



**MULTI-YEAR  
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 2012 TO DECEMBER 2017**

# **MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**Rainbow District School Board  
December 2012 – December 2017**

**Prepared by**

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

December 2012

This publication is available through the Rainbow District School Board's

- Website ([www.rainbowschools.ca](http://www.rainbowschools.ca) → About Us → Accessibility)
- In accessible formats upon request

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## **Aim**

This multi-year Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the Integration Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. It incorporates the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*. The Plan describes the measures that the Rainbow District School Board will take over the five year period from 2012-2017 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 Policies and Procedures.

## **Objectives**

This Plan:

- Describes the process by which the Rainbow District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- Reviews recent efforts of the Rainbow District School Board to remove and prevent barriers;
- Describes the measures the Rainbow District School Board will take in the period 2012-2017 to identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- 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;
- Describes how the Rainbow School Board will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

## **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, Parent Involvement Committee and the Accessibility Planning Committee. It will be presented to the Board for approval.

The Rainbow District School Board is committed to:

- Maintaining an Accessibility Planning Committee;
- 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/universal design. The Accessibility Planning Committee will provide input re: accessibility issues, where appropriate, with regard to new policies and procedures and to those under review;
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community. Consideration of ongoing identification of barriers will be the responsibility of the Accessibility Planning and will, wherever practicable, be incorporated in the multi-year plan.

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

### **Description of Rainbow District School Board**

Rainbow District School Board covers a geographic area of more than 14,757 square kilometers in Sudbury, Espanola, Manitoulin Island and Shining Tree.

Nine trustees govern Rainbow District School Board, including a trustee who represents 11 First Nations who have educational service agreements with the Board. Elected every four years, the trustees are the public's voice at the Board.

Rainbow District School Board is the largest school board in Northern Ontario with 35 elementary schools and 9 secondary schools. The Board also operates other educational programs – Barrydowne College, Cecil Facer Secondary School, Frank Flowers School, N'Swakamok Native Alternative School and the Ruth MacMillan Centre.

Rainbow District School Board had 14,067 students on October 31, 2012, with a staff of approximately 1,558. The approved budget for 2012-1013 was \$177 million.

In Rainbow Schools, programs focus on student success from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 in English and French Immersion.

### **Mission**

We bring learning to life, enabling students to fulfill their aspirations.

### **Vision**

We are leaders in learning, inspiring success for all students by reaching minds and touching hearts.

### **Values**

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| * Honesty        | * Courtesy     |
| * Respect        | * Resilience   |
| * Empathy        | * Acceptance   |
| * Responsibility | * Courage      |
| * Integrity      | * Co-operation |

### **Priorities**

- Ensure success for all (Literacy, Numeracy, Pathways and Community, Culture and Caring)
- Ensure efficient resource management
- Promote succession planning

### **Members of Accessibility Planning Committee**

| <b>Working Group Member</b> | <b>Department</b>                             | <b>Contact Information</b>                                      |
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The Accessibility Planning Committee held meetings between October 2012 and January 2013 to develop the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2012-17.

***(Note: The above list is based on typical composition of Accessibility Planning Committee or Accessibility Working Groups currently in place.)***

**Strategy for prevention and removal of barriers**

Beginning in September 1, 2001, the principles of inclusionary practice, freedom from barriers and accessible environments have informed all Rainbow District School Board policies, programs, procedures and services. Through the annual accessibility plan status report process implemented under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, the Rainbow District School Board’s programming, policies and practices have been assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility. This process will continue through the establishment of a multi-year accessibility plan which places particular emphasis on the provisions of the regulations made under the AODA with regard to customer service, information and communications, employment and school transportation.

