



Date of Meeting: 2019 06 25

Item #: 13 . c

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Program and School Services Advisory Committee
	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Working Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning and Priorities Advisory Committee
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> IN-CAMERA
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Accessibility Plan 2019-2021	
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b>	Andrew Canham, Superintendent of Student Achievement (Special Education) Andrea Marlowe, Diversity and Equity Coordinator	
<b>PRESENTED FOR:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Advice	
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	That the TVDSB Board of Trustees review the attached <i>Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Accessibility Plan 2019-2021</i> and vote to approve the plan for the upcoming three academic years.	
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek the approval of the <i>Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Accessibility Plan 2019-2021</i> from the Board of Trustees.	
<b>Content:</b>	<p>The Accessibility Plan is a public-facing document and an internal guide for staff and administration. It will inform the TVDSB community and the general public of the TVDSB's objectives, actions and progress related to accessibility over the next several years. Accessibility-related accomplishments and progress will be monitored by the Accessibility Working Group and documented in an annual status report to be presented to the Board at the end of each school year.</p> <p>The Plan reaffirms the TVDSB's commitment to ensuring accessible and inclusive learning and working environments, and respect for the rights of persons with disabilities. The Plan presents accessibility-related objectives as one piece of all ongoing work across our system to promote equity and diversity in the TVDSB, and therefore demonstrates alignment with TVDSB's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>On June 11, 2019, a draft copy of the TVDSB Accessibility Plan was shared with members of SEAC. The following motion was unanimously approved:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">THAT after reviewing and providing input to the 2019-2021 TVDSB Accessibility Plan, SEAC recommends that the plan be approved by the Board of Trustees.</p>	
<b>Cost/Savings:</b>	N/A	
<b>Timeline:</b>	The Plan is submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval on June 25, 2019.	
<b>Communications:</b>	Upon approval from the Board of Trustees, The Plan will be posted to the TVDSB website	
<b>Appendices:</b>	Attachment #1 - <i>Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Accessibility Plan 2019-2021</i>	

**Strategic Priority Area(s):**

<b>Relationships:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students, families and staff are welcomed, respected and valued as partners.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promote and build connections to foster mutually respectful communication among students, families, staff and the broader community.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships.
<b>Equity and Diversity:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Create opportunities for equitable access to programs and services for students.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students and all partners feel heard, valued and supported.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programs and services embrace the culture and diversity of students and all partners.
<b>Achievement and Well-Being:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> More students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes with a specific focus on numeracy and literacy.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff will demonstrate excellence in instructional practices.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance the safety and well-being of students and staff.

**We build each student's tomorrow, every day**



# Thames Valley District School Board

# ACCESSIBILITY

# 2019-2021

# PLAN

## Our Mission

We build each student's tomorrow, every day.

## Our Vision

The Thames Valley learning community inspires innovation, embraces diversity, and celebrates achievement – a strong foundation for all students.



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**Laura Elliott**  
Director of Education



**Arlene Morell**  
Chair of the Board

# From the Director of Education and Chair of the Board

In Thames Valley, we celebrate the diversity of our learning community every day. I am pleased to introduce our newly developed multi-year Accessibility Plan, to support our work in creating inclusive learning and working environments for students, staff, and family and community members of all abilities.

Developed by our multi-disciplinary Accessibility Working Group, which includes representatives from TVDSB and community partners, this Plan affirms our commitment to accessible policies, practices, structures and spaces across our district. The Plan will guide our accessibility work as a key element of fulfilling our commitments to equity and diversity outlined in our Strategic Plan. Further, the Accessibility Plan sets specific and measurable goals that will focus our collective efforts to achieve equitable access to all TVDSB services and facilities.

As our communities, and our world, evolve, it becomes increasingly important that we understand the significance of accessibility in ensuring a positive and inclusive experience for all Thames Valley students. Supporting students of all abilities to reach their potential is the mandate of public education, best achieved through strong relationships with families, staff and valued community partners. Thank you for your continued support in building a strong foundation for all of our students.



**Laura Elliott**  
Director of Education



**Arlene Morell**  
Chair of the Board

# Introduction and Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Ontario Human Rights Code establishes the right of all Ontarians to be free from discrimination in services, including education services, on the basis of disability. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), together with its Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, aims to address the right to equal opportunity and inclusion for persons with disabilities throughout society by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to access. Specifically, the AODA and Integrated Regulation address barriers related to:

- Customer service
- Information and communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built environment (i.e. physical spaces)

The Thames Valley District School Board is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code, and under AODA and the Integrated Regulation, in a way that ensures equitable access to its buildings, programs and services for all of the students, families, employees, and members of the public who collectively make up the TVDSB community. The TVDSB commits to achieving its accessibility goals in a way that promotes and ensures respect for every person's human rights, dignity and independence.

An accessible TVDSB is therefore comprised of two, equally important elements:

1. Policies, procedures and practices that promote inclusion in all aspects of service delivery for students, families, staff, and members of the public; and
2. Individual accommodations that meet the needs and ensure the success of every TVDSB student and employee.

