THUNDER BAY CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

for the period

December 2023 to December 2027

PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH:
Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Availability of the Plan:

1. On the Board's website www.tbcschools.ca
2. At the Catholic Education Centre
3. In accessible formats upon request:
   contact Karen McKissick, Safety Coordinator at (807) 625-1515 or kmckissick@tbcschools.ca

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

for the Period December 2023 to December 2027

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Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

for the Period December 2023 to December 2027

1.0 Purpose

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (TBCDSB) 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 plan outlines the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) as well as implement the recommendations from the Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy: Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities (2018).

The plan describes the measures the TBCDSB will take over the period 2023-2027 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

2.0 Objectives

This Plan:

2.1 Describes the process by which the TBCDSB will identify, remove and prevent barriers;

2.2 Reviews recent efforts of the TBCDSB to remove and prevent barriers;

2.3 Describes the measures the TBCDSB will continue to take in the period 2023-2027 to identify, remove and prevent barriers;

2.4 Makes a commitment to provide an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;

2.5 Makes a commitment to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every 5 years;

2.6 Describes how the TBCDSB will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

3.0 Commitment to Accessibility Planning

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

3.1 Maintaining an Accessibility Working Group;

3.2 Continuing the process of seeking advice through the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), and with person with disabilities;

3.3 Ensuring, wherever practicable, that Board policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and inclusive/universal design. The Accessibility Working Group will provide input with regard to accessibility issues (where appropriate), new policies and procedures and to those under review;

3.4 Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers, and members of the community. The Accessibility Working Group will be responsible for ongoing identification of barriers, which will, wherever practicable, be incorporated into the multi-year plan.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Working Group to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan which will enable the Board to meet its commitments.

4.0 Description of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board can trace its roots as far back as the mid 1800's, when Jesuit Missionaries established schools at the Fort William Mission. Schooling was continued by the Sisters of the Order of the Daughters of Mary, who arrived in 1870. The Sisters of St. Joseph arrived at Prince Arthur's Landing in 1881 and immediately began teaching in the new Catholic school, which was opened in 1880 in the St. Andrew's Church Sacristy.

In 1885, the Order of Daughters of Mary was recalled to their order in France, and the Sisters of St. Joseph assumed the responsibility for both the school and the orphanage.

Soon after, a number of Catholic school boards were created. The Port Arthur Roman Catholic School Board was established on January 2, 1885. The Fort William Roman Catholic School Board was formed on April 10, 1901, and the Roman Catholic Separate School Board No. 6 McIntyre was established on January 1, 1957. The Combined Roman Catholic Separate School Board of Neebing, Paipoonge and McIntyre was formed on January 15, 1967.

On January 1, 1969, the four school Boards were amalgamated in accordance with the Government of Ontario's plan to reduce the number of school Boards in the province. The newly amalgamated Board became known as the Lakehead District Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

As a consequence of Bill 104 - Fewer School Boards Act, 1997, the Lakehead District Roman Catholic Separate School Board was designated by Ontario regulation in May 1997 as District School Board #34A. The regulation governing the establishment and areas of jurisdiction of District School Boards was further amended and the Board received notification from the Education Improvement Commission that its name had been approved. Effective January 1, 1998 the Board officially became known as the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board.
The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board employs approximately 1,416 employees and serves 8,400 students through two secondary, three senior elementary and fifteen elementary schools. The Board offers a complete French Immersion program at two of its schools. Physically, our schools are primarily conventional school structures, typically constructed with brick and metal cladding, and they vary in age from the late 1920's to as recent as 1999. Most of the buildings have

been renovated and occasionally required the addition of portables to support the student population.

During the past year, the Board has entered into a long-term accommodation planning process. There have been significant renovations and additions at a number of schools. Each project has been considered in light of our objectives under the AODA.

The Board's vision is "**Educating for Christian Values and Academic Excellence**". The philosophy of the Thunder Bay Catholic School Board is best described by its Mission Statement:

Mission Statement

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board is committed to providing quality education which combines academic excellence with a concern for the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and physical growth of the student.

This education is provided in a Christ-centered environment where Catholic faith and life are integrated into the total curriculum and school day. Through the ministry of teaching, the Board fulfills its mandate from parents, from the Ministry of Education, and from the Church.

5.0 Members of Accessibility Working Group

Working Group Member	Department	Contact Information
JP Tennier	Director of Education	Phone: 625-1567 e-mail: jptennier@tbcschools.ca
Jill Thompson	Manager - Employee Services	Phone: 625-1565 e-mail: jthompson@tbcschools.ca
Keaton Longpre	Health & Wellness Officer	Phone: 625-1588 e-mail: klongpre@tbcschools.ca
Karen McKissick	Safety Coordinator	Phone: 625-1515 e-mail: kmckissick@tbcschools.ca
Paul MIgnault	Manager - Plant Services	Phone: 625-1518 e-mail: pmignault@tbcschools.ca
Cody Rozic	Manager – Information Technology	Phone: 625-8645 e-mail: crozic@tbcschools.ca
Matt Goetz	Manager – Business Services	Phone: 252-6343 Email: mgoetz@tbcschools.ca

6.0 Strategy for Prevention and Removal of Barriers

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board has established a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan placing particular emphasis on compliance with AODA regulations related to customer service, information and communications, employment and school transportation.

