



Algoma District School Board

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN January 2025 – December 2029

**Prepared by
Accessibility Committee**

**In accordance with
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, S.O., 2005, c.11**

This publication is available through the Algoma District School Board's

- website (www.adsb.on.ca → COMMUNITY → Accessibility)
- Education Centre/Head Office, 644 Albert Street East, Sault Ste. Marie, ON
- East Office – Adult Learning Centre, 50 Roman Ave, Elliot Lake, ON
- Northern Office – Sir James Dunn PS, 36 McKinley Ave, Wawa, ON

Accessible formats will be made available upon request

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1.0 PURPOSE

The Algoma District School Board is committed to ensuring an environment that supports independence, dignity and respect. To achieve this goal, the ADSB undertakes to continually improve accessibility in order to provide greater equity for all in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act* (AODA, 2005) and includes the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations (2001). The ADSB's first Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlined how the Board planned to meet its obligations and described the measures that it would take over the five year period from 2012 to 2017 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work, learn and participate in the school board community and environment including students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and visitors to the Board offices and its schools.

As the ADSB is committed to the principles and practices of inclusion and well-being to foster a community of integration, accommodations will be implemented as required and upon request. This revised 2025-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility plan is guided by the Board's Accessibility Standards Policy Statement and the AODA 2005.

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the ODA 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.

There are five areas, or Standards, of focus for the multi-year Accessibility Plan:

1.1 Information and Communications – giving people with disabilities access to more of the information we all depend on;

1.2 Transportation – making it easier for people with disabilities to get where they need to go;

1.3 Employment – expanding Ontario's labour pool and welcoming people with disabilities into more workplaces;

1.4 Built Environment – removing barriers in new buildings and outdoor spaces for people with disabilities. The regulation applies to public, private, and not-for-profit businesses and organizations that provide goods, services or facilities either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations and have at least one employee in Ontario.

1.5 Customer Service – committed to providing services to our students, parents/guardian, the public and our staff that are free of barriers and biases. The ADSB strives to ensure that key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environments. The use of assistive devices is welcomed at the ADSB. Please inform our staff if we can be of any assistance. Notice of temporary disruption of facilities or services will be posted at such facilities or on the ADSB website at www.adsb.on.ca.

Ministry of Community and Social Services link:

<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>

These standards are all part of the **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations**. The regulation sets out the requirements for each of the standards, as well as general requirements that apply to all, such as:

- Develop accessibility policies and plans
- Training employees and volunteers, and
- Considering accessibility when purchasing goods or services.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan also describes the measures that the Algoma District School Board has taken in the past, and the measures that the Board will take in the future to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

For the next five years, the Board will work toward the continual improvement of access to school board facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community with disabilities.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Accessibility Standard – an accessibility standard made by regulation under the AODA Act, 2005.

Barrier - 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 information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, and/or a policy or a practice “obstacle”.

Disability - The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. “Disability” is:

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- 2.3 A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- 2.4 A mental disorder, or
- 2.5 An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997*.

3.0 PROFILE OF THE ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Mission

Confident learners, caring citizens.

Vision

In partnership with our stakeholders, the Algoma District School Board will create a collaborative learning community where all flourish as confident learners who see themselves as capable, self-directed and open to learning and as caring citizens who value good character and contribute positively to our communities.

On January 1, 1998 the Algoma District School Board was formed through the amalgamation of six former school boards: The Sault Ste. Marie Board of Education, The North Shore Board of Education, the Central Algoma Board of Education, The Hornepayne Board of Education, The Chapleau Board of Education and The Wawa Board of Education.

The Algoma District School Board currently serves approximately 10,500 students and their families in 14 communities. ADSB has 25 elementary schools (K –6, K – 8), three JK to 12 schools, four 7 – 12 schools and two 9 – 12 secondary schools in addition to 3 Adult Learning Centres, 3 Alternative Program (Algoma Education Centres), 3 Developmental Programs, 3 Field Schools.