This Plan states the goals of TVDSB in continuing to identify and remove structural, attitudinal, systemic, and communication barriers to access for persons with disabilities. The Plan also sets out the steps that TVDSB will take to achieve these goals, and how we envision the outcomes of our efforts, and how we will measure our progress.

In doing so, the Plan is one among many concrete manifestations of TVDSB's commitment to ensure equitable and inclusive learning and working environments for our students, staff, and families. This commitment, a pillar of the *TVDSB Strategic Plan* and *Operational Plan*, is also embodied in the *TVDSB Equity and Inclusive Education Policy*, *Special Education Plan*, *Mental Health and Well-Being Strategic Plan*, *Policy and Procedure on Religious and Creed-Based Accommodation of Students*, and *Guideline for Supporting Trans and Gender Diverse Students and Staff*. The TVDSB continues its efforts to develop a robust policy framework to support the implementation of its operational goals with respect to equity and inclusion.



## Disability Defined

This Plan adopts an understanding of disability, consistent with the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code, as any physical or mental condition that limits a persons movements, senses, or activities, and which includes invisible disabilities such as mental illness, and cognitive or learning disabilities.

“Students with disabilities are a **diverse group**, and experience disability, impairment and societal barriers in many **different** ways. **Disabilities** are often “invisible”...”

– Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy  
on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities,  
March 2018

# The Thames Valley Community

The students, families, staff, and communities of the **TVDSB** in 2019 are **exceptionally diverse**.

The communities the TVDSB serves are urban, suburban, and rural, living in an area encompassing more than 7,000 square kilometres. Many of our students, families and staff have always lived in Southwestern Ontario – many have only just arrived. Our families are both large and small, and are composed of a multitude of identities and relationships – also reflected within our schools.

Our approximately 78,000 students attend 161 schools and learning centres across the TVDSB district. Our students are supported by more than 8,500 staff with varied identities and backgrounds, working within or out of both our educational and our administrative buildings.

Our students, families, and staff possess all levels of ability.

**TVDSB embraces** its community's **diversity**, as the foundation upon which each student's success is built.





# Accessibility Accomplishments

This section documents existing or ongoing accessibility initiatives or developments in the TVDSB.



## Customer Service

The TVDSB continues to deliver mandatory online training to all new staff regarding accessible customer service prior to commencing

employment. This training, together with system-wide training initiatives, ensures common understanding of accessibility standards across TVDSB's workforce.

The TVDSB continues our commitment to responding effectively to requests for communications materials in alternate accessible formats, as well as to community accommodation requests. TVDSB engages both system and school staff as appropriate, in responding to these requests to ensure a timely response.



## Information and Communication

In 2018, the TVDSB website was redeveloped to achieve compliance with World Wide Web Consortium

Content Accessibility (WACG 2.0) standards, which ensures accessibility through:

- enhanced readability, comprehensibility and predictability of text content,
- text alternatives for non-text content,
- captions and other alternatives for multimedia,
- content with multiple presentation options including by assistive technologies,
- ease of both audio and visual perception,

- independent, complete keyboard functionality, and
- content navigation support for users.

Content on the TVDSB website can also be instantly translated into more than 100 languages. Individual school websites use the same platform as the TVDSB main site, ensuring access to all of the same accessibility features and translation capabilities.

In the Spring of 2018, school and system leaders were provided with training in accessible communications standards, with the TVDSB Communications Team providing dedicated support upon request.

In addition to websites, TVDSB schools use an accessible communication tool, SchoolMessenger, to share information with families, and to allow families to connect with schools. Educators also have the option of using Brightspace as an accessible platform for sharing information with families.



## Employment

### Recruitment and hiring

TVDSB has standardized processes with respect to internal and external job postings to ensure staff and

the public are notified about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities at all stages of our recruitment processes.

Once applicants are selected for the assessment stage of the recruitment process, applicants are notified that accommodations are available upon request in relation to materials or processes to be used.

When inviting all applicants for interview, applicants are notified that accommodations are available, if requested. If accommodation is requested at any stage in the recruitment process, applicants are consulted regarding necessary arrangements to account for individual accessibility needs.

New hire conditional offers of employment include the requirement for applicants to complete the TVDSB AODA training module before commencing employment. All applicable new hire letters and internal hire letters reference the accommodation policy.

TVDSB has developed, in consultation with an independent expert in the field, a training program for staff regarding bias-free decision making in the recruitment and selection process. Delivery of this training across the system is ongoing.

## Accommodation

TVDSB's Accommodation Procedure for all teaching staff was developed with reference to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate, and supports a healthy and inclusive return to work for staff. TVDSB Abilities and Wellness Services supports staff requiring accommodation in developing an individual accommodation plan and working towards staff's goals in returning to work.



## Transportation

Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (STS) is a non-profit corporation that serves as the joint transportation consortium

for the TVDSB and the London District Catholic School Board. STS is responsible for the planning and coordination of school bus service for Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford counties and in the City of London.

