



2022-2026 Accessibility Plan



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PROFILE

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) is responsible for public education in the rural settings of Uxbridge, Brock and Scugog Townships and the urban settings of Ajax, Whitby, Pickering and Oshawa. The Board employs more than 10,000 teaching and educational services staff. With over 130 elementary and secondary schools and learning centres, the Board serves more than 70,000 regular day students and thousands more who take advantage of a wide variety of continuing education and adult credit courses. More information about the DDSB can be found on the Board's website at ddsb.ca.

OBJECTIVES

The DDSB has developed the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard, Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The DDSB participated in the LEAD (Leading Equitable and Accessible Delivery) in December 2021. This facilitated self-assessment process supported the creation of our Accessibility Plan.

The plan outlines the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the AODA and aligns with the Ontario Human Rights Code ("The Code").



PURPOSE

The DDSB is committed to providing services, employment and learning and working environments that centre Indigenous rights, human rights and equity and that are welcoming, respectful, safe, inclusive, equitable, accessible and free from all forms of discrimination. To support this commitment, the DDSB will:

- **Uphold the principles of and responsibilities under:**
 - The Code and the AODA
 - The DDSB's Indigenous Education Policy, Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy, Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy and related procedures
- **Work collaboratively with DDSB community members to:**
 - Raise awareness, share information, enhance learning and build capacity about accessibility, ableism and inclusion.
 - Identify, prevent and address accessibility barriers in schools/classrooms, teaching and learning, workplaces and operational, employment and corporate policies, procedures, processes and practices using the principles of inclusive design and, for students, Universal Design for Learning, culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy and differentiated instruction, assessment and evaluation.
 - Explore individualized options and solutions to respond to accessibility needs and to meet the duty to accommodate under the Code in ways that maximize dignity, respect, independence, participation and integration.
 - Engage, consult with and seek input from DDSB students, families, employees and community partners (including the Special Education Advisory Committee) about their experiences, and adjust practices as required to respond to feedback and continually improve accessibility.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The development and implementation of the DDSB's Accessibility Plan is grounded in intentional actions to address ableism and intersectional discrimination and to uphold, affirm and or support:

1. The distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples.
2. Students' right to education and employees' right to employment without discrimination under the Code and AODA, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
3. Equitable experiences, access, opportunities and outcomes for all DDSB community members.
4. Student, parent/guardian, employee and community input/voice and feedback to help inform decision making.
5. Transparent processes to address accessibility and accommodation issues and complaints.
6. Data collection (quantitative and qualitative, including student, parent/caregiver, and community input/voice), analysis and reporting to measure progress and to identify and address accessibility issues and trends.
7. Individual and shared organizational roles, responsibilities and accountability for accessibility.

This plan aligns with the DDSB Ignite Learning Strategic Plan.



COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

The DDSB's Accessibility Multi-Year Plan is posted on the board website at ddsb.ca and is available in accessible formats upon request. The plan will be shared with all stakeholders through multiple methods.

REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Accessibility Advisory Working Group will:

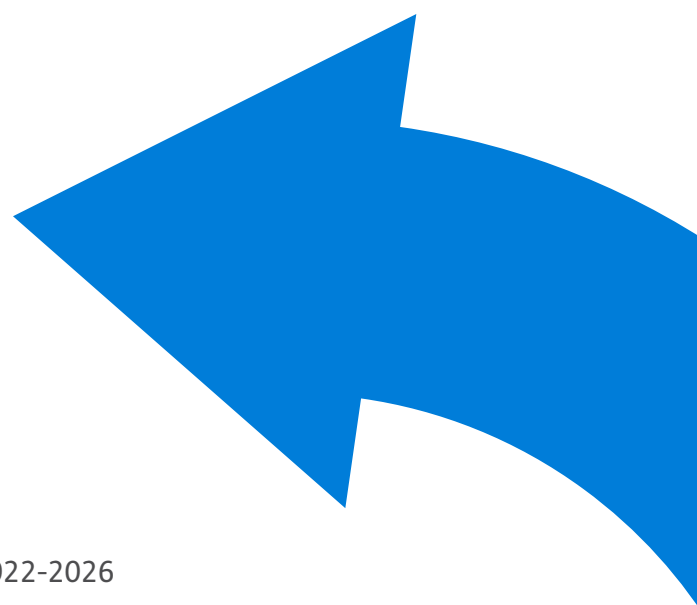
1. Monitor implementation of the plan.
2. Provide recommendations to support the implementation of the plan.
3. Prepare an annual status report on the implementation of the plan.
4. Review, seek feedback on and update the plan in 2026.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To give feedback or request information about accessibility within the DDSB, please contact

General.Inquiries@ddsb.ca

(905) 666-5500 • 1-800-265-3968



Information and Communications

The Information and Communications Standards of the AODA list rules for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that people with disabilities can access. The standards give all people an equal chance to learn and be active in their communities.

