



SUBJECT	N.E.P.N. CODE
COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY	ACE

I. POLICY

The Louis Riel School Division holds inclusion as a fundamental belief and upholds its responsibilities under [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#) (AMA). The Division strives to ensure that its learning environments and workplaces actively promote, support and value human rights and the principles of equity of opportunity.

Consequently, the Division is committed to:

- ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities;
- treating people with disabilities in ways that allow them to maintain their dignity and independence; and
- meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers in a timely manner.

The Division recognizes the role of proactive education to support the values of acceptance and inclusion of all individuals into the community and appreciation for human differences.

The Division believes it essential, therefore, that Louis Riel School Division programs, curricula, instructional strategies, and management practices support the values embodied in this policy.

Accordingly, the Division articulates its expectation that all staff, students and other members of the school community adhere to the current policy, its **GUIDELINES** and **PROCEDURES**, as applicable to specific components of our collective work and interrelations.

II. GUIDELINES

A. The Division shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies and administrative protocols respect and promote the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities.

B. The Division shall make reasonable efforts to provide goods, services and facilities that are accessible to all students, parents/guardians, the public, and staff, including but not limited to:

- Customer Service
- Employment
- Information and Communication
- School Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

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- C. To ensure greater awareness and responsiveness to the needs of a person with disabilities, the Division shall provide appropriate training for all staff who deal with the public or third parties on behalf of the Division.
- D. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:
1. *Barriers to Accessibility* means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of the services of the Division. This includes, but is not limited to, a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, and/or a technological barrier.
 2. *Disability* means
 - a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect of illness and, without limiting the generality 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,
 - b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
 - c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
 - d. a mental disorder, or
 - e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the [Workplace Safety and Health Act](#).
 3. *Assistive Device* is any device used by people with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, mobility scooters, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices.
 4. *Service Animal* is an animal that is being used because of person's disability and this is either readily apparent or as explained by the person with the disability.
 5. *Support Person* is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability as the services of the Division are accessed. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.
 6. *Third Party Contractor* is any person or organization acting on behalf of or as an agent of the Division. An example is a contracted bus operator.
 7. *Accommodation* means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the Division.

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III. PROCEDURES

A. COMMUNICATIONS

The Division shall 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 in reception areas
- all publications will include notice: “This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.”

The Division shall work with the person to determine the barrier and what method of communication works for them.

B. ASSISTIVE DEVICES

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

- 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 goods, services or facilities.
- The Division shall ensure that staff is trained and familiar with the various assistive devices that we provide to customers to ensure access to our goods, services or facilities.
- For detailed information and instructions on this topic, refer to LRSD [Administrative Protocol](#) – Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public.

C. SUPPORT PERSONS

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

- Fee/fare will not be charged for support persons.
- For detailed information and instructions on this topic, refer to LRSD [Administrative Protocol](#) – Use of Support Persons by the General Public.

D. SERVICE ANIMALS

LRSD welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals.

- 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:
 - Is the animal assisting you?
 - What assistance has the animal been trained to provide related to your disability?
- A service animal can often be identified through visual indicators, such as its harness or vest, or through the assistance it is providing. In some cases, a person’s disability may prevent the individual from maintaining physical control of the animal. Then, the person is expected to maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other means.

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- If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:
 - explain why the animal is excluded
 - discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities
- For detailed information and instructions on this topic, refer to LRSD [Administrative Protocol](#) – Use of Service Animals by the General Public.

E. MAINTAIN BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

The Division will maintain barrier-free access by:

- keeping hallways and waiting meeting rooms clear of clutter such as boxes
- keeping entranceways cleared of snow and ice
- ensuring the placement of standing signage is not a tripping hazard
- having space for mobility device in waiting room
- considering barrier-free access and universal design principles in planning for all new construction and significant renovation

F. 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:

- accessible washroom
- elevator
- automatic doors

The notice will be made publicly available in the following ways:

- posted on website
- posted at entrance
- announced on intercom
- immediately explained by service provider

G. FEEDBACK PROCESS

The Division welcome feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns. Customers will be notified how to provide feedback in the following ways:

- website
- email
- phone
- visit reception desk

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All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

- Feedback will be directed to the Division’s Accessibility Coordinator.
- Customers can expect to hear back within 5 business days.
- We will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

H. TRAINING

The Division shall provide accessible customer service training to:

- all employees and volunteers
- anyone involved in developing our policies
- anyone providing goods, services or facilities to customers on our behalf

All staff will be trained on accessible customer service within one (1) month of the date of hire.

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 and administrative protocols 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
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise provided, to help people access goods and services or facilities
- 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 and administrative protocols.

I. PUBLIC EVENTS

The Division shall 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

J. DOCUMENTATION

The Division shall document all policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service, including:

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- policies and administrative guidelines;
- the steps The Division shall take when there is a temporary disruption in services and facilities;
- an employee training plan; and
- a description of the feedback process.

The Division shall inform customers these documents are available on request in the following ways:

- accessibility information on the website

The Division shall provide copies of all policies and accessibility plans required under the AMA in an accessible format, upon request.

REFERENCES

- Toronto District School Board, <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Accessibility>

The Louis Riel School Division acknowledges the Toronto District School Board as a source for the development of this policy.

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