The TVDSB Board of Trustees approves and directs the service Parameters of STS annually through a service agreement. Two TVDSB staff also sit on the STS Board of Directors.

STS designs and monitors service for home to school transportation in keeping with its governing policies and procedures, which ensure compliance with accessibility standards. Policies and procedures include those related to Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Accessible Student Transportation, Individual Student Transportation Plans, Service Animals, and Support Persons for Students.



## Physical Environment

During the 2015-16 school year an independent facility accessibility audit was completed of all TVDSB owned sites. Individual site reports

were received and reviewed by TVDSB's Facility Services team. The results of this audit have guided, and continue to guide, prioritization of accessibility-related improvements to TVDSB facilities.

The TVDSB Special Education and Facility Services and Capital Planning departments work collaboratively to determine accessibility priorities throughout the year in order to effectively allocate resources from various funding sources, including capital grants received from the Ministry of Education. A collaborative approach to the prioritization process facilitates timely identification of students' needs and project planning at specific school sites.

Information related to individual student accessibility needs is communicated to Special Education system staff through administrators and Learning Support Teachers providing on-site support to students. This information is documented and tracked by the Superintendent of Student Achievement responsible

for Special Education. Maintaining current and accurate information regarding student needs allows the Special Education department to work effectively with Facility Services staff to plan and implement individual accommodations. The objective of this collaborative effort is to combine the relevant expertise of Special Education and Facility Services staff to ensure an inclusive learning experience for every TVDSB student.



## Systemic

In addition to the targeted accessibility initiatives outlined above, TVDSB is committed to system-level practices that promote equity and inclusion, and seek to identify and remove systemic barriers. These practices create opportunities for collaboration and community engagement in areas that support inclusion of all identities and levels of ability.

## Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE) Policy Review Committee

The EIE review process adds a preliminary step in the TVDSB's policy review process to ensure all TVDSB policies and procedures reflect principles and priorities related to diversity, equity and inclusion of all students, families and staff.

The EIE Committee consists of TVDSB system staff, with Trustee representation, from diverse areas of responsibility, and meets once per month from October to June to consider, using a dedicated review tool, new or revised policies or procedures. The department responsible for the policy or procedure participates in the Committee's discussions.

Through the EIE review process, TVDSB ensures its policies and procedures incorporate accessibility considerations and promote inclusion for students with disabilities, their families, and community members.

## Culture for Learning Advisory Committee

The mandate of the Culture for Learning Advisory Committee is to provide input and recommendations to support TVDSB's work in promoting safe and inclusive school environments, and the mental health and well-being of all students. The Committee meets three times each year, and includes community members, teaching staff, school administrators, and system-level staff, as well as a Board Trustee, to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered and reflected.

## Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The regulation made under the Education Act requires all school boards to establish a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). The SEAC provides the Board of Trustees with advice about special education programs and services, and may make recommendations to the Board on any matter affecting the delivery of those programs and services for exceptional students.

Members of SEAC include representatives from fourteen local community-based organizations that further the interests and well-being of exceptional children or adults, and three Board Trustees. The Committee is supported by the Superintendent of Student Achievement responsible for Special Education, Special Education Learning Supervisors, school administrators, and representatives from two local Indigenous communities.



**TVDSB embraces its Community's diversity, as the foundation upon which each student's success is built.**



## The Accessibility Working Group and Plan Development

The TVDSB Accessibility Working Group gathered in January 2019 to review the 2017-2019 Accessibility Plan, and to consider the way forward in developing a Plan that would guide the TVDSB's work related to accessibility in the coming years. The Group expanded to include representation from additional sectors and areas of expertise, to ensure contributions from all stakeholders.

The result, over the following months, was a renewed vision for accessibility, and a concrete plan to ensure the realization of the TVDSB's accessibility goals – supported by careful monitoring and accountability measures, and celebration of our successes along the way.

# Overview of Objectives: 2019-2021

The **TVDSB Strategic Plan 2018-2021** identifies three strategic priorities: building positive relationships to foster an engaged and inclusive board culture; providing an equitable and inclusive learning environment that champions learning opportunities for all; and engaging in innovative learning experiences that promote excellence in student achievement and well-being.

TVDSB acknowledges the significance of its Accessibility Plan in achieving these strategic objectives. Through focused planning, continual monitoring, and ongoing stakeholder engagement related to accessibility, TVDSB will:

- build positive relationships with students with disabilities, their families, and community partners;
- enhance the inclusivity of TVDSB services and structures for all students; and
- help to create a strong foundation for student achievement and well-being.

In working towards its ultimate goal of meeting the standards outlined in the AODA, TVDSB aims to achieve the following objectives during the period 2019-2021:



## Customer Service

- Review and revise TVDSB community feedback processes related to accessibility and accommodation to ensure efficiency and ease of access; and
- Enhance training and supports for staff in understanding and applying standards for accessible customer service.



