**Beautiful Plains School Division Accessibility Plan**

**Accessibility Achievements**

Beautiful Plains School Division is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment. The policies that currently promote accessibility include:

mission statement, school division goals and objectives, respect for human diversity, belief statements, transportation, and school programs/instruction-student services. We are in ongoing conversations with people with disabilities to determine barriers that exist and make improvements. We have a number of ongoing projects to improve accessibility include working with PSFB to plan for an elevator in our largest high school requested in previous years.

**Barriers to Accessibility**

Barriers to accessibility for Beautiful Plains School Division are mainly the result of the cost and time needed for improvements. There are upgrades to our buildings, website, and other spaces as identified by senior administration that require long term improvement. Our largest task will be to upgrade aging facilities and buildings to meet accessibility standards. Barriers such as information and communication, policies, systemic improvement and attitudes are also being reviewed for possible barriers for long term improvement. Our short term goal for 2017 includes reviewing the eight requirements to comply with the customer service standard.

**Statement of Commitment**

Beautiful Plains School Division is committed to moving towards equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in ways that allow them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion. We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers. We will do this by identifying, removing and preventing barriers and by meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA).

**Policies**

* Beautiful Plains School Division will review all programs, services and new initiatives to ensure accessibility. We are also reviewing existing policies attached to these programs and services for possible barriers.
* Beautiful Plains School Division will make information available in an accessible format and ensuring communication by removing barriers for people with disabilities in a way that considers their disability.

**Actions**

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| **Action 1- Establish Accessibility Working Group** |
| ***Initiatives/Actions**** Management to appoint an accessibility coordinator
* Management to establish an accessibility working group
* Meet on a regular basis to review initiatives working toward accessibility
 | ***Expected Outcomes**** A working group created which consists of representation of the division will meet a minimum of once a year to review and update plan
* Meeting minutes are available to review through accessibility coordinator
* Working group has detailed work plans, multi-year timelines
* Members participate in developing implementing updating the accessibility plan
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| **Action 2- Offer and Provide Information in an Accessible Format on Request**  |
| ***Initiatives/Actions**** Accessibility working group to develop a process for responding to requests for accessible supports and services
* Accessibility coordinator to communicate process to all staff by email
* Working towards improving the availability of alternate formats of communication on request
 | ***Expected Outcomes**** Inform staff of alternate formats as they become available
* Work towards advertising the availability of alternate formats
* Ensure communication by using accessible formats, easy to read fonts, plain language, and an active offer button “how can I help” to request alternative formats
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| **Action 3- Staff Awareness and Training** |
| ***Initiatives/Actions**** Management to confirm Beautiful Plains School Division commitment to accessibility in writing
* Management to offer accessibility awareness presentations to divisional staff
* Management to acknowledge accessibility achievements and share information with staff in organization newsletter and staff meetings
 | ***Expected Outcomes**** Accessibility will be part of ongoing planning for future programs and services in Beautiful Plains School Division
* Accessibility Plan will be shared with Beautiful Plains School Division Staff
* Information on progress on implementing Beautiful Plains School Division Accessibility Plan is available to staff
* Any concerns regarding accessibility will be forwarded to the accessibility coordinator
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| **Action 4- Monitor Progress** |
| ***Initiatives/Actions**** Accessibility coordinator, with assistance of working group, to track progress on challenges and requests for accommodations with budgetary implications
* Report progress to the Board of Trustees as requested
* Future plans and budgets to be integrated into operational plans
* Accessibility plan will be reviewed annually by accessibility committee
 | ***Expected Outcomes**** Senior administration and the board of trustees are aware of progress on AMA compliance and considers future plans
* We continue to consult with people with disabilities for determining barriers and how to overcome them
* We continue to consult with Mb. Disability services to improve our plan and remove barriers in accordance with the AMA
* Annual report includes progress on accessibility
* Accessibility Plan is posted on website
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