

# Interlake School Division Accessible Customer Service Policy

**Date of first approval:**

November 2017

**Date updated:**

January 2026

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## **Introduction:**

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We are committed to complying with the [Accessibility Standard for Customer Service](#) under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Our policies, practices and measures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

If a barrier to accessing our goods or services cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access the goods or services.

The following policy statements, organizational practices and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

This policy applies to all employees and management.

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## **Statement of Commitment**

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The Interlake School Division (ISD) is committed to providing services to our students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community members that are free from barriers and biases.

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## **1: Meet communication needs.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

We meet the communication needs of our students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community members.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- To meet communication needs, when appropriate we offer to communicate in different ways, such as writing things down, reading things out loud, and taking extra time to explain things.
- We:
  - keep paper and pens available to write things down
  - offer a chair when longer conversations are needed
  - offer a quieter space
  - sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair
  - use a normal tone
  - speak clearly
  - move away from a busy or noisy area
- We make written communication easier to see and read by using contrasting colours (black on white).
- We indicate on our ISD website that our publications are available in alternate formats and how to request them.
- We use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and colour contrast.
- We write signs and documents in plain language.

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## **2: Accommodate the use of assistive devices.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

We accommodate the use of assistive devices when students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community members are accessing our goods, services or facilities.

## **Practices and Measures:**

- We welcome assistive devices such as wheelchairs or walkers.
- We do not touch or move students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community member's assistive devices without permission.
- We are trained in how to use the assistive devices that we provide, including
  - automatic doors
  - wheelchairs
  - walkers
  - doorbells
- We welcome assistive devices to help with communication, for example hearing aids, iPads and computers.
- In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, we attempt to use other measures to ensure the person with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities.

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## **3: Welcome support persons.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

We welcome support persons and we would let the public know in advance if support persons have to pay service fees at a school event.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We address the students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community member, not the support person, unless requested by the parents/caregivers, staff, and community member, not the support person to do otherwise.
- We make space for support persons on-site and ensure students, parents/caregivers, staff, and community members have access to their support persons at all times.
- We would waive service fees for support persons.
- We would let the public know in advance if service fees cannot be waived.
- We would share information about fees for support persons with the public if applicable to a school event.

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## **4: Allow service animals.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

We allow service animals in all the areas available for public access.

### **Interlake School Division Policies:**

- [AP 5140 – Use of a Certified Service Animal in a School](#)
- [AP 5140 – F1 Request for Approval for the Use of a Service Animal](#)
- [AP 5140 – F2 Certified Service Animal Registration Agreement](#)
- [AP 5140 – F3 Information for Parents/Guardians Requesting a Service Animal in a School](#)
- [AP 5140 – F4 Management Plan for the Care of a Service Animal](#)

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We welcome service animals, which assist persons with low or no vision and a variety of other disabilities.
- We:
  - treat a service animal as a working animal
  - do not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so
  - know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing
- If we have concerns, we may ask if the animal has been trained to help a person with a disability-related need.
- We do not inquire about the disability.
- We expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal or other means.
- If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (i.e., by barking, whining or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal.

- If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.
- If another law prohibits service animals (e.g., food preparation areas), we explain why the animal cannot enter the space and discuss with the person another way of providing goods or services.

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## **5: Maintain accessibility features.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

To ensure barrier-free access to our goods, services or facilities, we maintain our accessibility features so they can be used as intended.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters and walkers.
- Our seating accommodates people of varying sizes and abilities.
- We keep our spaces clear of clutter.
- We keep our entrance area clear of ice and snow.
- We place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.
- Our accessibility features affected by this policy include our spaces within ISD.

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## **6: Let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is unavailable.**

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### **Policy Statement:**

If an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, we would let the public know when and why, how long it will be unavailable, and other ways to access our goods and services.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, we would prepare and post a notice and/or announcement about the disruption on our ISD website, the reason for the disruption, how long

it will last, and whether there are other ways we can provide access to our goods and services.

- If requested, we would work with the customer to find other ways to provide goods and services.

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## **7: Welcome and respond promptly to feedback.**

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### **Policy Statements:**

We welcome and respond promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our goods and services.

We document the actions we take to respond to the feedback we receive, and that information is available on request in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We invite feedback in the following ways:
  - **Email:** Send an email to [ISD@isd21.mb.ca](mailto:ISD@isd21.mb.ca) with your name, contact information and feedback.
  - **Phone:** Call 204-467-3017.
  - **Feedback Form:** If you have any questions or concerns about the level of Accessibility within the Interlake School Division, please fill out our [Accessibility Feedback Form](#).
- We invite feedback in the same places that we share our accessibility policies and Accessibility Plan.
- All feedback is directed to the Accessibility Coordinator, Chantel Richter, who determines what action, if any, should occur.
- If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the requester is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.
- We let the person who supplied the feedback know what action we will take to address their feedback, if any.
- We respond to feedback in a way that meets the communication needs of the individual.

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**8: Provide the required training to employees and management.**

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**Policy Statements:**

We provide the required training on accessible customer service to employees and management. We are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing goods and services, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- How to use any equipment or assistive devices that are available on-site.
- An overview of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), and the Customer Service Standard.
- Our organizational policies, practices and measures, including updates or changes.

**Practices and Measures:**

- We train new employees and management within two weeks after hiring.
- We record who has taken training and when.
- We indicate our organizational policies, practices and measures, including updates or changes.

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**9: Keep a written record of accessibility and training policies.**

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**Policy Statements:**

We keep a written record of our accessibility and training policies.

Our written documents include a summary of our training material and when training is offered.

We let the public know that our written policies are available on request.

**Practices and Measures:**

- We let the public know that our accessibility and training policies are available in the following ways:

- posted on ISD website
- posted in the same places that we share our Accessibility Plan and invite feedback
- We provide our policies within a reasonable timeframe, at no cost, and in a format that meets the needs of the individual.

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**10: We make our public events accessible.**

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**Policy Statements:**

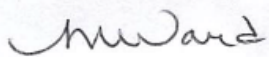
We take reasonable steps to make our public events accessible by letting the public know that relevant accommodations can be made on request.

**Practices and Measures:**

- We let the public know that they can request accessibility accommodations for our public events on our ISD website.
- In addition to notifying the public that accommodations can be requested for public events, reasonable measures are taken to ensure that:
  - Notice of the event is given in a manner that is accessible to persons disabled by barriers
  - The event is held in an accessible meeting space
  - The physical and communication needs of persons disabled by barriers are met, on request

Date of next policy review: April 2027

Approved by:



Margaret Ward  
Superintendent/CEO

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This information is available in alternate formats on request by emailing [ISD@isd21.mb.ca](mailto:ISD@isd21.mb.ca) with your name, contact information, and describe the accessible format you need.

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