## Information and Communication

- Enhance education and training for staff regarding accessible communication requirements across our system;
- Review school communications, in particular school newsletters, to ensure consistent use of accessible formats and communication tools, as well as content that can be accessed by all groups and individuals in our diverse school communities; and
- Revise accessibility information available on TVDSB's website to ensure it reflects current legislative requirements and TVDSB's broader commitments to equity, inclusion, and the rights of persons with disabilities.



## Employment

- Support TVDSB employees in accessing comprehensive, accurate information related to accommodation in the workplace to provide the best support possible to staff;
- Continue ongoing review of TVDSB Abilities and Wellness Services processes to ensure these reflect current best practices;
- Create a comprehensive accommodation policy and procedure applicable to all staff;
- Support staff through professional learning in understanding and applying principles related to accommodation;
- Enhance the diversity of the TVDSB workforce and inclusion for persons of varying ability within it, through amendments to recruitment, selection and promotional policies and processes as able; and
- Continue professional learning initiatives regarding bias-free decision making in recruitment and hiring.



## Transportation

Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (STS) aims to continue its organizational commitment to providing accessible

and specialized transportation service to students – a commitment that is founded in the dignity and humanity of all individuals and enables their full participation in a diverse society. In accordance with this commitment, STS aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Design and monitor service for home to school transportation, including specialized transportation, in keeping with its governing policies and procedures jointly agreed upon by its member school boards;
- Review, on an ongoing basis, all policies, practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with current legislative requirements and principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for all persons;
- Maintain its commitment to planning and delivering service, including accessible and specialized transportation service, that is safe, effective and efficient, and support this commitment with appropriate training for all staff; and
- Continue to respond to, and resolve concerns related to individual accommodations of students collaboratively with TVDSB senior administration and staff.



## Physical Environment

• Enhance information sharing and collaboration between Special Education Department staff and Facility Services and Capital Planning

regarding prioritization of accessibility-related projects;

- Update publicly available information regarding the accessibility of TVDSB school sites;
- Continue work to enhance TVDSB's process for documenting and tracking student accessibility needs to ensure seamless and successful transitions into the school environment, and from one school site to another (e.g., elementary to secondary); and
- Support communication between schools and Special Education Department staff regarding specific accessibility concerns.



### Other – Systemic

- Create a TVDSB Accessibility Policy to ensure a consistent understanding of the TVDSB's accessibility objectives and commitments, and the importance of these objectives to achieving system goals related to equity, inclusion and respect for Human Rights;
- In developing a comprehensive TVDSB Equity Action Plan, include accessibility as a key determinant of equitable and inclusive learning and working environments; and
- Acknowledging the findings and direction of the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) in its Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities (2018), enhance professional learning regarding the duty to accommodate.

## Multi-Year Plan 2019-2021

This section states the specific actions that TVDSB will take to fulfill its accessibility objectives. Each action represents an intentional step towards measureable outcomes to be achieved during the period covered by this Plan.



**Objectives:** The goals TVDSB intends to achieve by the end of our multi-year Plan.



**Actions:** Specific steps TVDSB will take to achieve our accessibility goals.



**Outcomes and Measurements to be considered:** Desired outcomes, and potential indicators that will assist us in measuring our success in meeting our objectives.





**1.** Ensure public information regarding accessibility in TVDSB is complete, accurate and up to date.

a) Update accessibility information to ensure it references current legislative requirements related to accessible customer service.

i) Website content has been revised at 6 months following the release of the Plan, as reported by TVDSB Communications team.

**2.** Amend the TVDSB Accessibility Feedback and Community Accommodation Request processes to ensure they are transparent, fair and efficient.

a) Direct feedback and concerns to the TVDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator, who will coordinate a response from the most appropriate staff person or department;  
b) Ensure information about feedback and request processes is easily located and prominently displayed on the TVDSB website;  
c) Through responding to requests and feedback, increase staff awareness of accessibility needs and concerns.

i) Feedback and requests are consistently documented and tracked by the Diversity and Equity Coordinator;  
ii) All requests and feedback are responded to.

**3.** Enhance staff understanding of accessible customer service and its relevance to their roles and positions.

a) Develop a plan to deliver more, and more interactive, professional learning on accessible customer service;  
b) As part of this plan, establish partnerships with TVDSB System Staff Development, as well as program staff responsible for delivering professional learning.

i) A mechanism for tracking and monitoring feedback about the service experience of school communities and the general public is established;  
ii) A method of identifying trends, if any, in customer service feedback is developed.



