



AODA Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 24, 2022
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Zoom

In Attendance (22 members)

Hirosh	Teresa Estriga	Stephanie Luong	Gabriella Simo
Abeywardane	Amanda Halley	Ralph Masciello	Scott West
Anthony Anirud	Steve Hopkins	Susie Nunes	Paul Woods
Pam Beetlestone	Shelly Khushal	Derek Petri	Brandon Wu
Dale Brusselers	Paul Lee	Steve Rutledge	Lynn Ziraldo
Cynthia Cordova	Gail Long	John Sellers	

Regrets

Dawn Forsyth; Gilbert Luk; Patrick Smith; Selena Tandon; Shane Taylor; George Vellathottam; Nadia Zamzul.

1. Land Acknowledgement and Reflection

SK read land acknowledged and shared reflections on our commitment towards reconciliation.

Action Item

Committee members asked to reflect on our thoughts, words, actions and how they contribute towards strengthening our relationship with Indigenous peoples.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes reviewed and motion carried to approve November 25, 2021 minutes.

Approved by CR; seconded by DB. Minutes have been posted online and available to the public under [AODA Advisory Committee web page](#).

3. Professional Learning: The Power of Inclusive Language

15-minute video clip from of [panel discussion about the Power of Inclusive Language](#) was shared with committee members. Panel discussion was hosted by Rick Hansen Foundation on December 3, 2021 for International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Committee members were placed into breakout rooms to review examples phrases to avoid and to discuss questions asked in the panel discussion:

- Is there a time you experienced inclusive language and what impact did it have on you?
- How can we be an advocate in our workplaces for inclusive language?

Committee debriefed about inclusive language considerations and implications as a large group in the main.

4. Subcommittee / Working Group Updates

Barrier Buster and Built Environment Subcommittee Update

- **Braille signage and portables update** – Plant Services will now consider including portables as we install braille signage; will be a complicated process and require planning as portables move around and the numbers that school uses will change from site to site.

Student Services Subcommittee Update

Blind / Low Vision Services

- **New Central Brailist** – has assumed centralized leadership position and is bringing innovation and new tools to schools braillists. Old braille books in old code were purged and team engaged in new strategies using combination of hard copy and electronic braille resources.

- **MacBook pilot project** – has been strongly supported by subject matter experts involved in exploring and trialing benefits of iOS accessibility features for learners with low vision. BLV will move forward with limited orders students who benefit from its functionality and applications. Braille users will continue to use the PC Windows laptops.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

- **Pendant mic trial** – small and discrete black pendant worn by educator and connected to student hearing aid receivers. Recommended by student who had concerns about social stigma of teachers wearing larger, more noticeable, touchscreen mics.
- **Video relay system** – Digital Literacy Resource Teachers and Assistive Technology Consultants are exploring video relay system applications on SE devices for profoundly deaf students to support life skill programs, health care consultations, self-advocacy and more.
- **Clear masks** – now being used across Board for visual accessibility and lip reading; being used by DHH Specialist Teachers, Speech-Language Therapists and Communication Disorder Assistants.
- **Voice-to-text communication apps** – supportive applications to augment communication in masked environments being trialed in Work Experience student placements.

Special Equipment Amount (SEA)

- **SEA laptops for OSSLT** – preplanning and testing of platform with ITS and Student Services was completed, and SEA laptops worked well with few technical issues.
- **SEA laptop refresh** – Student Services proceeding with replacing 2,218 SEA laptops.
- **Family Guide to SEA** – begin updated with inclusive language, less jargon and QR code to web-based alternative

- **Plain language checklist** – being developed and trialed for IEP writing.

5. Accessibility News Items

A. K-12 Education Standards Development Committee Update

Final recommendations report is almost complete. Over 100 recommendations have been added to initial recommendations. Finalizing report is a meticulous process and required writer to ensure consistent style throughout.

Once final recommendations report is then submitted to the Ministry, they will review and ideally make recommendations to Cabinet for new regulation.

Action Item

Accessibility Officer to circulate report with committee members once published and made available to the public.

B. Barrier Buster Reporting Form and Survey Request

System memo circulated via News Digest on February 17, 2022 to prompt awareness about Barrier Buster process and request staff to complete [Barrier Buster Awareness Survey](#) to assist HRCO in improving communication to all YRDSB stakeholders.

Action Item

Committee members asked to complete Barrier Buster Awareness Survey and share with respective teams and departments.

C. Inclusion Canada #ThisisAbleism Campaign

Inclusion Canada launched a [This is Ableism campaign](#) on February 8, 2022. They asked people with disabilities and their families about ableism and its impact on their lives. Website includes social media posts, comic strips and other resources including linked video series created by UN Human Rights

Office.

["What is ableism?" video](#) shared with committee as conclusion and take-away reflection to meeting.

6. Upcoming Meeting Dates and Adjournment

- Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2022.

Meeting adjourned.