Accessibility Report

November 2018

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

Accessibility Report

INTRODUCTION

In December 2013, the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA) became law. Since that time, the Government of Manitoba has been developing accessibility standards to address barriers for Manitobans.

In December 2016, an accessibility plan was created by the division's accessibility committee (Appendix A). The purpose of the plan was to show the division's commitment to moving towards equal access and participation for people with disabilities in accordance with the AMA. The plan specifically highlights the division's accessibility achievements, any barriers to accessibility and the division's plan of action. The committee has developed work plans to support the division's plan that adhere to identified AMA timelines. Committee members are: Amanda Gaudes, Senior Communications Co-ordinator; Greg Daniels, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; Leonard Zdrill, Manager – Workplace Safety and Health and Administrative Services; Rita Kupiak, Human Resource Officer; Tammy Mitchell, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services; and Vince Mariani, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO.

ACCESSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS

All 42 schools in our division are fully accessible. Although our maintenance and transportation buildings pose accessibility challenges, plans to relocate the transportation facility and the option of combining the two operations in one building would provide the opportunity to rectify these challenges.

The divisional website and school sites now have tags on images to ensure greater accessibility for all people. In addition, a training document has been prepared for school secretaries which outlines guidelines for adding proper text and tags to images on school websites. All secretaries to the division will be trained in this process.

Policy ECABB supports the activities of the Accessibility Committee (Appendix A). Guidelines for the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service have been prepared (Appendix B) and all employees have completed a training module which supports this standard. The module is accessed via the division's Learning Management System (Smarter U).

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN ADVANCEMENTS

A summary of the working group's advancement includes:

- The working group has drafted policy outlining the division's commitment to employment standards related to accessibility (Appendix C):

  - Recruitment and hiring of employees (CGE/CGF)
  - Procedure for hiring of employees (GCF-R)
  - Reasonable accommodation and accessibility procedure (CBA-R)

- Checklists to support the policies also have been drafted (Appendix D)

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

Accessibility Report

The following table represents the Accessibility Committee Work Plan to date:

DATE	ACTION	COMPLETED
29 Nov. 2016	- Team to attend AMA Training Workshop	√
5 Dec. 2016	- Team to draft the divisional Accessibility Plan	√
21 Dec. 2016	- Team to finalize the divisional Accessibility Plan	√
18 Jan. 2017	- Team to participate in the webinar on the employment section of the AMA	√
9 Mar. 2017	- Team to meet to prioritize work flow for policy development, customer service guidelines & website accessibility	√
20 Mar. 2017	- Team to attend AMA training	√
23 Mar. 2017	- Team to trial potential on-line accessibility training developed in Ontario	√
5 May 2017	- Team to share progress updates on policy development, customer service guidelines & website accessibility	√
6 June 2017	- Team to finalize policy, customer service guidelines & website guidelines; team to begin development on a staff training module & year-end report	√
28 Sept. 2017	- Team to finalize year-end report & staff training module	√
18 Oct. 2017	- Team to draft communication plan for customer service guidelines	√
Nov. 2017	- Policy ECABB – Accessibility is passed	√
Dec. 2017	- Customer Service Training module completed by all staff	√
March 2018	-Alt text training available for staff who support school websites	√
TBD	- Team to attend provincial AMA training workshops as new timelines are identified; team to meet monthly to plan for implementation of AMA requirements	

NEXT STEPS

The committee will continue to develop guidelines as required by the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act.* The most recent regulation distributed by the government relates to Accessible Employment Standard.

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

River East Transcona School Division believes that:

- achieving accessibility for all individuals in our school community is both morally and ethically correct and supports and aligns with our division's mission, strategic vision and core values

- achieving accessibility for all individuals by removing, eliminating or minimizing barriers will improve their health, independence and well-being and maintain their dignity and independence

River East Transcona School Division is committed to:

- adhering to the requirements of the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA)

Effective Date: November 21, 2017   Review Date:
Amended Date:
Board Motion(s):   296/17
Legal/Cross
Reference:

Guidelines for Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

June 2017

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

STATEMENT

River East Transcona School Division (RETSD) is committed to the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and its accessibility standards.

RETSD is committed to complying with The Accessibility Customer Service Standard under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.*

DEFINITIONS

Assistive Device - A technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that persons with a disability bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank. Assistive devices may assist with hearing, vision, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Barrier - Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability. This can include a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice ("obstacle").

Disability - A disability is a condition that limits a person's daily activities.

Service Animal - See the Manitoba Human Rights Commission Guidelines on Service Animals

Support Person - A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the individual in order to help with the communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

CUSTOMER SERVICES STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

Providing Accessible Goods, Services or Facilities

RETSD will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, guidelines, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Language and Terminology

RETSD is committed to using respectful language and terminology in our schools and workplaces as they pertain to various disabilities. It is everyone's responsibility to keep up with current terminology.