**1.** Support all staff in understanding and applying requirements for accessible communication, including the creation and distribution of print and electronic materials.

a) Build upon Spring 2018 training by creating additional professional learning opportunities for staff regarding accessible communication, with particular focus on document creation and creation of multimedia materials;

b) Facilitate collaboration between Communications and Graphic Services to ensure accessibility requirements are consistently met in the development of electronic or print materials;

c) Enhance awareness system-wide of accessible communication standards through internal reminders and messaging.d) Enhance awareness system-wide of accessible communication standards through internal reminders and messaging.

i) TVDSB staff, in particular those involved in the production of communications materials, system supervisors and managers, and school administrators, receive (current) training with respect to accessible communications;

ii) A mechanism for tracking rollout of accessibility training to staff across the system is established;

iii) A process for ensuring all new materials produced by TVDSB Graphic Services consistently meet accessibility requirements is put in place;

iv) A strategy for delivering periodic reminders and information to staff regarding accessible communication standards is developed and implemented by the TVDSB Communications team.



**2.** Ensure compliance of school-generated communications with regulated accessibility standards.

- a) Conduct a review of school to home communications e.g. school newsletters, to identify areas for improvement in meeting accessibility standards;
- b) Support school administrators and staff as appropriate in producing accessible document formats.

- i) A method for reviewing and auditing of school to home communications is developed and implemented;
- ii) A process for ongoing review of compliance of school to home communications with regulated standards is established.

**3.** Improve overall accessibility of school-generated communications for students, families, and other stakeholders.

- a) Gather feedback from parents/guardians and families regarding their experience in accessing school to home communications;
- b) Review school-based communications to identify areas for improvement in accessibility related to level and complexity of content and availability of translation;
- c) Support school administrators in tailoring school communications to their particular school communities.

- i) A plan for surveying consumers of school-based communications (i.e. parents/guardians and families), is developed and implemented;
- ii) A mechanism for tracking consumption of school communications, in particular by groups identified as facing potential barriers to access (e.g. persons with disabilities or persons for whom English is not the primary spoken language), is created;
- iii) Consultations with administrators and staff responsible for producing school to home communications are underway regarding accessibility; avenues for schools to access ongoing support from system staff are established.



**1.** Review and revise information and processes related to workplace accommodation, to ensure these reflect current regulatory requirements and best practices.

- a) Review and revise information available through the employee portal to ensure it reflects current legislative and regulatory standards;
- b) Enhance the information available via the portal to ensure employees have access to a complete guide to TVDSB's accommodation processes.

- i) Employee portal information has been revised at 6 months following release of the Plan by TVDSB Abilities and Wellness Services;
- ii) Enhancements are completed prior to the commencement of the 2020-2021 school year by Abilities and Wellness Services.

**2.** Develop and implement a comprehensive TVDSB accommodation policy and procedure applicable to all staff.

- a) Research policies developed in other jurisdictions to identify best practices;
- b) Develop and implement a policy applicable to all TVDSB employees.

- i) Policy and procedure are drafted, have progressed through the TVDSB review process (including posting for public input), and are in place.



**3.** Enhance professional learning related to the duty to accommodate amongst TVDSB organizational support staff.

- a) Engage a third-party vendor to develop content for leadership training related to the duty to accommodate;
- b) Support managers and supervisors, in particular in Organizational Support Services, in delivering training to staff.

**Desired outcomes include:**

- i) Managers and supervisors are knowledgeable and implement the Duty to Accommodate Process;
- ii) Concerns from staff related to accommodation are reduced;
- iii) A greater number of concerns are resolved informally. To this end:
  - Information on complaints made to the TVDSB alleging discrimination based on disability is compiled, in consultation with legal counsel;
  - A process for informal resolution of complaints has been developed.

**4.** Incorporate accessibility-related training in ongoing review and revision of corporate orientation practices.

- a) Develop a plan for including accessibility-related training in on-boarding and pre-boarding for new staff;
- b) Review, in particular, methods of delivery, to enhance the impact of learning related to accessibility during orientation.

- i) TVDSB pre-boarding and onboarding training includes content related to accessibility standards;
- ii) An approach to delivery, to ensure training is interactive and engaging, is developed and is implemented.



**5.** Enhance the diversity and inclusivity of the TVDSB workforce through amendments to recruitment and selection policies and processes.

- a) Analyze data collected through the TVDSB Everyone Belongs at Thames Valley Employee Survey to better understand the diversity of the TVDSB workforce;
- b) Identify opportunities for targeted recruitment activities amongst groups, including persons with disabilities, which are underrepresented amongst TVDSB employees;
- c) Continue delivery of bias-free hiring training, targeting in particular all Human Resources staff and all managers and supervisors newly (within the last 3 years) employed with TVDSB.

- i) Employee survey data is analyzed and publicly reported on;
- ii) A plan for action based on survey outcomes is determined.



**6.** Enhance the transparency and inclusivity of Principal/Vice-Principal promotional policies and practices, to ensure equitable advancement of candidates with varying abilities.

- a) Review existing promotional practices, particularly those related to promotions to Vice-Principal and Principal, to identify processes or approaches that allow for subjectivity in the selection of candidates for promotion;
- b) Revise processes to ensure objective and accountable decision-making regarding promotions.

- i) A method of tracking the number of candidates applying for promotion to Principal/Vice-Principal positions, as well as a mechanism for identifying diversity in the identities and circumstances of candidates, is established;
- ii) Review and revision of promotional practices and any related policies or procedures, is substantially complete.

