

**Annual Accessibility Plan
Bluewater District School Board
2022-2023**



Prepared by

Bluewater District School Board
Accessibility Executive Committee

This publication is available on the Bluewater District School Board website at:

<http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/AODA>

Table of Contents

Description of Bluewater District School Board	3
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005	3
Purpose of the AODA	3
Definition of Disability.....	3
Definition of Barrier	4
AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)	4
About the Annual Accessibility Plan	4
Bluewater District School Board Commitment	4
Annual Accessibility Plan Explanation of Contents	5
Communication of the Annual Accessibility Plan	5
The Accessibility Executive Committee	6
Accessibility Executive Committee Mission	6
Committee Mandate.....	6
Accessibility Executive Committee Members 2022-2023.....	6
Contact for Accessibility Executive Committee	6
Prevention and Removal of Barriers to Accessibility	7
Physical and Architectural Initiatives.....	7
Information, Communication, and Technology Initiatives.....	9
Human Resources Services Initiatives.....	9
Corporate Services Initiatives	10
School Transportation Initiatives	10
Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations.....	11
Part 1 General	11
Part II Information and Communications Standards.....	11
Part III Employment Standards	11
Part IV Transportation Standards	12
Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards.....	13
Part V Compliance	14
Customer Service Standard.....	14

Description of Bluewater District School Board

Bluewater District School Board provides public education to families in Bruce and Grey counties in southwestern Ontario. The two counties of Grey and Bruce cover an area of 8,673 square kilometers. As of March 31, 2023, the district was comprised of 42 locations with an Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) of 13,371 students in the elementary panel and 4,683 students in the secondary panel.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Purpose of the AODA

Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* is to benefit all Ontarians by:

- developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

Definition of Disability

The AODA defines a disability as meaning,

- 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*.

Definition of Barrier

The AODA defines a barrier as meaning anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability including: a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or a practice.

To this end, the AODA requires each school board to prepare an Annual Accessibility Plan, to consult with people with disabilities in the preparation of this plan, and to make the plan public.

AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)

The AODA is comprised of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations which currently cover the areas of:

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service

Please refer to [Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations](#) for website links and more specific information on the IASR content.

About the Annual Accessibility Plan

This is the nineteenth Annual Accessibility Plan (2022-23) prepared by the Accessibility Executive Committee of the Bluewater District School Board. This Annual Accessibility Plan is in compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001) and is consistent with the belief statements outlined in the Strategic Plan. It serves as a resource for addressing accessibility issues for the students, staff, and members of the community.

Bluewater District School Board Commitment

Bluewater District School Board is committed to:

- maintaining an executive committee to recognize compliance issues and forward to appropriate partners for action;
- consulting with persons with disabilities, as well as people working with the person with disabilities in the development and review of its Annual Accessibility Plan;

- providing ongoing support and training for administrative staff, managers, and supervisors; and
- holding regular committee meetings to:
 - review the annual accessibility plan
 - ensure compliance with accessibility legislation
 - address accessibility issues
 - ensure improved access to facilities, policies, programs, employment, practices and services for staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community.

Annual Accessibility Plan Explanation of Contents

The Annual Accessibility Plan includes:

- a report on the measures the organization has taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities;
- the measures in place to ensure that the organization assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- a list of the by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services that the organization will review in the coming year in order to identify barriers to persons with disabilities; and
- the measures that the organization intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

Communication of the Annual Accessibility Plan

The Bluewater District School Board's Annual Accessibility Plan is posted on the public Board website at www.bwdsb.on.ca/AODA and is available to employees on the AODA and Accessibility SharePoint page. It is also available in a variety of accessible formats upon request. Please contact the Accessibility Executive Committee to request an alternate accessible format.

The Accessibility Executive Committee

The Bluewater Accessibility Working Group was formally constituted in September 2004 and evolved into the Accessibility Executive Committee in 2011.

Accessibility Executive Committee Mission

The Committee will develop in consultation with stakeholders' recommendations to continuously improve the conditions of access at Bluewater District School Board. This will be achieved by meeting or exceeding the standards outlined in the AODA.