**Barrier Identification Methodologies**

The Accessibility Planning Committee uses the following barrier-identification methods:

| <b>Group</b> | <b>Methods</b>   |
|--------------|--|
| Students     | Barriers to accessibility are identified by students, parents and school staff. Facilities, Special Education and staff work with stakeholders to remove/prevent barriers and develop accommodation plans.   |
| Staff        | Employee and Human Resources staff identify barriers, restrictions and limitations and develop accommodation plans.  |
| Public       | Barriers to accessibility are identified by individuals accessing programs and services offered by the school board. Members of the public may bring concerns to the attention of the school or the Board Office. The Rainbow District School Board website also provides an opportunity for feedback. Barriers identified by members of the public are referred to the Board’s Accessibility Committee. Development of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the ongoing feedback opportunities are additional important methods to identify barriers to accessibility. |
| Board Wide   | Ongoing liaison with bargaining partners, provincial associations, school boards, and public sector agencies   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | provides updates on emerging barriers to accessibility. SEAC, PIC and the Ontario Public Schools Boards Association are examples of some of the resources used for barrier identification. Review of our facilities provides up-to-date identification of barriers and permits planning to remove/prevent such barriers. |
|--|--|

**Recent Barrier Removal Achievements**

The most recent Annual Accessibility Plan developed in accordance with the Ontarians with Disability Act (ODA) identified a range of barriers and appropriate strategies for their removal. The detailed achievements are set out in the following chart:

| <b>Type of Barrier</b>      | <b>Location</b>                             | <b>Action Taken</b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Physical                    | See Appendix 1                              |   |
| Information & Communication | System Wide                                 | Board and school websites will be reviewed for compliance for WCAG 2.0 standards and training for website development will occur for website administrators |
| Information & Communication | Walden, Algonquin, Churchill Public Schools | Installation of sound system in three classrooms to address needs of students with bilateral sensorineural hearing loss                                     |
| Information & Communication | LoEllen and Lasalle Secondary Schools       | Provision of enlargers for computers to address needs of students with visual challenges  |
| Information & Communication | Sudbury Secondary                           | Voice synthesizers for students with communication difficulties   |
| Attitudinal                 | System-wide                                 | Training in Accessible Customer Service for employees   |



New school construction has adhered to the current building code and includes level access to schools, automatic door openers, elevators in schools of more than one floor, accessible washrooms. Details of accessibility by school is outlined in Appendix 1.

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

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 filed in June 2011 pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 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.

Rainbow Board intends, through this Multi-year Accessibility Plan for the period 2012-2017, to take action to address barriers to accessibility related to the Standards areas of 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**

| <b>Type of Barrier</b>                       | <b>Location</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Effective Date</b> |
|--|-----------------|--|-----------------------|
| Systemic                                     | Board-wide      | Review Accessibility Policy Statement  | January 1, 2013       |
| Attitudinal – Information and Communications | Board-wide      | Develop a Procedure re Accessible Information and Communications                                   | January 1, 2013       |
| Attitudinal – Employment                     | Board-wide      | Develop Procedure re Accessible Employment   | January 1, 2013       |
| Systemic                                     | Board-wide      | Review procurement practices to incorporate accessibility criteria for goods, services, facilities | January 1, 2013       |
| Information and Communication                | Board-wide      | Provide accessibility awareness training for all Educators / classroom-based staff                 | Ongoing 2012-2013     |

|                               |            |  |                 |
|-------------------------------|------------|--|-----------------|
|                               |            | on accessible instruction and program delivery (e.g. TeachAble Project website/resource)   |                 |
| Information and Communication | Board-wide | Review practices to ensure readiness to provide educational resources or materials, student records and information on program requirements in accessible formats upon request | January 1, 2013 |

**2013-2014**

| <b>Type of Barrier</b>         | <b>Location</b> | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Effective Date</b>   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Systemic - attitudinal         | Board-wide      | Provide training to all staff, volunteers on accessibility standards requirements and on Human Rights Code provisions re disabilities and ensure third-party providers have similar training                              | Ongoing 2013-2014   |
| Information and Communication  | Board Offices   | Review process for receiving/responding to feedback to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities and readiness to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Notify the public re above. | January 1, 2014 (as per AODA, however, RDSB has already implemented this process) |
| Information and Communications | Board-wide      | Review Board and school websites to assess level of accessibility. Ensure that new sites and web content published after Jan 1, 2012 meet WCAG 2.0, Level A standards.  | January 1, 2014   |

