



Avon Maitland District School Board Annual Accessibility Plan Working Group

Wednesday, November 9th, 2016
4:00 p.m.

Avon Maitland District School Board
Education Centre, Seaforth, ON
Festival Room

MINUTES

Attendance: Janet Baird-Jackson, David Frier (co-chair), Terry Marklevitz, Doug Pratley, Jason Hillier, Laurel Mitchell, Mary Lou Bilcke, Randy Wagler, Shelley King, Tim Bilcke, Wendy Case, Rick Rompf, Anne Copeland, Martin Ritsma, Hugh Cox, Judy Hoffmeyer, Luise Hoffman, Eleanor Salmon, Rob Simmons, Vince Trocchi

Regrets: Susan Hushen, Julia Opie, Kathy Campbell, Mary-Jane Karkheck, Ralf Mesenbrink, Diana Doctor, Jamie Gibbings

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Janet Baird-Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Moved by Martin Ritsma, and seconded by Hugh Cox that the agenda be approved.
CARRIED.

3.0 Review of Minutes from April 20, 2016

Moved by Mary Lou Bilcke, and seconded by Jason Hillier that the minutes from the April 20th meeting be approved. CARRIED.

4.0 AODA Overview

Janet briefly reviewed the Ministry *AODA, 2015 Reporting Requirements*. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed in 2005 with the goal to make Ontario accessible in 20 years. There are five standards. Our committee has organized itself into sub committees to deal with various requirements of implementation as set out by the Province. Members were asked to review the requirements attached to the agenda.

5.0 Compliance Benchmarks

Janet spoke about the compliance benchmarks. Our organization falls under the Public Sector 50+ Employees category. The expected benchmarks we have met since January 1, 2010 were highlighted including accessible customer service, accessible transportation services, accessible emergency and public information including website upgrade and filing and updating a multi-year plan and compliance reports. The next identified benchmark that needs to be met is filing an accessibility compliance report by December 31, 2017. Committee members were asked to peruse the benchmarks.

6.0 Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS)

The Ontario government slide deck from March 29, 2016 regarding DOPS was shared. Compliance with DOPS was effective January 1, 2016. This standard covers accessible parking, exterior paths of travel, outdoor public-use eating areas, recreational trails and outdoor play spaces. This standard applies to new spaces or significant changes to existing spaces; it is not retroactive. The committee can review the slide deck attached to the agenda.

7.0 Sub-committee/Working Group - Updates

The Working groups each provided their updates as follows.

Built Environment

Accessibility concerns are being addressed at SCSS for a student. There was extensive consultation and discussion with a number of parties including one of the City's Building Officials, the student, teachers, VP, Learning Services Dept. staff, Facilities staff and architect. The consultation process included review of the floor plan and discussion of the issue with the Building Official, consultation with the student, walking around the school with the student, asking questions and seeing how the student moved around the school, and reviewing the student's drop-off at the school by the parent. It was concluded that hand rails in three of the stair wells needed modification as well as an exterior door and that work had to be undertaken when school was not in session, so at the time of meeting it is still being completed.

Also, this past summer, at FEMSS work was undertaken, as part of the sports field drainage and upgrade project, to ensure that the existing path met the 5% incline for compliance and finished with stone dust so that it would be accessible for students.

Janet indicated that, when the AODA legislation was first passed, it had been discussed with various groups including the Board and SEAC that one of the viable strategies to address accessibility in schools was looking at school closures. Due to school closures, especially of a number of inaccessible two and one-half storey schools, we have been able to improve other schools for the students and have had the opportunity to build new schools, all with accessibility in mind.

It was brought to the committee's attention that parking is not part of the Ontario Building Code but a requirement of municipalities. It was cautioned that we need to keep this in mind when trying to make modifications, as some changes to make accessible spaces may put us in conflict with municipal bylaws.

Customer service

In the *Safe Schools* training module, staff are required to complete accessible customer service training. It's an expectation that staff complete this training every 3 years and new staff are to complete when hired. For efficiency and ease of review, it is the intention that related AP's and forms will be added to the module.

Information and technology

School websites are being updated and are very close to all being compliant. Communications staff are working with schools on uploading newsletters. Shortly there will be a tool in place able to scan pdf's on our websites for accessibility. January 1, 2021 is when all websites and content need to be accessible, so we are in good shape.

Employment

External ads now include a statement regarding accessibility. HRS is in the process of reviewing and updating all documents and forms. Considering getting a computer in the HRS department to do speech to text. A System Memo is being issued to employees asking them to self-identify if there is an accessibility need.

Transportation

AP 589 has been updated with recommended changes and is ready for review by Sr. Staff. Last year, Transportation did more accessibility training with the goal to have all inclusive buses on the road. Seventy two passenger vehicles now have students with all stages of development. Drivers were all at training sessions last year. Another training session is planned for this spring.

Creation of individual travel plans for students. Working with Learning Services to have EA's on the bus instead of bus monitors for students requiring support.

Sub-committee/Workgroup membership

There was review and discussion of the sub committee membership list identified in the Board Plan and that it needs to be updated with new members, given the amount of turnover this year. New members identified what committee they would like to join. The updated list will be finalized and sent out to the AODA committee.

Workgroup Review of Board Plan

The working groups need to review their sections of the plan for accuracy, update the information and identify any action that needs to be taken. This information needs to be sent to Janet by November 30th for the plan to be updated for 2016 and posted on the website. An electronic copy of the existing plan will be e-mailed to committee members.

8.0 Future meetings

Dates of next meetings:

- Wednesday February 8th, 4pm
- Wednesday April 26th, 4pm
- Wednesday October 11th, 4pm

9.0 Adjournment at 5 p.m.