Committee Mandate

To recommend to Bluewater District School Board the prevention and removal of barriers that persons with disabilities may encounter at any Bluewater District School Board sites through programs, education, practices, and services provided by the board.

Accessibility Executive Committee Members 2022-2023

Don Bluhm	Supervisor of Project Development
Don Burns	Administrator
Rob Cummings	Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer
Anna Gowan	Human Resources Services Manager
Amanda Maxwell	Human Resources Services Manager
Andrew Chittka	ETFO Occasional Teachers Union President
Sabrina Osborne	System Special Education Lead Teacher
Lydia Howie	Software Application Trainer
Janette Scott	Executive Assistant Business Services

Contact for Accessibility Executive Committee

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Prevention and Removal of Barriers to Accessibility

Physical and Architectural Initiatives

The following work has been completed and forms work under the 'Accessibility Plan, Plant, Capital Retrofits', and meet all requirements of the Ontario Building Code as amended, specifically Section 3.8. Projects for the 2023-2024 school year will be determined in before the fall of 2023. Accessible elements will be considered within projects as required and in compliance with the Ontario Building Code.

Update on Completed Projects for 2021-2022 and New Projects for 2022-2023

Projects Completed or Scheduled 2021-2022	Status
Hillcrest Elementary School – Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of new universal washroom• Upgrades interior lighting to LED fixtures for improve light/visibility levels• New flooring and interior painting for improved visibility and contrasts• Exterior door system replacements for easier access	Work Completed 2022
Hepworth Central School – Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New parking & bus drop off zone with fully accessible components integrated in• Re-designed accessible parking spaces with improved locations and code compliance• Improved exterior light standards and interior lights to LED for improved visibility• Interior painting for improved colour and brightness contrast• AODA interior signage installations	Work Completed 2022
Paisley Central School – Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrades interior lighting to LED fixtures for improve light/visibility levels• Interior door hardware replacements for easier usage• Cosmetic improvements to accessible washroom• Interior painting of door trim and walls for improved colour and brightness contrast	Work Completed 2022
East Ridge Community School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New aluminum door entry systems for east access (daycare) into school• Design and construction of new poured concrete accessible ramp at same entry	Work Completed 2023

Projects To Be Completed 2022-2023	Status
Amabel-Sauble Community School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded accessible washroom with full personal lift unit to meet incoming student needs Door hardware updated to lever sets throughout school LED interior lighting throughout for improved illumination levels Interior painting of door trim and walls in various areas of school for colour and brightness contrast. AODA interior signage installations 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023
Hillcrest Elementary School – Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of new universal washroom Improved front entry sidewalks and access ways New or replace corridor handrails to improve mobility Reworked interior courtyards to allow improved access AODA interior signage installations 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023
Saugeen District Senior School – Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New barrier free parking spaces with new entry ramp and sidewalks integrating curb cuts, tactile strips and signage 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023
Paisley Central School – Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrades and repairs to front sidewalks for easier and safer access Upgrades to existing washrooms including new barrier free sinks and faucets Some interior painting of door trim and walls in east side of school for improved colour and brightness contrast AODA interior signage installations 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023
Northport Elementary School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front bus loop and north parking lot rejuvenation with better accessibility to front entryway Removal of existing post & chain parking barriers for safer and improved access Addition of automatic door operator for existing accessible washroom Infill of kindergarten teaching pit for improved safety and access 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023
Ripley-Huron Community School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocation of accessible parking spots and signage closer to accessible entry Construction of new accessible barrier free washroom including new barrier free fixtures AODA interior signage installations 	Design Complete, Construction Manager selected, work planned for Summer 2023

Information, Communication, and Technology Initiatives

2022-2023 School Year Progress

ICT Services implemented website assessments and reporting, in addition to new training initiatives to increase awareness of AODA requirements, Bluewater District School Board's AODA Policy and website tools to support meeting and maintaining compliance. Updates have been made to website content, increasing accessibility, and improving overall visitor experience. ICT Services continues to work with the vendor in support of template enhancements across BWDSB websites. ICT Services continues to work with Human Resources (HR) and the AODA committee to comply with accessibility standards as outlined by Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 for all Bluewater District School Board websites.