The ADSB has many special programs and initiatives as well as specialized staff positions that are ongoing including: Apprenticeship Training (Level I) in 3 sectors, Specialist High Skills Majors in 6 sectors, Dual Credit opportunities for Grades 11 and 12, International Baccalaureate Program, Advanced Placement and Reach-Ahead Programs, E-Learning, Cooperative Education/ Work Placements/ Field Schools, French Immersion, First Nations, Metis, Inuit Initiatives, Indigenous Education Lead, Indigenous Grad Coaches, Transition Programs at all ADSB secondary schools, Student Success Teachers at all ADSB secondary schools, Students At Risk Program, Project SEARCH, Co-op for students with disabilities, Transitions Navigator, Grade 7 and 8 Intermediate Programs (4), Character Education, Full Day Early Learning Program, Instructional Lead Teachers / Special Assignment Teachers, LD Resource Facilitator, Behaviour Coach, ASD Facilitator, Early Years Resource Facilitator, New Teacher Induction Programing, and Mentor-Coaching for Administrators.

The ADSB has 3 administration buildings and covers a geographic area of approximately 71,000 square kilometers. ADSB has approximately 2100 permanent and casual employees. Our school community stretches from Hornepayne on the Northwest to Chapleau on the North and East to Spanish with our Board Office located in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Algoma District School Board is one of the largest geographical English Public School Boards in Ontario. It employs a diverse staff to ensure quality education and a positive environment for teaching and learning. Our appreciation is extended to all organizations within the Sault Ste. Marie and District area that partner with us to enhance the learning opportunities for all our students.

The ADSB is faced with and is committed to deal with the many difficulties that the diverse weather, lack of available public transportation, narrow rural road and a large complement of aging facilities provides. The ADSB will work with our diverse communities to ensure that

emergency evacuation sites provide the proper access and appropriate facilities to meet the needs of students and staff requiring accessibility.

The ADSB is committed to providing educational opportunities that will assist every child in personal and intellectual development. In an effort to ensure that programs and services are meeting student needs, regular program reviews are conducted.

Annual Budget is approximately \$190 000 000.

More information about the ADSB can be found on the Board's website at www.adsb.on.ca.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The ADSB Multi-Year Accessibility Plan reflects the strategic directions of achievement, well-being and equity outlined in the ADSB Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and describes the measures the Board will take over the period of 2025 – 2029 to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. This plan:

- 4.1** Describes the process and measures by which the Algoma District School Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers and review recent efforts to remove and prevent barriers;
- 4.2** Makes a commitment to provide, as requested, an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the multi-year accessibility plan;
- 4.3** Makes a commitment to review and update the multi-year accessibility plan at least once every 5 years;
- 4.4** Describes how the ADSB will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

5.0 COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

This plan will be established and shared with the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Accessibility Committee, and with community partners. It will be presented to the Board of Trustees following a revision.

The Algoma District School Board is committed to:

- 5.1** Maintaining an Accessibility Committee with representation from across the system;
- 5.2** Consulting with stakeholder groups including people with disabilities, to continuously improve policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community living with disabilities.
- 5.3** Ensuring, wherever practical, that Board policies, procedures, and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility and universal design. The Accessibility Committee will provide input, where appropriate, about accessibility issues relating to new policies and procedures, and to those under review;

5.4 Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community. Consideration of ongoing identification of barriers will be the responsibility of the Accessibility Committee and will, wherever practical, be incorporated in the multi-year plan.

The Director of Education has authorized the Accessibility Committee to review and update the multi-year Accessibility Plan that will enable the Algoma District School Board to meet these commitments.

6.0 MEMBERS OF ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

The Algoma District School Board's Accessibility Committee was formally constituted in January 2003 and consists of the following active members:

Working Group Member	Department
Brent Vallee	Superintendent of Special Education
Joe Santa Maria	Executive Superintendent of Business & Operations
Krista Lappage	System Administrator – Special Education
Alicia Mannarino	Human Resources Services
Chris Alfano	Health & Safety Officer
Trevor Brown	Assistant Supervisor of Capital Planning & Mait
Lisa Henderson	COMMUNITY MEMBER (CEO of Thrive Child Development Centre)
Ian Gauld	Eastern Area Coordinator - Elliot Lake ON
Sarah Anich Mansfield	LD Resource Facilitator
A.Chapman	Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Supporting Members:

ADSB Transportation Services
ADSB Information Technology
ADSB Human Resources

7.0 REVIEW AND MONITORING

The role of the Accessibility Committee is to establish a framework that ensures compliance with the AODA legislative Acts and related regulations to further identify the barriers to people with disabilities in all facilities, procedures, policies, programs, practices and services offered by the ADSB.