7.0 Barrier Identification Methodologies

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

Methodology	Description	Status
Presentation to Senior Team	Opportunity for input and feedback	Ongoing
Special Education Department	Opportunity for input and feedback	Ongoing
Presentation to SEAC	Present plan to the Special Education Advisory Committee asking them to share the plan with the associations they represent for input into following plans.	Yearly
Presentation to Board of Trustees	For information.	Yearly
Working Group Brainstorming	Respond to input from stakeholder groups named above.	Yearly

8.0 Barriers to be Addressed under the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

(NEW) 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 Communication
- Employment
- Transportation

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

Through the 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, TBCDSB intends to take action to address attitudinal barriers to accessibility with a special emphasis on supporting all students in inclusive environments. This is in addition to ongoing work regarding identification and removal of barriers in the TBCDSB physical environment.

Customer Service

The TBCDSB is committed to continuing to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are clear and provide services that are free of barriers for students, staff, and community members with disabilities.

- Ensure public information is reviewed frequently and posted in a timely fashion for efficient and transparent communication.
- Ensure ongoing training is provided to staff to continue to raise awareness of accessibility needs and importance of removing barriers.
- Ensure libraries provide accessible or conversion-ready formats of materials when they are available and that users are aware of this opportunity.

Information and Technology

The TBCDSB is committed to continuing to ensure the website and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

- Partner with departments and schools to assist in ensuring that content is accessible and available in conversion ready formats where possible.
- Provide training on assistive technology for library staff.
- Continue to maintain feedback processes for reporting barriers and accessibility issues and respond to accessibility inquiries and requests in a timely and transparent manner.

Employment

The TBCDSB is committed to continuing to support employees with disabilities, ensuring employment practices are AODA compliant, and supporting employees proactively with their mental health & wellbeing.

- Address the health and wellness of all employees through collection of data to inform specific strategies to address gaps and barriers.
- Maintain up-to-date accommodation administrative procedures to ensure consistent process for accommodating employees throughout the employment cycle.
- Continue to ensure applicants are aware that accommodations are available through the recruitment and selection process.
- Through the recruitment process, ensure job information is provided in accessible formats and support individual employee accommodation plans.
- Ensure accessibility and accommodation needs are met through the performance management and career development process.
- Continue to provide documented individual accommodation plans and support return to work initiatives through clear processes.

Built Environment

TBCDSB is continuing to build/upgrade existing schools to meet or exceed the requirements of the Ontario Building Code, Section 3.8, Barrier-Free Design. To celebrate the work accomplished to date and reaffirm our commitment to the build environment, the TBCDSB commits to the following:

- Conduct a new audit of our existing facilities, where required, to form a baseline of needs.
- Collaborate across the system to align Board priorities with identified building needs.
- Continue to allocate school renewal funding to improve equity of access to our facilities.

Transportation

The TBCDSB is committed to continuing to ensure that it provides accessible transportation services to students with disabilities in collaboration with the Student Transportation Services Thunder Bay.

- Continue to develop individual student transportation plans.
- Provide the public with current information on accessibility equipment and features in school transportation vehicles, routes, and services.
- Conduct employee accessibility training and maintain a record of training provided
- Deploy lifting devices and ramps upon request, ensure adequate time is provided to safely board, assist with safe and careful storage of assistive devices, and allow persons with disability to travel with medical aid.

Other/Systemic

The TBCDSB is committed to continuing to provide appropriate training to all staff around AODA and accessibility. A record of this training will be maintained, including dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals it was provided to.

9.0 Review and Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Working Group meets twice during the school year to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of barrier-removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the Board.

The Accessibility Working Group will ensure that with respect of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan the following steps take place:

(a) An annual status report on measures taken to implement the plan is prepared.

(b) At least once every five years the plan is reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities, with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee and with other relevant committees.

10.0 Communication of the Plan

In addition to the public availability of the Plan as noted on the cover, an annual status report of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Board's website. The Board will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

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

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board
459 Victoria Avenue West
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 0A4
Phone: 807 – 625-1555
Fax: 807 – 625-8601

APPENDICES

A Inventory of Accessible Facilities

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

APPENDIX A

Inventory of Accessible Facilities

School		Type of Structure	Accessible Entrance Ramps	Door Operator		Elevators/ Lift	Stage Access	Instructional Areas Not Accessible	Barrier Free Washroom
				Front	Alternate				
Bishop E.Q. Jennings	(7-8)	Single	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Bishop Gallagher	(7-8)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	*yes (75% accessible)	no
Corpus Christi	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	no	yes
Holy Cross	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	*yes (90% accessible)	yes
Holy Family	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	no	yes
Our Lady of Charity	(JK-6)	single	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	no	yes
Pope John Paul II	(7-8)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
St. Ann	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	no	yes
St. Bernard	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	no	*yes (80% accessible)	yes
St. Elizabeth	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	no	yes
St. Francis	(JK-6)	Single	yes	no	yes	n/a	n/a	no	yes
St. Ignatius High School	(9-12)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	main - yes alt - no	*yes (60% accessible) May have accessibility within each level of school	yes
St. Jude	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	gym-not accessible (90% accessible)	yes
St. Margaret	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	no	no	n/a	*yes (85% accessible)	yes
St. Martin	(JK-6)	Multi-level	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
St. Patrick High School	(9-12)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
St. Paul	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	no	yes
St. Pius X	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	no	yes
St. Thomas Aquinas	(JK-6)	Single	yes	yes	yes	n/a	n/a	no	yes
St. Vincent	(JK-6)	Multi-level	yes	yes	yes	no	n/a	*yes (50% accessible)	yes
Catholic Education Centre		Multi-level	yes	yes	no	yes	n/a	no	yes