



# Evergreen Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Prepared by  
Evergreen School Division's Accessibility Steering Committee

In accordance with The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), 2013

This publication is available through the Evergreen School Division website:  
[www.esd.ca](http://www.esd.ca)

## Introduction

The Evergreen School Division is committed to providing services to our students, parents/guardians, staff, and community at large that are free of barriers and biases. This Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA, 2013). The legislation requires accessibility standards to be developed over the next several years. The standards will address barriers and set out requirements in five key areas of daily living.

1. Customer service standard
2. Information and communication
3. Transportation
4. Employment
5. Built environment

### a. Objectives: This plan

- Will be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with the Accessibility Planning Committee and consult with persons with disabilities.
- Describes the processes by which Evergreen School Division will identify barriers to Accessibility.
- Describes the measures Evergreen School Division will take to remove barriers to Accessibility. Makes a commitment to prevent barriers to accessibility.
- Makes a commitment to periodically report on, review and update this multi-year plan.

### b. About us: Evergreen School Division

- Evergreen School Division (approximately one hour north of Winnipeg) serves approximately 1400 students in 8 schools in the communities of Arborg, Riverton, Gimli and Winnipeg Beach.
- The Division employs over 300 permanent and casual staff and has a budget of approximately \$21 million.
- Our educational values and beliefs:
  - **Vision:** *Learning Today to Improve Tomorrow*
  - **Mission:** *Evergreen School Division will engage students in learning to become contributing citizens of a democratic society*
  - **Values:**
    - *Students come first*
    - *Learning is our core purpose*
    - *Public education serves the common good*

### c. Commitment Statement

The Evergreen School Division School Board is committed to providing services to our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff that are free of barriers and biases. Evergreen School Division strives to ensure that key principles of independence, dignity, integration and quality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environments. The commitment is to:

- Maintain an *Accessibility Planning Committee*. The persons responsible for accessibility planning include the Division Leadership Team (principals, managers and senior administration).

- Ensure, wherever practicable, that Board policies, regulations and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility. The Accessibility Planning Committee will provide input re: accessibility issues, where appropriate, with regard to new policies, regulations and procedures and to those under review.
- Improve practices and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community. Consideration of barriers to accessibility and how to provide services by removing barriers that may exist. Barriers may include attitudinal barriers, informational and communication barriers, technological barriers, systemic barriers and physical and architectural barriers.

#### **d. Achievements**

- Evergreen School Division is committed to inclusion and has developed practices and procedures to ensure equal access to students who have accessibility challenges.
- Evergreen will further develop practices that will help ensure barrier-free accessibility for people with disabilities, seniors, and others with challenges to mobility, communication, understanding or health concerns.
- School and Division leaders in Evergreen are guided by the Division's mission, vision and values the principles of accessibility in the development of Education and Operational plans at the school and Division level.
- Evergreen School Division has in place hiring policies and practices to ensure potential employees have access to employment opportunities and are representative of a diverse population.
- The Transportation and Maintenance Departments are diligent in addressing accessibility in buildings and facilities. Maintenance and custodial staff respond promptly to reports of faulty equipment or barriers to access our facilities. Specially equipped buses provide transportation to students who require mobility assistance.
- The Information Technologies Department manages divisional and school websites, communication software and student and employee access to our technological infrastructure. Staff are attentive to new technologies that impact student learning and the professional development/training needs of employees: optimizing digital technologies to improve accessibility and independence, procedures in place for requesting technology improvements and reporting services disruptions.
- The Student Services Department ensures that appropriate education programming regulations are strictly adhered to and promotes a philosophy of inclusion, advocates and seek to ensure implementation of assistive technologies and accessibility for students, staff and community wherever needed.
- As a public sector organization, Evergreen currently adheres to the Education Administration Act (EAA), Public School Act (PSA), Appropriate Educational Programming Regulations (AEP regs.); and related amendments to legislation. Educational staff strive to promote inclusive school communities by differentiating instruction, adapting teaching methodology and curricula and accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities in the classroom and larger school community.

#### **e. Barrier Identification, Removal and Prevention:**

- Ongoing reference to the Accessibility for Manitoban's Act, 2013.
- Brainstorm with the Planning Committee a list of known and suspected barriers to determine the extent of known and suspected barriers within the Division.

- Discussions with staff for information sharing and feedback around known and suspected barriers within the Division.
- Solicit suggestions from employees, volunteers, students and others outside the organization to improve accessibility. This will be done through the Division website, Twitter, Facebook and consultations.
- Provide an opportunity, through a survey, focus groups, phone calls and interviews, for employees, volunteers, students and others outside the organization to provide input on the accessibility of the organization.
- Communication to stakeholders through newsletters, the Division website, Twitter and Facebook.
- Provide a copy of the Accessibility plan that is developed with questions to invite feedback and a response mechanism

## **f. Progress update under this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

### ***Customer Service Standard:***

The customer service standard under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act, 2013, identified specific requirements to achieve accessibility in the area of customer service. We began by identifying and addressing barriers in each of the following areas and report the following progress:

- i Meet the communication needs of clients: The Division uses a variety of means to communicate with the public. Our website is compatible with screen reader technologies and our messages to families occur via text, call, email and are posted to the website and social media apps.
- ii Allow assistive devices: The Division provides assistive devices to students and staff who require them. We have been upgrading our infrastructure to ensure our facilities are increasingly accessible.
- iii Welcome support persons: Within Division guidelines, we welcome support personnel into our facilities to assist individuals who require aid.
- iv Allow people with service animals: Within Division guidelines, we welcome service animals into our facilities.
- v Review physical barriers to access: On an ongoing basis, we review physical barrier to access and upgrade to more accessible options when replacing/renovating infrastructure.
- vi Let customers know when accessible services aren't available: The Division communicates an openness to inquiries regarding accessibility and feedback on our procedures and practices via a feedback form on our website.
- vii Invite customers to provide feedback: Students, staff, families and community members are invited to provide feedback formally, via our feedback form on the website and informally via communication with supervisory staff.
- viii Train staff on accessible customer service: All staff were required to view a video on accessible customer service. This is part of our hiring practices for new employees.

Evergreen School Division will continue to identify barriers, review existing practices and procedures and where necessary introduce measures enhance our compliance with this standard.

### ***Standard for Employment:***

The Standard for Employment, the second standard under the Accessibility for Manitobans, enacted in 2019 aims to remove barriers that affect current and potential members of the labour force. We began by identifying and addressing barriers in the following areas:

- i Recruitment, hiring and retention: Our prospective employees are informed that we offer reasonable accommodations. Staff who require accommodations are supported with appropriate planning including modifications to the workday, environment and assignment.
- ii Workplace emergency assistance: Staff supervisors are responsible for creating workplace emergency plans for students and employees who require assistance in an emergency.

Evergreen School Division will continue to identify barriers, review existing practices and procedures and where necessary introduce measures enhance our compliance with this standard.

### **g. Reviewing and monitoring ongoing progress**

- The Accessibility Planning Committee will review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of planned barrier removal and prevention strategies.
- Further, the committee will continue to plan for improved accessibility in all standards.

### **h. Communication of the Accessibility Plan**

The plan will be available on our School Division website at [www.esd.ca](http://www.esd.ca). We will work towards having the plan available in alternate formats. Questions, comments or feedback regarding Evergreen's multi-year Accessibility Plan are welcome.

Please direct any questions or comments to [info@esd.ca](mailto:info@esd.ca) or call 204-642-6260.



# EVERGREEN SCHOOL DIVISION

## APPENDIX A

### Accessibility Feedback Form

The Evergreen School Division (ESD) is committed to removing barriers that impede participation in the learning environment and improving accessibility to promote inclusive school communities for all persons. ESD is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for all persons with disabilities in our school division communities. We believe in inclusion and the maintenance of dignity and independence for all. The ESD Accessibility Plan will implement protocols to assist in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

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|-------|--|-------|--|
| Name: |  | Date: |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|

Contact Information:

|        |  |        |  |
|--------|--|--------|--|
| Phone: |  | Email: |  |
|--------|--|--------|--|

Please describe the barrier and suggestions for improved accessibility

Accessibility Coordinator:

Phone: 204-642-6260

Actions (Include estimated time line)

**Please email to [info@esd.ca](mailto:info@esd.ca) with the subject line accessibility feedback**