facilitate Return to Work and use documented individual accommodation plans.
- This does not replace RTW processes under any other statute.

### **Performance Management**

- Take into account accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans in using performance management process.

### **Career Development and Advancement**

- If career development/advancement is provided the employer shall take into account accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans.

### **Redeployment**

- Employer shall take into account accessibility needs and individual accommodations plans in redeployment process if one exists.

### **Transportation**

- Consult with parents or guardians of students with disabilities to develop individual school transportation plans that detail student assistance needs for each student with a disability by January 2014.
- This includes plans for boarding, securement and deboarding, and a process to identify and communicate roles and responsibilities for all those involved in the student's transportation

## **2014-2015**

### **Attitudinal**

- Offer a variety of workshops and presentations to staff to address attitudinal barriers and provide information about addressing issues related to accessibility. Areas of focus include: deaf and hard of hearing, physical disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.

### **Educational and/or Training Materials**

- School libraries will provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request by January 2015.

- Schools will provide, upon request, accessible or conversion ready formats of textbooks by January 2015.
- The third year of the Special Education Technology Refresh Plan includes: Resource rooms for teacher use and instructional use for the remaining half of schools.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of technology provided through Special Equipment Amount Funding for students, used in 2013-2014 and adjust as feasible.

### **Information and Communication**

- Identify and have ready access to resources that enable the Board to provide information and communication supports upon request, in a timely manner and at no greater cost than charged to others, to persons with disabilities by January 2015. Consider access to board meetings/school events.
- Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards (ongoing preparation for 2021 compliance date).
- Make additional adjustments based on year 2 findings from Learning for All projects and implement across the system, as applicable to promote the use of technology in classrooms in Grades 7-10 with an emphasis on reducing barriers for students with special needs who require technology.

## **2015-2016**

### **Attitudinal**

- Offer a variety of workshops and presentations to staff to address attitudinal barriers and provide information about addressing issues related to accessibility. Areas of focus: mental health and specific disorders according to school board needs and provincial initiatives (ongoing).

### **Educational and/or Training Materials**

- Ensure readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion ready format of digital or multi-media resources upon request (ongoing preparation for compliance by January, 2020).
- Year 4 of Special Education Technology Refresh Plan: Classes for students with giftedness and mild intellectual disabilities.
- Continue evaluating and making necessary changes to technology and other equipment provided through Special Equipment Amount Funding for students.

### **Information and Communication**

- Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards in preparation for the 2021 compliance date.
- Evaluate the use of technology in the classroom that reduces barriers for students with special needs and identify areas to be addressed.

## **2016-2017**

### **Attitudinal**

- Offer a variety of workshops and presentations to staff to address attitudinal barriers and provide information about addressing issues related to accessibility. Areas of focus: mental health and specific disorders according to school board needs and provincial initiatives.

### **Educational and/or Training Materials**

- Year 5 of Special Education Technology Refresh Plan: Classes for students with learning disabilities.
- Review the procedures and practices associated with Special Equipment Amount Funding.

### **Information and Communication**

- Review status of capability for school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request in preparation for 2020 compliance date.
- Review accessibility features of all updates and purchases related to board and school websites in anticipation of WCAG, 2.0, Level AA standards in preparation for 2021 compliance date.
- Create a plan to address the barriers identified in 2015-2016 for students with special needs who require technology.

## **Review and Monitoring Process**

The Accessibility Steering Committee meets monthly during the year to review progress and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

The Accessibility Steering Committee will ensure that in respect of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan the following steps take place:

- (a) An annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the plan is prepared.
- (b) At least once every 5 years the plan is reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee and other relevant committees.

## Communication of the Plan

In addition to the public availability of the plan as referenced earlier, the Upper Grand District School Board will post an annual status report on the progress of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan on the Board's website. The Board will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

Questions, comments or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:

Bonnie Talbot  
Superintendent of Education  
Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee  
Upper Grand District School Board  
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