**7.** Enhance professional learning regarding implicit bias and bias-free decision making, system-wide.

- a) Further improve and refine bias-free decision making training.
- b) Deliver, or re-deliver, training to Human Resources staff, supervisors and managers, school administrators, senior administration, and Trustees.

- i) A method of tracking rollout of bias-free hiring training is established to ensure target groups are being reached.



**1.** Design and monitor service for home to school transportation in keeping with STS policies and procedures.

- a) Develop transportation arrangements for students identified and approved by partner school boards, consistent with each student's Individual Student Transportation Plan (ISTP);
- b) Ensure effective communication of ISTP information to service providers contracted to deliver service to students.
- c) In accordance with STS' commitment to integrated transportation, ensure exceptional students are transported on traditional school buses unless alternate accessible transportation is required to meet a student's needs.

**Desired outcomes include:**

- i) Transportation service that meets individual students' needs, while maintaining maximum inclusion and integration;
- ii) Successful implementation of ISTP requirements by contracted service providers.





**2.** Review existing policies, practices and procedures to ensure these reflect current best practices and principles of equity and inclusion and proactively address barriers to access and integration.

- a) Review legislative and regulatory requirements for any updates or changes;
- b) Review policies and procedures of student transportation providers in other jurisdictions to identify best practices;
- c) Review and propose revisions to STS policies, procedures and practices, as appropriate.

- i) Policies and procedures are up to date, clear and comprehensive;
- ii) Policies and procedures embody organizational commitments.

**3.** Ensure compliance with STS policies and procedures, and commitment to safe, efficient and effective service by all staff, including service delivery partners.

- a) Plan and deliver training to staff, in particular training related to accessible transportation and ISTPs;
- b) Ensure training includes, in particular, all bus operators under contract to STS;
- c) Monitor the quality of home-to-school services provided by contracted service delivery partners.

- Desired outcomes include:**
- i) Fewer concerns raised by students and families related to services provided by service delivery partners;
  - ii) Organizational culture reflects commitment to principles of equity and inclusion.



**1.** Enhance information-sharing regarding student accessibility needs between Special Education and Facility Services to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources across the system.

a) Schedule planning meetings between the Superintendent of Student Achievement responsible for Special Education, or designate, and the Manager of Capital projects, to take place at least quarterly;

b) Continue a collaborative approach between Special Education and Facility Services to determining priority of accessibility projects, to ensure that priority is assigned according to

- principles of inclusion as outlined in TVDSB Special Education policies,
- the rights of students with disabilities, and
- strategic priorities in accessibility-related improvements to TVDSB school sites, across school communities. communities.

i) A system that is conducive to storing and sharing information regarding all TVDSB students with physical accessibility needs is in place;

ii) A mechanism for gathering and compiling feedback from Special Education and Facility Services staff related to the process for identifying and prioritizing accessibility projects is established, to allow for an annual check-in and review.



**2.** Anticipate student physical accessibility needs sooner, to allow for advance planning for facilities-related accommodations.

- a) Identify, through a collaborative prioritization process and in consultation with the TVDSB Capital Planning Committee, priority capital projects to be completed during the upcoming school year, by no later than March of the current year;
- b) Continue work to enhance and refine TVDSB's process for communicating, documenting and tracking student accessibility needs prior to planned transitions within the system (from Early Years programming into the school system, and from elementary to secondary school);
- c) Expand the scope of the current process for tracking student accessibility needs (from its focus on students transitioning from elementary to secondary) to include tracking for all exceptional students from pre-school to graduation;
- d) Enhance the functionality of the current tracking system by allowing information to be more readily shared with Facility Services and other system partners.

**Desired outcomes include:**

- i) More efficient planning for capital projects, allowing Facility Services to mobilize improvements to TVDSB buildings more quickly to meet student needs;
- ii) Fewer unanticipated, last-minute requests for facility modifications to accommodate exceptional students.



**3.** Enhance capacity to efficiently direct resources to support accessibility-related capital projects.

a) Dedicate funds within the TVDSB Budget to accessibility-related capital projects, to be augmented as needed by additional sources of funding, including but not limited to, existing school renewal and school condition improvement grants.

**Desired outcomes include:**

- i) Transparency in accounting for accessibility-related improvements to school buildings;
- ii) More efficient planning for the use of resources to support accessibility-related projects.

**4.** Monitor progress in accessibility-related improvements to school sites in a manner that is effective, efficient, and transparent.

a) Update facility-specific accessibility information for all TVDSB buildings available on the TVDSB website to reflect current conditions;

b) Develop a process to ensure information is updated at least annually.

- i) Information available to the public regarding accessibility is current, complete and accurate at 6 months from the release of the Plan, as reported by Facility Services;
- ii) Information available to the public is consistently updated to reflect successful completion of accessibility-related projects.



