Sault College

ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

September 2019 – August 2020

Submitted to:
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President, Sault College

Submitted by:
Accessibility Advisory Committee

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1.0 Executive Summary

Sault College acknowledges and promotes the rights of all persons with disabilities as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001. The College also affirms the rights of all persons, including those with disabilities, to have equal access and opportunity in their employment, education, accommodation or business dealings with the College.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2004 (AODA) was introduced as a means to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. It is also intended to provide for the involvement of people with disabilities in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to enhance their full participation in the life of the province. To achieve these goals, the AODA mandates the province and the broader public sector – including each Ontario College to prepare an Accessibility Annual Status Report.

This document was prepared in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The report describes (1) the measures that Sault College has taken in the 2019/2020 year, and (2) the measures that Sault College intends to take during 2020/21 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who access and/or utilize our facilities and services.

During 2019/2020 Sault College committed its accessibility efforts to; a) continuing to proactively review the campus physical environment b) ensuring that all renovation/construction projects are completed within accessibility standards, c) ensuring that AODA legislated standards are met and Sault College policies are developed in compliance with the integrated accessibility standards, d) identifying and removing physical barriers within the limits of available financial resources, e) improving awareness of disabilities and the effects of living with a disability, f) applying for accessibility funding opportunities to remove or reduce barriers.

During 2020/21, Sault College will focus its accessibility efforts on; a) continuing to proactively review the campus physical environment, b) ensuring that all renovation/construction projects are completed within accessibility standards, c) ensuring that AODA legislated standards are met and Sault College policies are developed in compliance with the integrated accessibility standards, d) identifying and removing physical barriers within the limits of available financial resources, e) improving awareness of disabilities and the effects of living with a disability, f) applying for accessibility funding opportunities to remove or reduce barriers, g) removing learning and support access barriers for students studying remotely

2.0 Aim

The report should address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the organization's by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services.

The aim of this report is to identify

- The measures the college has taken during the 19/20 year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
- The measures already in place that ensure the organization assesses its policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities.

- The measures the organization intends to take in the 2020/21 year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
- All other information that the regulations prescribe for the purpose of the report.
- Provide that the Accessibility Annual Status Report be made available to our students, staff, and the public.

3.0 About Sault College

Our Mission

Sault College will continue to be recognized the pre-eminent student-centred post-secondary institution in the province with an unyielding dedication to giving students the tools to reach their goals, and in doing so, will be a cornerstone of the communities we serve.
In developing students, Sault College has created four statements of our core promise outlined in our Strategic Plan. Our College is successful when our students can make these statements:

1. "I get the education I wanted and more"
2. "The people are great"
3. "It was worth it to come here"
4. "The experience changed my life"

4.0 The Accessibility Advisory Committee

Our Accessibility Advisory Committee consists of the Director of Student Services as the Chair with representation from all divisions of the college.

NAME	TITLE	DEPT/SCHOOL
Matt Trainor (Chair)	Director, Student Services	Student Services
Andrea Sicoli	Faculty	Health
Ryan Namespetra	Faculty	Natural Environment
Jamie Schmidt	Faculty	Technology & Trades
Colleen Brady	Faculty	Community Services
Luke O'Brien	Student Services Officer	Student Services
Morgan Levy	Coordinator Counselling/Accessibility Services	Counselling/Accessibility Services
Carol Bell	Learning Strategist/Assistive Technologist	Accessibility Services

Jill Pateman	Manager, Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance

5.0 Sault College's Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Sault College supports the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Bills 125 and 118, the legislated Accessible Standards, and is committed to expanding its access and support to all persons with disabilities, by having as its goal a barrier-free learning and working environment to enable academic and employment success.

Therefore, the accessibility mission of Sault College will:

- Conduct ongoing review and update of Sault College policies, procedures, and practices to achieve sustained compliance with Bill 125; an Act to improve the identification, removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities and all other related policies, directives and/or legislation.

- Conduct ongoing review and update of Sault College policies, procedures, and practices to achieve sustained compliance with Bill 118; an Act respecting the development, implementation and enforcement of standards relating to accessibility with respect to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation, buildings and all other things specified in the Act for persons with disabilities.

- Develop plans to achieve sustained compliance with the Final Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation under the AODA.

- Maintain and create a physical and technological barrier-free campus within the limits of available financial resources.

- Provide adequate information, awareness and training to foster a supportive and inclusive environment, and work towards removing any attitudinal barriers.

- Continue to make reasonable accommodation for the particular needs of self-identified persons with documented disabilities, as per the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- Provide for the involvement of people with disabilities in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in order to enhance their full participation in daily tasks

- Monitor its admission policies to ensure that self-identified students with disabilities are accommodated for admission to programs for which they are academically qualified.

- Continue to monitor program course load, examination procedures, and other academic requirements to permit self-identified students with disabilities to complete their program of study.

- Explore avenues for new funding as well as utilize existing funds to increase assistive technology and/or computer software/hardware technology for students with disabilities, i.e. Capital Equipment and Renewal Fund.

- Explore funding sources that may become available to assist Sault College with the costs associated in the removal and prevention of barriers to all persons with disabilities.

5.1 Accessibility Services Office

The Sault College Accessibility Services Office is the centralized point of activities related to students with disabilities. Disabilities include visual and hearing loss, physical and mobility limitations, medical and mental health disorders as well as learning disabilities.

The Accessibility Services Office assists students with disabilities identify the most appropriate accommodations.