USE . . .	INSTEAD OF . . .
Person with diabetes, arthritis, etc.	Afflicted with Suffers from
Person with a disability	The disabled, The handicapped
Person with a mental illness	Mentally ill, insane, crazy, psychotic

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

Person with a mental health issue	
Person who is hard of hearing Person who is deaf	The deaf
Person who is Deaf-Blind	Deaf and dumb, deaf mute
Person with Downs Syndrome Person with an intellectual disability Person with a developmental disability	Downs, imbecile, mentally retarded, mentally challenged
Person with epilepsy	An epileptic
Person who is blind Person who is visually impaired	The blind
Person who stutters Person with a communication disability	Stutterer, speech handicapped
Person with a mobility disability Person with a spinal cord injury	Physically challenged, crippled, lame,
Person who uses a wheelchair	Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound
Accessible parking Accessible washrooms	Handicapped parking, handicapped washrooms
Person without a disability	Normal

If you are unsure of the proper terminology, ask the person.

COMMUNICATION

RETSD will communicate with people disabled by barriers in ways that take into account the nature of the barrier. This may include the following:

- easy to read fonts and plain language
- paper and pen available at reception
- all publications will include notice: "This publication is available in alternate formats upon request."

RETSD will work with the person to determine the barrier and what method of communication works for them.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our facilities.

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our facilities.

The division will ensure that staff are aware of the various assistive devices that we provide to staff, students and the public to ensure access to our facilities.

SUPPORT PERSONS

A person with a disability is welcomed to be accompanied by a support person.

SERVICE ANIMALS

The division welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals into our facilities. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

When it is not easy to identify that an animal is a service animal and if appropriate, staff may ask:

1. Is the animal assisting you?
2. What assistance has the animal been trained to provide related to your disability?

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded

- discuss with the person another way of providing access to the facilities

For further information, refer to RETSD Policy IMG – Animals in Schools.

MAINTAIN BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

The division will maintain barrier-free access by:

- keeping hallways, waiting areas and meeting rooms clear of clutter
- keeping entrance ways cleared of snow and ice
- ensuring the placement of standing signage is not a tripping hazard
- having space for mobility device in waiting room

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services or facilities for customers disabled by barriers, the division will promptly post notices and, when possible, announce the disruption. A clearly posted notice or announcement will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services/facilities include, but not limited to:

- accessible washroom
- elevator
- automatic doors
- accessible parking

The notice will be made available in one or more of the following ways:

- posted on school or division website

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

- posted at entrance
- announced on p.a. system

FEEDBACK PROCESS

The division welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. This feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Staff, students and the community may provide feedback in the following ways:

- email
- phone
- visit reception desk

All feedback, including complaints, will be directed to the appropriate department. Where applicable, responses will be provided in a timely manner.

TRAINING

The division will provide accessible customer service training to:

- all employees

- school board members

All staff will be trained on accessible customer service within 3 months after being hired.

Training will include:

- background and purpose of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*

- the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

- explanation of all policies relating to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

- how to interact and communicate with people disabled by barriers

- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person

- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our goods, services or facilities

- staff will also be informed and/or trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

PUBLIC EVENTS

The division will make public events accessible by:

- announcing events in a manner that is accessible
- holding event(s) in accessible meeting places
- inviting requests for relevant disability accommodations

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

DOCUMENTATION

The division will document all policies, guidelines, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service.

The division will inform staff, students and the community that these documents are available upon request.

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

RECRUITMENT AND HIRING OF EMPLOYEES

(1)   Recruitment and selection of teachers and non-instructional staff shall be the responsibility of the human resources department.

(2)   All candidates selected for employment shall be approved by the human resources department within the budget allocation.

(3)   The board of trustees shall be informed of all appointments made.

PROCEDURE FOR HIRING OF EMPLOYEES

The principal will assume a key role in the staffing of the school. Department managers/directors will be responsible for the hiring of new employees within their respective departments.

(1)   Staff vacancies are bulletined by the River East Transcona School Division human resources department in consultation with the principal or department manager/director for typically, five working days.

(2)   Applicants will submit a covering letter referencing the bulletin number, accompanied by a resume, including three references, to the human resources department by the designated closing date.

(3)   The human resources department short lists the candidates based on qualifications, training, experience and previous interview information, if available.

(4)   The short listed applications are forwarded to the school or department for consideration.

(5)   The principal or department manager/director establishes the interview team (minimum of two people) that may include team leaders, Administration Offices staff, department heads, consultants, or other department staff as required.

(6)   Any member of the interview committee who may be in a conflict of interest due to a familial or close personal relationship must withdraw from the interview committee.

(7)   When the principal, department manager/director, or their designate, contacts each candidate on the short list to communicate the date, time and location of the interview, they must also communicate to each candidate that the school division has an accommodation and accessibility policy, and if accommodation assistance is needed, to please inform the school division.

(8)   The interview process shall include an interview and the checking of the references for the recommended candidate.

(9)   At the conclusion of the interview process, the principal or department manager/director will make a recommendation to hire to the human resources department.

(10)   After consultation with the human resources department, the principal or department manager/director will inform the successful applicant. All other applicants who were interviewed will be informed by the principal or department manager/director that the position has been filled.