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Systemic - Employment                                  | Board-wide  | 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 | January 1, 2014  |
| Information and Communication – Student Transportation | Board-wide (Student Transportation and Special Education) | Consult with parents and develop individual school transportation plans for students with disabilities, clarifying roles and responsibilities   | Required by January 1, 2014 in AODA however, RDSB has already implemented this process |
| Information and Communication                          | School Libraries  | Review the readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request  | Ongoing 2013-2014 in anticipation of the 2015 compliance date                          |
| Physical   | Various sites   | Remove barriers to accessibility to address student and staff needs (see Appendix 1)  | Ongoing 2013-2014  |

**2014-2015**

| <b>Type of Barrier</b>        | <b>Location</b> | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Effective Date</b> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------------|
| Information and Communication | Board-wide      | Identify and have ready access to resources that enable the Board to provide information and communication supports upon request and in a timely manner to persons with disabilities. (Consider access to board meetings/school | January 1, 2015       |

|                               |                  |  |                                       |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
|                               |                  | events)  |                                       |
| Information and Communication | School Libraries | Ensure readiness of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of print resources upon request                           | January 1, 2015                       |
| Information and Communication | Board-wide       | 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 deadline |
| Physical                      | Various Sites    | Remove barriers to accessibility to address student and staff needs (see Appendix 1)   | Ongoing 2014-2015                     |

## 2015-2016

| Type of Barrier               | Location         | Action   | Effective Date                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Systemic                      | Board-wide       | Review status of accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff have been trained.   | Ongoing                               |
| Information and Communication | School Libraries | Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of digital or multimedia resources upon request in anticipation of 2020 deadline | Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline |
| Information and Communication | Board-wide       | 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 deadline |

|          |               |  |                   |
|----------|---------------|--|-------------------|
| Physical | Various Sites | Remove barriers to accessibility to address student and staff needs (see Appendix 1) | Ongoing 2015-2016 |
|----------|---------------|--|-------------------|

## 2016-2017

| Type of Barrier               | Location         | Action   | Effective Date                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Systemic                      | Board-wide       | Review status of accessibility awareness training to ensure new staff have been trained  | Ongoing 2016-2017                     |
| Systemic                      | Board-wide       | Review status of Board accessibility policies and procedures and update as required  | Ongoing 2016-2017                     |
| Information and Communication | School Libraries | Review status of capacity of school libraries to provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of all resources upon request                    | Ongoing preparation for 2020 deadline |
| Information and Communication | Board-wide       | 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 deadline |
| Physical                      | Various Sites    | Remove barriers to accessibility to address student and staff needs (see Appendix 1)   | Ongoing 2015-2016                     |

## **Review and Monitoring Process**

The Accessibility Planning Committee meets regularly during the year to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of barrier-removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

The Accessibility Planning 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**

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the Annual Reports prepared by the Accessibility Planning Committee will be posted on the Rainbow District School Board's website [[www.rainbowschools.ca/aboutus/accessibility](http://www.rainbowschools.ca/aboutus/accessibility)] and made available to the public in accessible formats upon request.

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

[info@rainbowschools.ca](mailto:info@rainbowschools.ca)

Phone: 705-674-3171, ext. 7217

For more information on providing feedback, please visit:  
[www.rainbowschools.ca/aboutus/accessibility](http://www.rainbowschools.ca/aboutus/accessibility)

## **APPENDICES**

### Definitions

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Accommodation             | is a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the Board.   |
| Assistive Device          | is any device used by people with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices, etc.   |
| Barriers to Accessibility | means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of the services of the Board. This includes, but is not limited to, a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, and/or a technological barrier.   |
| Customer                  | is any person who uses the services of the school board.   |
| Disability                | (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,<br>(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,<br>(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,<br>(d) a mental disorder, or<br>(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; ("handicap") |
| Service Animal            | is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a medical practitioner.  |
| Support Person            | is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.  |
| Third Party Contractors   | is any person or organization acting on behalf of or as an agent of the Board (e.g. bus operators, psychologists).   |