The Accessibility Committee will:

1. Post the multi-year Accessibility Plan on the ADSB website.
2. Provide the plan in an accessible format, upon request.
3. Prepare an annual status report on the implementation of the plan.
4. Review and update the plan in the fall of 2029.
5. Provide the revised Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to Trustees in January of 2030.

The Accessibility Committee will meet a minimum of three times a year to plan and review progress. Minutes of the meetings will be available on the Board's website at www.adsb.on.ca.

8.0 STRATEGY FOR PREVENTION AND REMOVAL OF BARRIERS

Beginning September 1, 2004 the principles of inclusionary practice, freedom from barriers and accessible environments have informed all Algoma District School Board policies, programs, procedures and services. Through the annual accessibility plan status report process implemented under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, the Algoma District School Board's programming, policies and practices have been assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility. This process will continue through the establishment of a multi-year accessibility plan which places particular emphasis on the provisions of the regulations made under the AODA regarding customer service, information and communications, employment and school transportation.

8.1 BARRIER REMOVAL INITIATIVES

Within the last several years, there have been several initiatives that the Algoma District School Board has identified to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

These include:

- i. **Physical/Architectural Barriers** - Accessibility for people with physical disabilities has been facilitated with the installation of ramps to facilitate entry to buildings, barrier-free parking and the renovations of washrooms for barrier-free access. Renovations to existing buildings to necessitate the need for track lifting for students with physical disabilities as required and is ongoing.
- ii. **Attitudinal Barriers** - Attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities are being addressed through ongoing staff and student in-service about diversity, assessing diversity policy/procedures and examining other policies and procedures for impediments to accessibility.

8.2 BARRIERS TO BE IDENTIFIED

Over the next several years, the Committee will focus on specific barriers. The list is divided into the following areas:

1. **Physical Barriers** - objects added to the environment – doors, windows, elevators, furniture, etc.
2. **Architectural Barriers** - building design, area adjacent to the building, shape of room, size of doorways, etc.
3. **Information Barriers** - inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, etc.
4. **Attitudinal Barriers** – staff who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, staff who refuse to provide service, discriminatory behaviour.
5. **Technological Barriers** – computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephone switches, assistive technology.
6. **Policy or Practice Barriers** – rules, regulations and protocols that prevent one performing their job satisfactorily, or from serving the public, or that restrict participation.
7. **Communication Barriers** – difficulties receiving information in person, or by telephone, difficulties interacting with receptionists or other staff, difficulties receiving training.

Barriers that have been identified include ramps, barriers in washrooms, visual fire alarms, lighting, window coverings,

8.3 BARRIER IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGIES

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

- Accessibility Plan Presentation to SEAC,
- Accessibility Plan available to Employee Groups for general information,
- Communication with Public via posting on ADSB website, and finally
- Review, planning and recommendations for following year through various Accessibility Committee meetings where the active members report on progress and status updates.

New school construction has adhered to the current building code and includes level access to schools, automatic door openers, elevators in schools of more than one floor, and accessible washrooms.

An Accessibility Checklist is being piloted at 2 elementary schools and 2 secondary schools to be completed during monthly Workplace inspections. Administration from each school will meet with System Administrator after a 3-month trial to edit checklist. Formal implementation for all schools for September 2025. Appendix A

9.0 ONGOING INITIATIVES

The Algoma District School Board, through its Special Education Plan, has addressed access for students with disabilities through programs and services that provide for accommodations, modifications and alternative programming. The Special Education Plan is available on the Board website under the Special Education tab.

Attitudinal, learning, and policy/practice barriers for people with disabilities will be addressed on an ongoing basis through staff and student in-service, and by examining policies and procedures for impediments to accessibility.

The Algoma District School Board continues its work on promoting Mental Health and Well-Being. The Algoma Model was developed to promote and support the positive behaviour, well-being and mental health of all children and youth in our community to maximize their full potential. It is a collaborative school and community-based approach to child and youth problem behaviour and mental health issues. The ADSB Mental Health Lead (MHL) and the Mental Health, Counselling and Attendance Team (MHCAT) facilitate the delivery of Mental Health and Addictions initiatives with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ministry of Child and Youth Services and Ministry of Education. The ADSB MHL works collaboratively with community partners developing protocols for service delivery, defining roles and responsibilities, workshops for staff members, assisting in the development of transition plans for students recently discharged from the Sault Area Hospital and returning to school, and supporting the professional learning of teachers around mental health.

