

Accessibility Plan

Updated: September 2023

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Pembina Trails School Division

A. Statement of Commitment

Pembina Trails School Division is committed to moving forward to equal access and participation for all. We are committed to continuing our work to create an environment where all individuals, regardless of their abilities can thrive with dignity and independence. We have had a long-standing philosophy of inclusion and are committed to meeting the needs of those who face accessibility barriers. We will continue this work by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility throughout our division and by meeting the requirements of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA). In this way we can support our 'customers' which include our students, parents/caregivers, volunteers, employees, community members and the general public.

We are working to ensure Pembina Trails practices align with Manitoba's accessibility standards which focus on five key areas of daily living:

1. The Accessibility Standard for Customer Services (November 2017)
2. The Accessibility Standard for Employment (May 2021)
3. The Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications (May 2024)
4. The Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces
5. The Accessibility Standard for Transportation

B. Policies

Pembina Trails has stated a commitment to creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all through a number of documents and policies. Those that promote accessibility and inclusion are:

- Mission, Vision and Values
- Creating a Safe, Caring and Inclusive Community – A Standard of Behaviour for the Pembina Trails School Division
- Policy AC – Non-Discrimination
- Policy ACG – Resolution of Discrimination Procedure
- Policy GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity
- Policy GBAA – Harassment
- Policy IFC – Inclusion and Appropriate Educational Programming
- Policy IJ – Selection of Instructional Resources
- Policy IJL – Library Resources Selection
- Policy IMG – Animals on Division Premises
- Policy JLCEA – Students with Special Health Needs
- Manitoba Education – Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students in Manitoba Schools

- Manitoba Education – Resources for Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students
- Manitoba Education – Case Studies to Explore the Challenges and Possibilities for Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Children and Youth
- Rick Hansen Foundation – “From Where I Sit: Five Traits of a Meaningfully Accessible Building”
- A Path Towards Inclusivity – Report on Accessibility in the Pembina Trails School Division (Monteyne Architect Works: January 2018)
- Manitoba Education - Safe and Caring Schools – A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging

The Pembina Trails School Division will continue to review all programs, services, and policies, and will scrutinize all new initiatives with a view to providing accessibility for all.

C. Actions

Action 1 – Enhance Accessibility Working Group to Include Diverse Representation	
Initiative and Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Coordinator to invite underrepresented members of employee groups to engage in providing feedback about Pembina Trails Accessibility Plan. • Establish regular meetings to prepare and review initiatives that support accessibility and to generate recommendations for action (twice yearly). 	Expected Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each area or division that serves the public is represented on the working group. • Working group establishes plans for progress along with timelines for completion. • Working group will review divisional policies and practices and forward recommendations for improvement. • Working group will participate in developing, implementing, and updating the Accessibility Plan.
Action 2 – Accessibility of Divisional Buildings	
Initiative and Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pembina Trails will strive to identify and remove any existing barriers to ensure an environment where all stakeholders are able to participate. • Ensure that all new builds, renovations, and upgrades are designed and built with accessibility features in mind. 	Expected Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an existing barrier cannot reasonably be removed, the division will seek to ensure that persons who are disabled by the barrier are provided access by alternate means. • The division will seek to prevent new barriers from being created. • Future facilities projects will ensure full accessibility in design and build.

Action 3 – Accessible Customer Service

Initiative and Actions

- The division will ensure that training about accessible customer service is provided to all employees and school board members.
- The division will document its training policy, including a summary of the content of the training and when training was provided.
- The accessibility standard for customer service policy is available upon request.

Expected Outcomes

- The Accessibility for Manitoba's Act provides an online learning portal which could be used to train all employees by the end of the 2024/2025 school year.
- All new employees will be required to complete this training within 3 months of being hired.
- Staff will be informed and/or trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policy.

Action 4 – Accessible Employment

Initiative and Actions

- The division will offer reasonable accommodations when recruiting new employees.
- The division will inform applicants about workplace accommodation policies and practices when making an offer of employment.
- The division will let employees know about our policies and practices, including updates, in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request.
- The division will develop and implement individual accommodation plans for employees that request them.
- The division will consider workplace accommodations to remove a barrier affecting an employee's performance and wellbeing or an employee's opportunities for training and advancement.
- The division will inform the public that our accessible employment policies and practices are available on request and in accessible formats.

Expected Outcomes

- The Accessibility for Manitoba's Act provides an online learning portal which could be used to train employees involved in the recruitment process, trainers and facilitators by the end of the 2024/2025 school year.
- All new employees involved in the recruitment process or those individuals who provide training or facilitation will be required to complete this training within 3 months of being hired.
- Ensure all job ad's includes wording that the division offers reasonable accommodations by January 2024.
- Updates to public-facing website to articulate that our accessible employment policies and practices are available on request and in accessible formats.

Action 5 – Staff Awareness and Training	
Initiative and Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Trustees to affirm Pembina Trails commitment to accessibility in divisional operations. • Administration to provide resources for training of staff in accessibility issues where required. • Administration to acknowledge accessibility achievements as appropriate through divisional information streams. 	Expected Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility will be considered in all future planning. • Accessibility planning will be communicated to all staff. • All staff members are aware of divisional accessibility initiatives and their role in implementation. • Concerns with regards to accessibility will be forwarded to the Accessibility Coordinator.
Action 6 – Monitoring Progress	
Initiative and Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Coordinator, with the working group, to track progress, challenges, and requests for accommodations. • Accessibility Coordinator will report annually to Senior Administration. • Financial planning for resolving accessibility issues will be integrated into the annual budget process. 	Expected Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Administration is kept apprised of requirements and progress with respect to the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. • Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually. • Annual report on progress provided.
Action 7 – Information and Communications Progress	
Initiative and Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The division is ensuring that all the current information on the website will be accessible by May 2024. • The division is ensuring that all new documents produced for the website meets the accessibility standards. 	Expected Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve compliance of the standard for information and communications by May 2024. • Ensure information is provided to all staff responsible for publishing information on the website on how to make the documents accessible.

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