**5.** Clarify the process for raising specific accessibility or accommodation concerns at the school level (which could originate with students, families, staff, or administrators) to the TVDSB Special Education Team to facilitate timely and effective communication of these concerns.

- a) Investigate existing practices on the part of school staff for raising individual accessibility concerns or requests at school sites with school administration;
- b) Develop a plan for educating staff on the appropriate process for communicating and responding to these concerns or requests.

**Desired outcomes:**

- i) Enhanced communication between school staff and TVDSB system staff regarding existing and changing student needs related to accessibility.



**1.** Develop, as needed, further policies, procedures, and/or guidelines to support the Accessibility Plan and other Board initiatives related to the rights of persons with disabilities and the creation of equitable and inclusive learning and working environments.

- a) Draft and implement a TVDSB Accessibility Policy, reflecting best practices across boards in other jurisdictions.
- b) Identify other policy supports, as appropriate and necessary based on a review of best practices.

**Desired outcomes:**

- i) TVDSB policies reflect best practices, consistent with the approach of boards in other jurisdictions;
- ii) Board governance structure reflects the vision for an accessible TVDSB outlined in the Accessibility Plan.

**2.** Develop and implement a TVDSB Equity Action Plan or Framework to guide and coordinate the Board's work related to equity, inclusion and Human Rights, system-wide.

- a) Steering Committee established to determine approach to action planning and next steps;
- b) Ensure representation from the Accessibility Working Group and persons with disabilities in community and stakeholder consultations regarding a TVDSB Equity Action Plan.

- i) Steering Committee begins work before end of 2018-2019 school year;
- ii) Community/stakeholder consultations planned and completed before end of 2019-2020 school year;
- iii) Action Plan document(s) created to guide work internally, as well as to increase public awareness of TVDSB's commitment and actions related to equity and inclusion.



**3.** Develop a plan for, and begin to deliver, system-wide professional development regarding the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities.

- a) Review recently completed and existing professional learning in relation to the TVDSB's duty to accommodate students, family members, and members of the public to identify system needs;
- b) Develop a plan for effective implementation of professional learning.

**Desired outcomes:**

- i) Increased understanding among staff and management regarding the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities;
- ii) Reduction in concerns raised regarding a lack of, or the nature and scope of, accommodation.

**4.** Develop a plan for and provide support for school-based student learning opportunities that focus on enhancing students' understanding of inclusive communities that welcome individuals of all abilities.

- a) Work collaboratively with Learning Support Services staff to provide resources to schools to support student learning opportunities that focus on understanding and supporting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

**Desired outcome:**

- i) Increased understanding among both staff and students of the ways in which schools can help to foster inclusive communities as seen through school-wide initiatives and more inclusive classroom learning environments.



## Communication of the Plan

The TVDSB Accessibility Plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees and displayed on the TVDSB web site at [www.tvdsb.ca](http://www.tvdsb.ca). Hard copies, and accessible formats will be provided upon request by contacting:

**Andrea Marlowe**, Diversity and Equity Coordinator

Thames Valley District School Board

1250 Dundas Street

London, ON N5W 5P2

Tel: (519) 452-2000 ext. 20515

Email: [a.marlowe@tvdsb.ca](mailto:a.marlowe@tvdsb.ca)

## Review and Monitoring

The Accessibility Working Group will meet quarterly to discuss the TVDSB's progress in implementing the objectives outlined in this plan. Representatives from TVDSB departments with responsibility for actions, measures and desired outcomes outlined in the Plan will report to the Working Group on progress made.

The Working Group's meetings, including any commitments or actions arising out of these meetings, will be documented and tracked through a method to be collectively determined by the Working Group.

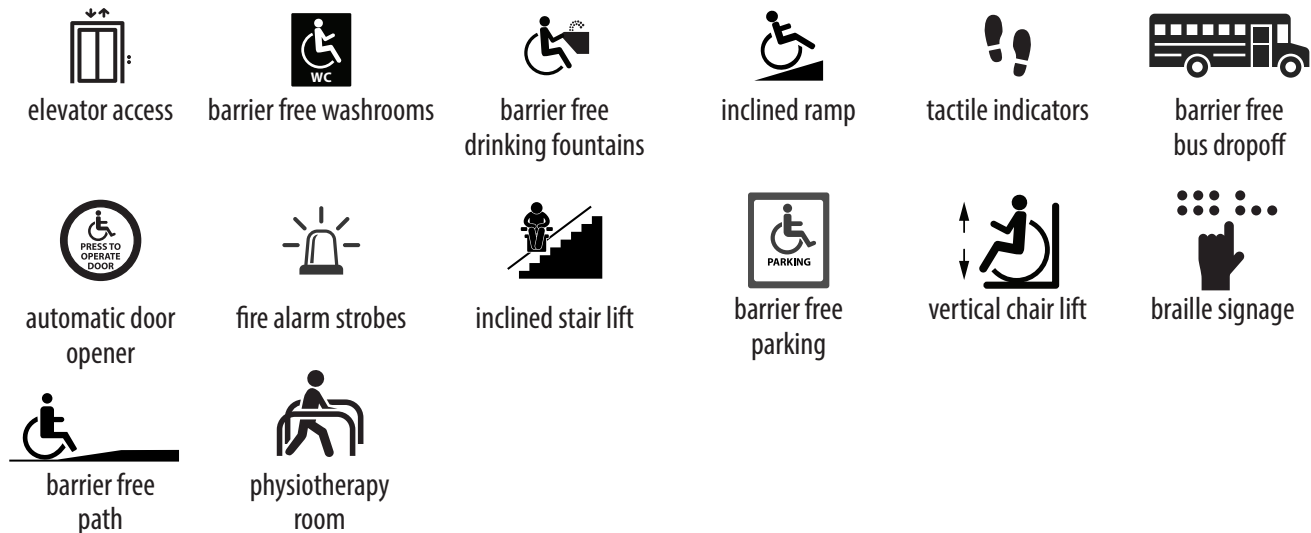
The Diversity & Equity Coordinator will be responsible for follow up or coordination of efforts to achieve the objectives outlined in the plan, as necessary.