On-Going Initiatives and Future Plans

ICT Services will maintain training and reporting efforts. ICT will continue to provide support to the board to meet the AODA standards. ICT Services will continue to work with HR and the AODA committee on what is needed to meet future compliance.

Human Resources Services Initiatives

2022-2023 School Year Progress

In the 2022-2023 school year, Human Resources Services provided continued support to the AODA committee in reviewing AODA policies and procedures and made appropriate adjustments to meet standards. Human Resources Services is committed to providing and supporting a robust focus on accessibility throughout Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB).

Human Resources Services has maintained the AODA and Accessibility SharePoint page to provide employees with access to accessibility resources, news, and support within the BWDSB intranet system. The SharePoint page includes an area of resources created to support staff in creating accessible documents.

On-Going Initiatives and Future Plans

Human Resources Services will continue to ensure the Accessibility Executive Committee and other stakeholders remain aware of legislative changes and progress, with specific focus on the requirements of the Education Standard that is currently being developed under the AODA.

Human Resources Services will provide ongoing monitoring for current accessibility policies, programs and initiatives. The department will provide continued support to the Accessibility Executive Committee as well as BWDSB staff, students, and the public in accessibility efforts and to address accessibility concerns.

Human Resources Services will continue to support, develop, and implement procedures to help ensure BWDSB is compliant with the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations in consultation with various stakeholders. The department will also ensure staff of all levels receive training and notification related to new or updated procedures.

Corporate Services Initiatives

2022-2023 School Year Progress

All board policies and administrative procedures are reviewed according to a set cyclical review process. When policies are brought forward as part of the cyclical review process, and/or are being created, they are posted on the board's website, and also sent to specific groups/committees to solicit feedback (i.e. the Administrative Council, learning services administrators, administrators, managers/supervisors, the Student Senate, union presidents, school councils, the Parent Involvement Committee, the board's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Committee, and other individuals/groups as identified).

The Corporate Services Officer is responsible for coordinating the cyclical review process with the Administrative Council and the Policy Standing Committee. An initial review of policies and procedures will always consider accessibility and equity.

On-Going Initiatives and Future Plans

When policies and procedures are reviewed or drafted, the issue of accessibility will be considered where appropriate.

Bluewater District School Board endeavours to ensure ongoing compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Additional information about the AODA and all of the compliance standards can be found at [<http://www.accessON.ca>]

School Transportation Initiatives

The consortium continues to support accessibility generally by providing inclusive specialized transportation for students with special needs that are appropriate for each student's unique needs. Consortium practices meet the AODA Transportation Standard, specifically that pertaining to Student Transportation.

Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations

[<http://www.aoda.ca/>]

Clicking each link below will open the applicable website content.

Part 1 General

[<http://www.aoda.ca/integrated/#parti>]

1. Purpose and application
2. Definitions
3. Establishment of accessibility policies
4. Accessibility plans
5. Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities
6. Self-service kiosks
7. Training
8. Exemption from filing accessibility reports

Part II Information and Communications Standards

[<http://www.aoda.ca/integrated/#partii>]

9. Definitions and exceptions
10. Application
11. Feedback
12. Accessible formats and communication supports
13. Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information
14. Accessible websites and web content
15. Educational and training resources and materials, etc.
16. Training to educators
17. Producers of educational or training material
18. Libraries of educational and training institutions
19. Public libraries

Part III Employment Standards

20. Scope and interpretation
21. Schedule
22. Recruitment, general
23. Recruitment, assessment or selection process
24. Notice to successful applicants
25. Informing employees of supports
26. Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
27. Workplace emergency response information
28. Documented individual accommodation plans
29. Return to work process

- 30. Performance management
- 31. Career development and advancement
- 32. Redeployment