<https://aoda.ca/what-is-the-information-and-communications-standards/>

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- New contract position of Digital Accessibility Coordinator
- Documents made with support of Creative Services/ Communications are AODA/WCAG complaint
- Documents posted to the DDSB main website are AODA/WCAG compliant

Note: WCAG = Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

DDSB GOAL 1:

All public facing documents and websites meet AODA/WCAG compliance.

KEY STRATEGIES: Information and Communications <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Develop key resources and training (virtual/on demand) sessions on how to create accessible documents and presentations <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources and training sessions are available for employees to access• All resources comply with AODA/WCAG requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications• Creative Services• Information Technology Services• Innovation

KEY STRATEGIES: Information and Communications <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Offer live and virtual training sessions for school Principals/ Vice Principals/Clerical and Education Centre Staff on creating accessible documents <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Training sessions feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Creative Services • Information Technology Services • Innovation • Accountability and Assessment
Update Accessibility public facing webpage to include customer services standard, form to request accessible/alternate formats, how to provide feedback and contact information for Digital Accessibility Coordinator <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public website is updated • Track requests for accessible or alternate formats • Feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Accountability and Assessment
Monitor DDSB external and internal public facing websites for AODA/WCAG compliance <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance benchmark created and monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • All Departments
Include requirement in Technology Approval Process (TAP) for AODA compliance for any new software or hardware <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update TAP process • Data on compliance for new software/hardware 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Technology Services
Include a requirement in Project Online to ensure that new applications development is AODA complaint <i>Implementation year: 2024</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Project Online • Data on compliance of new applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Technology Services

DDSB GOAL 2:

All staff use accessible and inclusive communication and information formats.

KEY STRATEGIES: Information and Communications <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
P/VPs/Managers will receive training and tools to host accessible meetings and be able to provide accessible/alternate formats upon request <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovation• Inclusive Student Services• Curriculum (K – 12)• Communications
Offer alternative format and contact information for all public DDSB documents <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on alternative format requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative Services• All Departments
Development of accessibility, translation tools and additional inclusive language resources <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of tools/resources• Tools and resources are embedded in training and professional learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovation• Curriculum (K – 12)• Inclusive Student Services
Create and provide guide on how to utilize translation and accessibility functions within DDSB online platforms/websites <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from staff/students/families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovation• Communications

Employment

The Employment Standard requires that employers must make their workplace and employment practices accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities.

<https://www.aoda.ca/what-is-the-employment-standard/>

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- Online application is accessible.
- Virtual interview platform is digitally accessible.
- Provide opportunity to meaningfully plan for individual accommodations through the hiring process
- Lived experience statement is provided on teachers and MPA postings inviting application from underrepresented groups
- 2nd DDSB Workforce Census was completed in 2022
- Employee Experience Checkpoint 2021

DDSB GOAL 3:

Increase diversity of workforce through a universal design approach to recruitment and retainment.

KEY STRATEGIES: Employment <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Work with agencies/partners to engage underrepresented groups to apply to postings <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Variety of communication methods and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Culture

KEY STRATEGIES: Employment <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Analyze data from Workforce Census 2022 to identify gains and continued areas of focus <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review data to identify barriers and establish steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability and Assessment • People and Culture
DDSB to consider accessible options as appropriate to role responsibilities to increase diversity of workforce <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure – Hybrid Work • Workforce Census 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • People and Culture
Gather authentic and meaningful information on work environment for all employees <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summaries from workplace assessments and listening tours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture
Analyze data from teacher self-identification equity survey on ApplyToEducation <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review data to identify barriers and establish steps to build a more equitable and inclusive hiring process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability and Assessment • People and Culture
Review interview tools and orientation materials for accessible and inclusive language. <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive interview tools and orientation materials • Recruitment self-identification survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture

DDSB GOAL 4:

Develops plans and strategies to increase diversity and disability representation at leadership levels, through recruitment and succession planning.

KEY STRATEGIES: Employment <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Develops plans and strategies to increase diversity and disability representation at leadership levels, through recruitment and succession planning. <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the workforce diversity in leadership positions in DDSB.• Workforce Census	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Culture• Leadership
Information sessions on leadership opportunity focused on increasing diverse representation <i>Implementation year: 2024</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the workforce diversity in leadership positions in DDSB.• Workforce Census	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Culture• Leadership

Transportation

The Transportation Standard of the AODA requires transportation service providers to make the features and equipment on routes and vehicles accessible to passengers with disabilities.

<https://aoda.ca/what-is-the-transportation-standard/>

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- Traffic study group
- Individual transportation plans created for students with disabilities.

DDSB GOAL 5:

Transportation accessibility is continuously improved to meet needs of our stakeholders.

