



AODA Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Monday, November 25, 2019
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
EC Aurora Boardroom**

In Attendance (25 members, 1 guest)

Brusselers, Dale	Long, Gail	Shep, John
Hastings, Sue	Luong, Stephanie	Smith, Patrick
Kaderdina, Rizwana	Malcolm, John	Snowball, Andrew
Khushal, Shelly	McRoberts, Bob	Taylor, Shane
Gilbert, Luk (for Dawn Adams)	Nunes, Susie	Viney, Carolyn
Halley, Amanda Halley (for Tina Wieringa)	Petri, Derek	Woods, Paul
Lee, Paul	Rodney, Shellyann	Wu, Brandon
Leesti, Laura	Rutledge, Steve	Zafron, Marisa (guest)
	Sellers, John	

Regrets

Anirud, Anthony; Beetlestone, Pamela; Estriga, Teresa; Forsyth, Dawn (YCDSB); Harrison, Gerry; Kostic, John (CUPE 1196); Laliberte, Dawn; Mason, Anne (EIAC), Star, Rhonda; Silverberg, Carrie; Vellathottam, George

1. Welcome

- Introduction and overview of agenda; welcomed new HRCO Early Resolutions Officer, Andrew Snowball.

2. Land / Relationship Acknowledgment

- Committee members encouraged to recognize and appreciate the traditional lands we are meeting on beyond the doors of the AODA Advisory Committee meeting.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

- Motion to approve September 26, 2019 minutes (all minutes are in draft format until approved by committee members); approved by SR, seconded by CV.

- September 26, 2019 minutes have been approved and are now available online to the public.

4. Inclusion Activity / Professional Learning

- Preface – reframed Canadian disability data from [Angus Reid and Rick Hansen Foundation \(2019\)](#)
- Barriers to Accessibility – “Breakup and makeup” (pair and share) activity to develop an understanding of the barriers to accessibility (attitudinal, physical, communication, systemic, technology) and how barrier identification, removal and prevention benefits everyone, including people with disabilities.
- Committee split into 5 groups to discuss each barrier and asked to come up with examples and solutions to reducing/eliminating barriers (breakup); larger group discussion about each type of barrier followed (makeup)

Action Items

We all have a role to play in addressing barriers to accessibility for the YRDSB community.

Committee challenged to consider how we can help reduce, eliminate and prevent barriers to accessibility within the learning and working environments of YRDSB.

5. Subcommittee Presentations

- In a shift away from the traditional self-audit reporting, a representative from each subcommittee / working group was asked to do a short presentation on an accessibility project or initiative.

A. Accessibility Policy Review Subcommittee

- **Implications of PPM 163 (School Board Policies on Service Animals)** – PPM 163 requires all school boards to develop service animal policy/procedure; in process of working with Students Services to create service animal procedure under Student Health Support Policy #662; will also require alignment with revised Accessibility Policy #407, specifically Procedure #407.1, Customer Service Standards that speaks to welcoming service animals into public spaces.
 - Exception: Under the Education Act, school buildings are not considered public spaces so service animal request must go through an accommodation process for determining whether the service animal provides meaningful access to education.

B. Student Services Subcommittee

- **Braille in schools project update** – Blind/Low Vision (BLV) Services team supports students with BLV, some of whom require use of Guide Dogs or braille for communication and/or independence; BLV has now created a list of priority schools

requiring Braille signage based on students who are completely blind or with profound blindness.

Elementary school identified:

- Baythorn Public School
- Doncrest Elementary School
- ****Stonehaven Public School**** (priority 1)
- ****Michael Cranny Public School**** (priority 2)
- Wilshire Public School

Secondary schools identified:

- Langstaff Secondary School
- Maple High School
- Newmarket High School
- Vaughan Secondary School
- Woodbridge College

- **Assistive Technology Consultants** – Board has 5 Assistive Technology Consultants (1 per area and 1 regional) who work with/support teachers and students with understanding and using approved assistive technology / Special Equipment Amount (SEA) equipment; shared a captioned video of Screencastify (Google Chrome extension) and how is it allowing students with special needs to share their voice.
- **Quest 2019** – Assistive Technology Consultants hosted a new workshop at Quest 2019 called “Playground: Assistive Technology Tool for the Classroom” where participants had opportunities to test and sample the various assistive technology used by YRDSB students to support special education needs; assistive technology shared at Quest included:
 - Virtual 360 degree field trips
 - Text to Speech software (Google Read & Write)
 - Google Meet
 - Screencastify
 - Flip Grid
- Consultants also work with external LearnStyle team to provide 1:1 expert training for students, teachers and parents when students receive SEA equipment.

Action Items

Secondary schools are much larger spaces so much more training is required for students with BLV to navigate with independence.

Brandon to post list of priority schools on [Accessibility Projects](#) webpage.