### Annual Updates

The TVDSB will produce an Annual Status Report with respect to the implementation of the Accessibility Plan, in consultation with the Accessibility Working Group. The Status Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees, and made publicly available on the TVDSB web site together with the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.




































# Appendix A: Accessibility Projects 2017-2019



## 2017-2018 School Year

TVDSB Site	Location	Project Completed					
John Dearness Public School	City of London						
Lester B. Pearson School for the Arts	City of London						
Zorra Highland Park Elementary School	Embrow, Oxford County						
Arthur Ford Public School	City of London						
Elgin Court Public School	St. Thomas, Elgin County						
Innerkip Central Public School	Innerkip, Oxford County						
W. Sherwood Fox Public School	City of London						

# 2018-2019 School Year

TVDSB Site	Location	Project Completed		
Blenheim District Public School	Drumbo, Oxford County			
Bonaventure Meadows Public School	City of London			
C.C. Carrothers Public School	City of London			
Chippewa Public School	City of London			
Hickson Central Public School	Hickson, Oxford County			
Jack Chambers Public School	City of London			
John P. Robarts Public School	City of London			
Oxbow Public School	Ilderton, Middlesex County			
Tavistock Public School	Tavistock, Oxford County			
AB Lucas Secondary School	City of London			
College Avenue Secondary School	Woodstock, Oxford County			
East Elgin Secondary School	Aylmer, Elgin County			
H.B. Beal Secondary School	City of London			
Huron Park Secondary School	Woodstock, Oxford County			
Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute	Ingersoll, Oxford County			
Montcalm Secondary School	City of London			
Saunders Secondary School	City of London			
Sir Wilfred Laurier Secondary School	City of London			

# Appendix B: Accessibility Working Group

**Andrew Canham**

TVDSB – Superintendent of Student Achievement  
(Special Education)

**Andrea Marlowe**

TVDSB – Diversity and Equity Coordinator

**Andrea Leatham**

TVDSB – Learning Supervisor, Special Education

**Roseanne Ferrara**

TVDSB – Learning Supervisor, Special Education

**Carlos Henriquez, Manager, Capital Projects**

TVDSB – Facility Services

**Julia Capaldi, Communications Specialist**

TVDSB – Public Affairs and Community Relations

**Carolyn Glaser, Manager, IT Services**

TVDSB – Information Technology

**Bethany Martin, Manager, Staffing**

TVDSB – Human Resources

**Alice McCauley, Employee Relations Officer**

TVDSB – Human Resources

**Carolyn Blewett, Supervisor,**

Learning Support Services

TVDSB – Learning Support Services

**Dwayne DeJonge, Vice Principal, Central Elgin CI**

TVDSB – OPC Secondary

**Rebecca Crichton, Disability Management Officer**

TVDSB – Human Resources, Disability Management

**Kimberly Smith, Summers Corners PS**

TVDSB – Active Learning Educational Assistant

**Becky Calvert-Hamilton,**

OSSTF District 11 Health & Safety Officer

**Lisa MacMaster, President**

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)

**Monique Greczula, President**

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 7575

**Joanne Dowswell, Chief Steward**

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 4222

**Melissa Bakker, Secretary**

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 4222

**Charlie Price, President, Unit A**

CUPE 4222

**Alison Morse, Senior Manager, Provincial Services**

Easter Seals Society/ TVDSB Special Education Advisory  
Committee (SEAC)

**Samantha Edwards, Senior Transportation**

Specialist and Systems Administrator

Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services (STS)

**Sherry Haines, Associate Director,**

Access Ability Services

Ontario March of Dimes

**Carla Mocellin-Barbieri, Assistive Devices**

Counsellor

Ontario March of Dimes

**Randy McGivern, TCS Clinical Coordinator**

Thames Valley Children's Centre

**Heather and Brian Van Arnhem**

Parent representatives