Involvement in various community service planning groups permits the Board to network and collaborate around programs and services of mutual interest. Participation in Ministry surveys, collaborative work with regional school boards, and sharing effective practices with other boards ensure the Algoma District School Board has the most up-to-date information on improving access for students with special needs.

11.0 COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN AND FEEDBACK

In addition to the public availability of the plan as referenced earlier, the Algoma District School Board will post an annual status report on the progress of the multi-year Accessibility Plan on the Board's website. The Board will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

The ADSB is committed to ensuring that its services meet the highest standard of accessibility for people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the Board. Comments and feedback on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated. To provide input or feedback, please contact the office at 705 945 7297.

All feedback, questions, comments or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:

Accessibility Committee
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7
Telephone: 705-945-7297
Fax: 705-942-2540

Or

www.adsb.on.ca → "Contact Us"

FOR ACCESSIBLE FORMAT REQUESTS:

Please contact the Special Education Department at 705-945-7297

Suggested Reference Materials & Resources

Accessibility Ontario – Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning

<http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/accessibleplanningguide.htm>

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005

http://www.cfcs.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/what/AODA_guide

Government of Ontario – Paths to Equal Opportunity A-Z index – Accessibility in Educational Environments

http://www.equalopportunity.on.ca/eng_g/subject/index.asp?action=search_4&dir_id=1071

Ontario Human Rights Commission - *Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate* <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/english/publications/disability-policy.shtml>

Enablelink (Canadian Abilities Foundation) Directory of Canadian Disability Links

http://www.enablelink.org/resources/links_to.html

Directory for Accessibility

<http://www.accessibilitydirectory.ca>

Adaptive Technology Resource Centre

<http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc>

Ontario Interpreter Services (OIS)

<http://www.chs.ca/services/ois.html>

Canadian Standards Association:

B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design

B480-02 – Customer Service Standard for People with Disabilities

<http://www.csa.ca>

Playability Tool Kit: Building Accessible Playspaces

<http://www.opassoc.on.ca/toolkit.asp>

Ontario Disability Organizations:

ATN (Accommodation, Training & Networking for persons with disabilities)

<http://www.atn.on.ca>

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

<http://www.cnib.ca>

Canadian Hearing Society

<http://www.chs.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association – Ontario
<http://www.ontario.cmha.ca>

Community Living Ontario
<http://www.oacl.on.ca>

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – Ontario Division
<http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario>

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
<http://www.ldao.on.ca>

Little People of Ontario
<http://www.lpo.on.ca>

Ontario Brain Injury Association
<http://www.obia.on.ca>

Canadian Paraplegic Association – Ontario
<http://www.canparaplegic.org/on>

Le Phénix
<http://www.lephenix.on.ca>

Ontario March of Dimes
<http://www.dimes.on.ca>

The Easter Seal Society – Ontario
<http://www.easterseals.org>

AboutFace International
<http://www.aboutfaceinternational.org>

Ontarians with Disabilities Act – ODA Committee
<http://www.odacommittee.net/>

Ontario Coalition for Inclusive Education
<http://www.inclusive-education.ca/>

Accessibility Ontario
<http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/>

Appendix A



Accessibility Checklist

Inside Building	Equipment ○ Lifts in working order ○ Change tables in working order ○ Electric doors in working order ○ Elevator (if applicable) in working order Door restrictions ○ manual doors (fire doors) in working order Visual accommodations ○ tape/paint is in place where required for visual tracking ○ braille in place where required Fire Alarms ○ visual alarms (flashing) – in all spaces including bathrooms & gym Hearing ○ functioning, appropriate and worn all the time by teaching staff when in classroom
Outside building	Surfaces ○ free of large cracks, divets, holes (smaller wear and tear cracking is acceptable) Lighting ○ In instances of low light, are surfaces illuminated Visuals/audio ○ fire alarms (is that alarm visual?)

Work Order Required:	Work Order #
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