C. Barrier Buster Subcommittee

- **All Access Washrooms Project:** provided background context and update on status of Board’s All Access Washrooms (AAW) project; started as 2 pilot projects from 2016-2018 involving ~40 schools to establish guidelines for all access vs. all gender washrooms; 4 categories for implementation were identified in order operate the all-access washroom:

- Category 1: Signage required
 - Category 2: Signage and hardware modifications required
 - Category 3: Signage, electronic lock and possible a new door required
 - Category 4: Renovation required
- **AAW challenges** – discussed some of the challenges throughout the AAW project, including various site-specific request and changes during implementation
 - **Standardized AAW signage** – standardizing signage to meet AODA and OBC requirements (e.g., Braille on washroom signage); worked in collaboration with BLV to establish proper signage, at proper locations with proper information; passed around finalized samples of signage

Action Items

For anyone who wants additional details, much of information/updates are available in memos that went out to system last school year.

Categories 1 to 3 are in process of being implemented by Plant Service and plan to be completed over current 2019-20 school year; category 4 to be implemented over next several years (dependent on budget and feasibility).

Ongoing consultations and feedback from various stakeholders; most recently, input from Curriculum Services to have student helpline posters created and placed inside all access washrooms; sample poster shared with Advisory Committee.

D. Human Resource Subcommittee

- **Hiring/recruitment process accessibility** – made more accessible consistent with Employment Equity Audit recommendations:
 - Accessibility and Accommodation Statement added/updated on all job postings
 - Statement of Good Health requirement removed from hiring process
 - Accessibility compliance training added to onboarding training requirements

E. Curriculum Working Group

- **Accessibility at Quest** – New circular stage setup for Quest 2019 (Indigenous Education and Equity) was designed to honour Indigenous way of learning and was a big success; setup received positive feedback and will be applied moving forward; circular setup made stage and speakers feel more “accessible” overall
- Question: Was Student Services consulted when designing the new set up/floor plan around closed captioning and accessibility?
Answer: Quest Committee is comprised of representatives from various departments



- **Student support persons** – student volunteers acted as onsite “support persons” to help people with mobility challenges to navigate the conference (anecdotal feedback that student volunteers were received very positively)
- **Quest accessibility challenges** – mounted TVs were not big enough to display captions due to setup and weight limitations on the trusses; participants who required captioning were offered iPads or could use personal device to access link to live captioning of speakers; acknowledged this was a reactive solution following decision to design circular stage; Quest Committee ensures that accessibility features will be designed an integrated more proactively next year

F. Digital Media, Website Management and Learning Working Group (W5G)

- **YRDSB new website launch** – Board set to launch new YRSB website in early 2020 with various accessibility features built-in, including the following:
 - SiteImprove checker to provide real-time accessibility tips for content contributors
 - SiteImprove plug-in to scan and analyze website and generates weekly accessibility reports
 - Separate license to scan PDFs upon upload to proactively ensure content is accessible; currently about 58,000 PDFs on website (of which only 20% are accessible)
 - Question: Adobe Acrobat licenses do we need and who needs it?
 - Website will be fully navigable via tablet or tabbing (no mouse necessary) in meeting WCAG AAA standard
 - Red in YRDSB logo to be adjusted to an accessible contrast level; new colour palette will be reflected on updated visual identity manual
 - Call to Action buttons – 6 buttons/images/icons from “Font Awesome” database that are all already alt-tagged
 - Blog feature to be included on school webpages as an accessible alternative to PDF newsletters, but won’t know uptake/buy-in until schools have opportunity to use new website
 - Overall, new website has features in place to be as proactive as possible to be accessible for users and content contributors

6. Accessibility News Items

a) Annual Accessibility Report and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

- Annual Accessibility Report recently presented to Board Standing Committee (November 19, 2019); major change is that Annual Accessibility Report has been prepared as a separate document from previously integrated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (formatting best practice); and accessibility report will now follow school calendar (Sept. to Aug.) while mulita-year plan will continue to follow calendar year (Jan. to Dec.)

b) Accessibility Compliance Training Update

- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service = 15,512 staff completions
- Accessibility and Human Rights: Working Together = 15,382 staff completions
- Accessibility Awareness for Educators = 12,164 staff completions

c) [YRDSB Customer Feedback Form](#)

- General feedback form created to allow customers/YRDSB community with another avenue to provide feedback

Action Items

Annual Accessibility Report 2018-2019 to be published and posted on accessibility webpage.

Committee members urged to complete accessibility compliance training if yet to do so.

Fill out YRDSB [Customer Service Feedback Form](#) (available on BWW) in response to our AODA Advisory Committee meetings and use feedback form for departmental events that require feedback loop.

7. Additional Items from Committee Members

- Quest call for membership (specifically around accessibility) – contact Dale if interested

8. Upcoming Meeting Dates and Adjournment

- February 13, 2019 – EC Aurora Boardroom (meeting invite has been sent out)
- Please note: If you are unable to attend a meeting, please send an email to let us know and arrange for a designate to attend on your behalf.

Meeting adjourned.