Part IV Transportation Standards

- 33. Definitions
- 34. Availability of information on accessibility equipment, etc.
- 35. Non-functioning accessibility equipment
- 36. Accessibility training
- 37. Emergency preparedness and response policies
- 38. Fares, support persons
- 39. Transition, existing contracts
- 40. Transition, existing vehicles
- 41. Accessibility plans, conventional transportation services
- 42. Accessibility plans, specialized transportation services
- 43. Accessibility plans, conventional and specialized transportation services
- 44. General responsibilities
- 45. Alternative accessible method of transportation
- 46. Fares
- 47. Transit stops
- 48. Storage of mobility aids, etc.
- 49. Courtesy seating
- 50. Service disruptions
- 51. Pre-boarding announcements
- 52. On-board announcements
- 53. Requirements re grab bars, etc.
- 54. Floors and carpeted surfaces
- 55. Allocated mobility aid spaces
- 56. Stop-requests and emergency response controls
- 57. Lighting features
- 58. Signage
- 59. Lifting devices, etc.
- 60. Steps
- 61. Indicators and alarms
- 62. Accessibility, rail cars
- 63. Categories of eligibility
- 64. Eligibility application process
- 65. Emergency or compassionate grounds
- 66. Fare parity
- 67. Visitors
- 68. Origin to destination services
- 69. Co-ordinated service
- 70. Hours of service
- 71. Booking
- 72. Trip restrictions
- 73. Service delays
- 74. Companions and children

- 75. School transportation
- 76. Public sector organizations
- 77. Ferries
- 78. Duties of municipalities, general
- 79. Duties of municipalities, accessible taxicabs
- 80. Duties of municipalities, taxicabs

Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards

- 80.1 Definitions
- 80.2 Application
- 80.3 Transition
- 80.4 Slope ratios
- 80.5 Schedule
- 80.6 Trails
- 80.7 Beach access routes
- 80.8 Consultation, recreational trails
- 80.9 Technical requirements for trails, general
- 80.10 Technical requirements for beach access routes, general
- 80.11 Common technical requirements, general
- 80.12 Boardwalks
- 80.13 Ramps
- 80.14 Exceptions, limitations
- 80.15 Exceptions, general
- 80.16 Outdoor public use eating areas, application
- 80.17 Outdoor public use eating areas, general requirements
- 80.18 Outdoor play spaces, application
- 80.19 Outdoor play spaces, consultation requirements
- 80.20 Outdoor play spaces, accessibility in design
- 80.21 Exterior paths of travel, application
- 80.22 Exterior paths of travel, general obligation
- 80.23 Exterior paths of travel, technical requirements
- 80.24 Exterior paths of travel, ramps
- 80.25 Exterior paths of travel, stairs
- 80.26 Exterior paths of travel, curb ramps
- 80.27 Exterior paths of travel, depressed curbs
- 80.28 Exterior paths of travel, accessible pedestrian signals
- 80.29 Exterior paths of travel, rest areas
- 80.30 Exceptions, limitations
- 80.31 Exceptions, general
- 80.32 Application, off-street parking
- 80.33 Exceptions
- 80.34 Types of accessible parking spaces
- 80.35 Access aisles
- 80.36 Minimum number and type of accessible parking spaces
- 80.37 Signage
- 80.38 Exception
- 80.39 On-street parking spaces

- 80.40 Application
- 80.41 Service counters
- 80.42 Fixed queuing guides
- 80.43 Waiting areas
- 80.44 Maintenance of accessible elements

Part V Compliance

- 81. Application
- 82. Definition
- 83. Amount of administrative penalty
- 84. Review of order
- 85. Payment of penalty
- 86. Designation of tribunal
- 87. Commencement
- Schedule 2 Administrative penalties for individuals or unincorporated organizations
- Schedule 3 Administrative penalties for corporations

Customer Service Standard

- 1. Purpose and application
- 2. Effective dates
- 3. Establishment of policies, practices and procedures
- 4. Use of service animals and support persons
- 5. Notice of temporary disruptions
- 6. Training for staff, etc.
- 7. Feedback process for providers of goods or services
- 8/ Notice of availability of documents
- 9. Format of documents
- Schedule 1 Boards, commissions, authorities and agencies
- Schedule 2 Broader public sector
- Exemptions