(11)   All information, applications and recommendations are to be returned to the human resources department.

(12)   All required documents and arrangements regarding the the new hire will be processed by the human resources department.

Effective Date:	~~May 4, 2004~~ January 17, 2018	Policy	
Amended Date:		Regulation	XXX
Board Motion(s):	292/04	Exhibit	
Legal/Cross Reference:			

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AND ACCESSIBILITY PROCEDURE

River East Transcona School Division and its employees shall use the following process when reasonable accommodation and accessibility of a special need is requested. Requests could be made based on a protected characteristic under *The (Manitoba) Human Rights Code* (the "Code") or the Accessible Employment Standard Regulation.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

The employee will:

- advise the division of the request for accommodation by completing form GBA-E Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility Request and submitting the form to the human resources department in a timely manner,
- provide all relevant medical and other information to assist the division in assessing the request,
- provide the division with the necessary authorization to communicate with relevant professionals, medical or other, depending on the request, and
- co-operate in the search for, and implementation of, the accommodation.

DIVISIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The division will:

- post the Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility Policy and applicable form(s) on the divisional staff portal,
- through its human resources department, review the employee's request for accommodation,
- verify the need for accommodation through employee interview, additional communication with medical and/or other relevant professionals and review of documentation submitted,
- assess, identify, and implement reasonable accommodation in a timely manner, and
- hold all information obtained confidential.

The division's human resources department will monitor any accommodation implemented to determine effectiveness and need for change, and to determine if accommodation is no longer necessary.

If accommodation is not possible due to undue hardship, the division will advise the employee in writing as to the reason(s) the accommodation cannot be provided.

INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION PLANS

Once an individual accommodation plan is created and agreed to, the GBA-E Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility Request form will become the formal individual accommodation plan. The content of the individual accommodation plan will include clarification of the accommodation requested, documentation associated with the accommodation request, and the details surrounding the accommodation action undertaken by the division.

In the event that the division denies a reasonable accommodation request, employees may elect to contact the Human Rights Commission or any other appropriate legal authority at any time before, during or after the division's involvement in the process.

CHECKLIST FOR HIRING OF EMPLOYEES – GCF-E3

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The hiring manager (principal or department manager/director) submits a request to human resources (HR). Staff vacancies are bulletined by HR for typically, five working days.

Hiring manager establishes the interview team (minimum of two people) that may include team leaders, Administration Offices staff, department heads, consultants, or other department staff as required. Any member of the interview committee who may be in a conflict of interest due to a familial or close personal relationship must withdraw from the interview team.

The hiring manager will arrange with HR to receive the short-list of applicants and the job bulletin folder.

☐ **Select Applicants for Interview** – Only applications received from HR may be considered. Applications submitted directly to the school/department or hiring manager must be forwarded to HR before being considered. Review applications and select applicants to interview. Hiring managers shall not respond to questions from applicants regarding whether an application has been received. Application questions shall be referred to HR.

☐ **Contact Candidates to Interview** – Hiring manager or designate will contact selected candidates with the following information:

- Date, time and location of the interview.
- Provide the location's address and a contact phone number or email should they need to reach the interview team.
- Provide information such as fragrance-free policies, parking information, where to report and to whom.
- Communicate to each candidate that the school division has an accommodation and accessibility policy, and if accommodation assistance is needed, to contact the hiring manager or, if they prefer, human resources.

  o List the reason for the request and the accommodation being requested: _____

  _____

  _____

  (continue on back if required)

  o List how request will be accommodated: _____

  _____

  _____

  (continue on back if required)

River East Transcona
S C H O O L   D I V I S I O N

CHECKLIST FOR HIRING OF EMPLOYEES – GCF-E3

☐ **Interview –** Hiring manager or designate will describe the position and relevant information regarding the school, division, program. At the conclusion of the interview:

- Inquire as to their availability (start date).
- Request reference contact information if not previously provided.
- Obtain approval to contact references.
- Indicate the expected date that a decision will be made and that all interviewed candidates will be contacted.

☐ **Reference Checks –** Complete reference checks on the recommended candidate(s) using the applicable Reference Check form.

☐ **Recommendation to Hire –** Hiring manager will contact HR with a recommendation to hire. No employment offer shall be made to a candidate prior to consultation with HR.

☐ **Offer of Employment –** After HR approval is received, the hiring manager will contact the recommended candidate with employment offer. If accepted, request their social insurance number to include on the Recommendation to Hire Form. Refer the recommended candidate to HR should they have questions regarding employment or contracts.

☐ **Contact Remaining Candidates –** Inform unsuccessful candidates that the position has been filled.

☐ **Return Documentation –** Return the Job Bulletin Folder to HR for filing, including this form and all recruitment documentation (ie. Recommendation to Hire form, resumes, interview notes and reference checks for all applicants). The division is required to retain recruitment documentation for two years.

HR will process the paperwork for the new hire once folder is received from the school/department. The principal or department manager/director will receive email account user name and password information up to five days prior to the start date of the new employee.

River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION