BUSINESS AND BOARD ADMINISTRATION | 3000

DRAFT DECEMBER 18, 2026

ACCESSIBILITY PROCEDURES | 3100

1. General

Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) supports human rights and accessibility for persons with disabilities informed by the four principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equality of opportunity.

Lakehead District School Board established the 3100 Accessibility Policy and these procedures to meet the requirements for accessibility on a graduated basis, to address the four areas, customer service, information and communication, employment and in the design of public spaces that it constructs or redevelops.

Lakehead District School Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services and supports that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities. Such services and supports incorporate measures that include, but are not limited to, the use of assistive devices, support persons, service animals, information and communications, employment, and transportation.

2. Definitions

The definitions articulated in the policy will apply. The following is supplementary information:

Service Animal is an animal that is being used to provide support to a person with a disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a regulated health care professional, such as a physician.

Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who have vision loss, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety. The provisions also apply to animals providing other services to persons with disabilities.

For an animal to be considered a service animal, the animal is easily identifiable as relating to the person's disability (for example, it is a guide dog) or the person with a disability can provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the animal is required due to a disability or has an identification card from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General.

Support Person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of LDSB. A support person is distinct from an employee who provides support services to a student or staff person in the system – separate and specific procedures apply.

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A support person is an individual chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual's health, or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure. The support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member. They do not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

3. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of superintendents, principals, managers, the communications officer, and supervisors, as appropriate, to endeavour to meet the objectives articulated in the 3100 Accessibility Policy, Section 4. The responsibilities include the following:

3.1 The users of LDSB and school services are notified when there is a disruption in services that may have an impact on access to services by persons with disabilities.

3.2 Staff and volunteers who deal with the public or third parties on behalf of LDSB, receive training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and corresponding standards - the requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Training will be appropriate to their duties and will be provided as soon as practicable. Participation of training is monitored and any necessary follow up action is taken. Tip sheets (Appendix A) have also been prepared to support these efforts. Training includes the following areas:

- staff receives training related to the AODA and corresponding standards, including but not limited to providing accessibility training to appropriate staff members with respect to accessible student program and course delivery and instruction;
- staff is trained to support parents/guardians and the public who may use assistive devices while accessing LDSB services; and
- all staff, volunteers, and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

3.3 A multi-year accessibility plan outlining LDSB's strategy to prevent and remove barriers is posted on the LDSB website. Lakehead District School Board will consult with individuals who have disabilities in the formation of this plan.

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4. Accessible Customer Service

4.1 Notification of Disruption of Service

Persons with disabilities may rely on certain facilities, services, or systems in order to access the services of the school or LDSB offices. Escalators and elevators, for example, are important to people with mobility disabilities because that may be the only way they can access the premises. Other systems and services designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities can include accessible washrooms, amplification systems, and note-taking or TTY services. When those facilities or services are temporarily unavailable or if they are expected to be temporarily unavailable in the near future, a notice of disruption of service is required.

4.1.1 When services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable, such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice will be posted at the site.

4.1.2 Generally, disruptions to all of the LDSB's services, such as during a major storm or power outage, do not require this special notice. However, if the disruption has a significant impact on people with disabilities, a notice of the disruption should be provided.

4.1.2.1 Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at or in the school or LDSB facilities. Other options that may be used include: posting on the LDSB and/or school website; direct communication with users of the services in accordance with school practices.

4.1.2.2 Consideration should be given to providing notice in multiple formats.

4.1.2.3 If the disruption is planned, notice should be provided in advance of the disruption. If the notice is unplanned, notice should be provided as soon as possible after the disruption has been identified.

4.1.2.4 The notice of disruption of service must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

4.2. Use of Assistive Devices

4.2.1 Training is focused on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are using assistive devices to access services at LDSB, rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices.

4.2.2 Students and staff are supported in their use of assistive devices in accordance with their Individual Education Plan or accommodation plan, respectively.

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4.2.3 The LDSB website will indicate all facilities services that are open to the public, will respect to the independence and dignity of persons with disabilities and that includes those who use assistive devices. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access the service provided.

4.2.4 The LDSB website, as applicable, will indicate the availability of assistive devices provided by LDSB, or school, to assist in provision of services to persons with disabilities.
These could include:

- assistive devices: TTY service, telephones with large numbers, amplifiers, lifts;
- services: sign language interpretation, oral interpretation, real-time captioning; and
- alternate service methods: assistance of a staff person to complete a transaction (e.g., school registration).

4.3 Use of Support Person

4.3.1 Access to LDSB Premises

Any member of the public with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on LDSB premises with their support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures. This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or LDSB offices where the public does not have access.

4.3.2 Confidentiality

Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is not the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the superintendent, principal, or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure.

4.3.2.1 Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given, in writing, by the parent or guardian.

4.3.2.2 The support person must also provide assurance, in writing, to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.

4.3.2.3 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/LDSB office.

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4.3.2.4 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required. (A sample of a consent document is provided as Appendix B).

4.3.3 Support Persons Accompanying a Person with a Disability at School Events for Which There is an Admission Fee

Where an individual with a disability, who is accompanied by a support person, wishes to attend a school, family of schools or LDSB organized event for which a fee is charged, the notice of the event will include information as to whether support persons will be charged a fee and specify the amount of the fee.

4.3.4 Where LDSB may Require the Presence of a Support Person

4.3.4.1 Lakehead District School Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises. (NOTE: This would be a rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill LDSB's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.)

4.3.4.2 Lakehead District School Board will understand the needs of the person with a disability, consider health or safety reasons and determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises. Persons with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health or safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health or safety before LDSB can require one – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means.

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4.4 Use of Service Animals

4.4.1 Access to LDSB Premises

4.4.1.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal will be welcomed on LDSB and/or school premises with his or her service animal and will be accompanied by the service animal while on the premises. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures. This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or LDSB offices where the public does not have access.

4.4.1.2 This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service animal. Access to classrooms for service animals used by students and staff is covered by the 8075 Service Animal in Schools Policy and the 7030 Human Rights and Workplace Harassment Policy.

4.4.2 Exclusion of Service Animal

4.4.2.1 A service animal can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom), although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g., school cafeteria or lunchroom).

4.4.2.2 Where there is a risk to the health or safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service animal, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. The situation needs to be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g., creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.

4.4.2.3 A service animal can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario Dog Owners' Liability Act which places restrictions on pit bull terriers.

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4.4.2.4 In the rare instance where a service animal must be excluded, LDSB will explain the situation and discuss with the person with a disability another way of providing the service. This could involve leaving the animal in a secure area where it is permitted by law, e.g., a person with a vision disability might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide them.

4.4.3 When it is Necessary to Confirm an Animal is a Service Animal

4.4.3.1 Where it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the LDSB staff member may ask the person using the service animal for a letter from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

4.4.3.2 Where the person using the service animal regularly attends at the school or LDSB facility, the principal or manager may request to keep a copy of the letter on file but only as long as required by the circumstances. Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to bring a letter with them on occasions when they visit the premises. The principal or manager shall preserve the confidentiality of the letter and information contained in the letter and shall not use or disclose the letter or information except as provided for in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56, or as otherwise required by law.

4.4.3.3 Students with disabilities are accommodated according to the 8075 Service Animals in Schools Policy.

5. Accessible Information and Communication

5.1 In order to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to regular LDSB services and documents, these will be made available in accessible formats, or communication supports provided, upon request. Examples of regular services and documents available may include: public emergency safety information, student program information and requirements, policies and procedures, student transportation information, etc.

5.2 Lakehead District School Board will consult with the individual making the accessibility request to determine an appropriate format for the accommodation. The individual's disability will be taken into account; however, the final determination as to which format or communication support will be used will be determined by LDSB.

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5.3 Lakehead District School Board materials in accessible formats or communication supports will be made available as soon as possible following the request and they will be provided to the individual at the same cost as they would cost in the original format. If information and communications are unconvertable, LDSB will provide an explanation and provide a summary of the unconvertable information or communication. The public will be made aware of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports via various means.

5.4 Lakehead District School Board will provide its website and web content in an accessible manner, ensuring that the content conforms with the world wide web consortium web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. Where this is not practicable, LDSB will endeavour to provide the information available on its website to persons with a disability in an alternate format, upon request.

5.5 Lakehead District School Board will provide educational training resources, materials and student records, program requirement information, descriptions, and availability in accessible formats that take an individuals' disability into account, upon request.

5.5.1 Methods of providing accessible formats may be obtained through purchasing or otherwise obtaining alternate formats, or by arranging for the provision of a comparable accessible resource if an accessible copy of the resource cannot be otherwise obtained.

5.5.2 Materials found in LDSB libraries will be made available in an accessible format or conversion ready format upon request. These materials include print, digital and/or multimedia resources, but do not include special collection material, archival material, rare books, or donated materials.

6 Accessible Employment

6.1 Lakehead District School Board will ensure that its recruitment, selection and employment practices are made accessible for persons who have disabilities, subject to the need for bona fide occupational requirements.

6.1.1 When LDSB advertises for available positions, the public will be advised of the availability of accommodation throughout the recruitment process.

6.1.2 Job applicants will be made aware of the availability of accommodation during the hiring process, and accommodation will be provided to individuals with disabilities upon request. Successful candidates will be made aware of the Rights and Workplace Harassment Policy 7030 and procedures and the accommodation support program.

6.2 Employees will be advised of the 7030 Human Rights and Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedures and the accommodation support program.

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6.3 Employees who have disabilities will be provided accessible formats and communication supports, as needed, to access job and job-related information, upon request. Lakehead District School Board will consult with the individual making the accessibility request to determine an appropriate format for the accommodation. The individual's disability will be taken into account; however, the final determination as to which format or communication support will be used will be determined by LDSB.

6.4 Where needed, an employee with a disability will be provided with an individualized workplace emergency response plan.

6.5 Lakehead District School Board will have an accommodation support program for developing individual accommodation plans for employees. Lakehead District School Board will develop and maintain a return to work plan for employees who were absent for work due to disability.

6.6 Lakehead District School Board will take into account the needs of employees with disabilities as well as their accommodation plan for performance management, promotion or professional development and in the redeployment process.

7. Accessible Transportation

Students with disabilities who require accessible transportation will be identified at the beginning of each school year and an appropriate integrated accessible transportation plan for that student will be developed. These plans will be developed by LDSB and Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay (STSTB) and communicated to all necessary parties.

8. Procurement

To ensure ongoing efficient and effective adherence to the Accessibility policy, LDSB, its school-based administrators, its managers, and its supervisors, including those representing LDSB in multi-board consortia, will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring goods, services or facilities. If it is not possible or practical to do so, LDSB will provide an explanation, upon request.

9 Monitoring and Feedback

Lakehead District School Board will monitor the effectiveness of implementation of 3100 Accessibility Policy through a process for receiving and responding to feedback. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public on the LDSB website and will allow persons with disabilities to provide feedback using more than one method. Persons with disabilities are invited to provide feedback about accessibility at LDSB.

Lakehead District School Board will review the implementation of 3100 Accessibility Policy with LDSB's various constituency groups, including the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

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10. Review

These procedures shall be reviewed in accordance with 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy.

Cross Reference	Date Received	Legal Reference
Lakehead Public Schools Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 1020 Equity and Inclusive Education Policy 7030 Human Rights and Workplace Harassment Policy 3030 Purchasing Policy 3040 Transportation Policy 8075 Service Animals in Schools Policy	December 15, 2009 Date Revised March 26, 2013 June 22, 2021	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Ontario Human Rights Code

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