KEY STRATEGIES: Transportation <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Traffic Study Group continues to provide recommendations to improve accessibility <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on actions from Traffic Study Group, eg. accessible exteriors – walkways, building entry points, parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham Student Transportation Services • Facilities Services • Inclusive Student Services
Review Durham Student Transportation Services procedures to enhance accessibility and inclusion <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated DSTS procedures to align with DDSB Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham Student Transportation Services
Review individual transportation plan process <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated individual transportation plans/process created for students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham Student Transportation Services • Facilities Services • Inclusive Student Services

Design of Public Spaces

The Design of Public Spaces Standard describes ways to make communal spaces more accessible.

<https://aoda.ca/what-is-the-design-of-public-spaces-standard/>

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- Ongoing audit of existing schools by Facility Services Analyst and open forum (email or work order) for schools to present accessibility barriers and/or opportunities to implement accessible spaces
- Identify needs both short term/current and long term/future
- Assign project priority, short and long term goals and estimated budget
- Maintain live listing of projects and conduct ongoing review for opportunity to execute
- Maintain current design standards to comply with governing regulations for accessible design

DDSB GOAL 6:

Facility accessibility is continuously improved on, along with accessible technologies to meet needs of stakeholders.

KEY STRATEGIES: Design of Public Spaces <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Remove accessibility barriers to serve current and future needs <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data from projects, eg. accessible interior vertical and horizontal transportation routes (ramps, lifts, elevators, power door operators, lighting, signage, flooring etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities Services• Information Technology Services• Inclusive Student Services
Maintain a live list of all accessibility project requests/assignments with a plan for completion <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data from projects, eg. accessible fitments and fixtures (millwork, washroom fixtures, wayfinding).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities Services• Information Technology Services• Inclusive Student Services

Customer Services

The Customer Service Standard mandates that service providers must find ways to break down barriers that prevent customers with disabilities from accessing the services they need. Barriers may be due to:

- Physical obstacles
- Technology
- Information and communication
- An organization's practices or procedures
- Attitudes of staff

<https://aoda.ca/what-is-the-customer-service-standard/>

**Customer Service in the DDSB includes students, families, community members and employees*

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- Consistent 2-way communication between General Inquiry/ Communications/Departments.
- Virtual attendees can provide feedback via survey following public Zoom webinars.
- Accessibility module created for all employees 2021.
- Accessibility module included in all onboarding for new employees.
- DDSB Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Procedure includes requirement to apply human rights and anti-discrimination principles (including accessibility requirements) to all aspects of corporate services, procedures, practices and protocols, including business relationships and partnerships, procurement, tendering, and vendor selection criteria, processes and contracts

DDSB GOAL 7:

Provide multiple opportunities for internal and external stakeholders to share feedback via a range of methods.

KEY STRATEGIES: Customer Service <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
On public website and SPARK, ensure alternative format request form is available and/or feedback opportunity to Digital Accessibility Coordinator is available <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website is updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications
Enhance community consultation and engagement and involve people with disabilities to help identify, prevent and address potential accessibility barriers <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in community engagement, input/feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications
Develop feedback mechanism for attendees following public events/ training to share if their accessibility and accommodation needs were met <i>Implementation year: 2024</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in community engagement, input/feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications

DDSB GOAL 8:

All employees complete mandatory accessibility training.

KEY STRATEGIES: Customer Service <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Completion of Mandatory Training will be monitored <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular compliance with training completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Culture
Revised module will be created for all employees <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular compliance with training completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Culture

DDSB GOAL 9:

Accessibility requirements are included in service, equipment and technology procurement processes. (Assistive Device funding and administrative processes are streamlined, removing barriers to students accessing them in a timely manner).

KEY STRATEGIES: Customer Service <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
Include accessibility-related criteria and language in RFP postings, selection criteria (e.g., “look fors”) and contracts <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from students, families and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Services• Inclusive Student Services
Revise processes to streamline and remove barriers for students accessing assistive devices in a timely manner <i>Implementation year: 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from students, families and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Services• Inclusive Student Services

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) means finding ways to teach that benefit the widest variety of learners. UDL means designing learning goals, materials, and activities in ways that make them accessible to learners with a variety of abilities. There are three UDL principles to guide educators in creating lesson content that learners with differing abilities and circumstances can access. <https://www.aoda.ca/universal-design-for-learning>

CURRENT SUCCESSES

- DDSB Human Rights Policy and procedures were approved May 2022
- SPARK resources for staff to support UDL and variations in program design through providing numerous examples of how students can show learning (conversations, observation, product)
- Ongoing planning to support staff with implementation of UDL principles and actions including but not limited to online learning modules, staff meetings and Inclusive Students Services team discussions/supports

DDSB GOAL 10:

The DDSB is committed to learning and working environments that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, inclusive, accessible and free from discrimination, oppression, and harm.

KEY STRATEGIES: Universal Design for Learning <i>Implementation Year</i> (calendar year starting with 2022)	OUTCOMES (connected to strategies)	KEY DEPARTMENTS
School learning plans and system department plans include concrete actions to support inclusive design, Universal Design for Learning and accessibility <i>Implementation year: 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources and training provided to all employees• School and department plans reflect accessibility requirements and outcomes• Feedback from students, families and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Departments