The Accessibility Services Office serves as a resource for faculty and staff who work with students with disabilities. Accessibility Service Staff are available to answer questions, discuss disability issues, provide information, and support in order to provide the most appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. By working together, we can ensure that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of higher education. The Accessibility Services office is centrally located in E1101.

Phone: (705) 759-2554 Extensions 2703

Email: studentsupport@saulcollege.ca

5.2 Self-Identification

Students are encouraged to self-identify to the Accessibility Services Office as early in the admission process as possible, in order to plan accommodations that will equalize opportunities for them to participate in all learning and evaluation activities within Sault College.

Once self-identification occurs, students will meet individually with a Counsellor to develop a Student Learning Plan. Confidentiality is maintained within the parameters of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Legislation.

5.3 The Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD)

Students with disabilities who qualify for OSAP may also qualify for a bursary. The individual student, the Financial Aid Administrator and the Counsellor jointly process the BSWD application. Students may use the bursary to support their disability-related educational expenses.

6.0 Barrier Removal Initiatives – September 2017 to August 2020

Category: Physical	Date Completed
▪ College wide door handle replacements – door knobs to levers	2017 & 2018 summer

▪ The new Child Development Centre opened in the L Wing with improved accessibility within the building and within the outdoor play area.	May 2018
▪ J Wing and L Wing doors were replaced, making them more accessible.	2018 summer
▪ Walkway to J South parking lot from G Wing was resurfaced.	2018 summer
▪ J North parking lot was re-surfaced with new curbing & walkways.	2018 summer
▪ The IE3 building (E wing) was re-opened with accessibility features to access services, classrooms, elevators, washrooms, faculty offices etc.	October 2018
▪ J Wing was re-opened with accessibility features with accessibility features including gender neutral, accessible washrooms, open concept classrooms, accessible faculty offices etc.	October 2018
▪ Walkway from H wing to M wing East was resurfaced.	November 2018
▪ The Equity room opened on campus as a space for LGBTTTQ+ students to relax, gather and meet other students.	February 2019
▪ The Franklin Prouse Waterfront Adventure Centre opened to the public. The building featured accessible components for barrier free access.	June 2019
▪ Hangar access controls were added to improve accessibility.	July 2019
▪ E Wing lecture theatre/student activity space lift was serviced to improve access.	August 2019
▪ The reflection room opened on campus as a space to allow students to pray, reflect, meditate or calm themselves.	August 2019
▪ 3rd floor of E wing opened with new classrooms and student study space.	August 2019
▪ College wide elevator monitoring capabilities were upgraded with voice notifications added.	August 2019
▪ M wing lecture theatre door operator was adjusted to improve access	January 2020
▪ Residence renovated the 2nd floor to include the addition of a more accessible kitchen space	July 2020
▪ Parking lot surface improvements to improve accessibility	July 2020
▪ Hangar washrooms renovated to improve accessibility (door operators, emergency, stall accessibility, signage)	August 2020
▪ Purchased new pedestrian snow clearing equipment to improve access to entrances	August 2020

Category: Attitudinal	**Date Completed**
▪ The Transition to College Program for students with varying learning disabilities ran specialized workshops aimed at assisting self-identified students adapt to college life.	Ongoing
▪ Implemented a transition to college program for students with mental health challenges.	Ongoing
▪ Physical plant staff consulted with Accessibility Committee to discuss accessibility requirements when changes to the physical environment were in development	Ongoing

▪ Faculty regularly consult with the Accessibility Services Office when there is a need to review an accommodation or learning need of a student with a disability	Ongoing

Category: Practice	**Date Completed**
▪ The Accessibility Advisory Committee meets as required to review accessibility challenges and review relevant policies.	As required
▪ New staff completed AODA customer service training during orientation.	Ongoing
▪ Sault College continued its ongoing review of policies, procedures and practices to ensure compliance with accessibility legislation. The Academic Policy Committee continues to update policies to improve access and inclusivity.	Ongoing
▪ Online UDL training module access for faculty is utilized.	Ongoing
▪ Learning activities accompany lectures and are posted in advance for students which then lead to performance based tests.	Ongoing
▪ Academic upgrading provides a free, self-paced learning environment where student deadlines and needs are accommodated with direct support from the program or Accessibility Services while students still have the option work from off-site using LMS.	Ongoing
▪ Class and lab sizes in many programs remain small to ensure access to in class/lab supports for students requiring accommodations or in order have their questions answered.	Ongoing
▪ UDL strategies such as these are used to reduce barriers to learning and improve student success: use a variety of assessment methods based on different learning styles, fun learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, tests are more frequent to increase exposure and contain less material, assignment flexibility, allowing make up tests, use of cue cards, student choice options for assessments, regular communication of due dates and extensions, group work settings based on student needs, etc.	Ongoing
▪ Experiential learning opportunities continue to expand in all program areas. Examples include: field camps, certifications, lab experiences, clinical, placements etc.	Ongoing
▪ Student growth and development opportunities are available to improve student success.	Ongoing
▪ Regularly adjust the delivery of material and clinical/placement experience to account for student accommodation and learning needs.	Ongoing
▪ The Enquiring Mind mental health awareness training was offered to students	Sept 2019-Feb 2020
▪ Best practices for active learning for remote classes PD	May 2020
▪ The use of Apps to implement UDL strategies	May 2020
▪ Stress & Resilience training for staff	May 2020
▪ Building interactive videos PD	May 2020

Category: Architectural	Date Completed
▪ The design and construction of the Waterfront Adventure Centre buildings were completed with accessibility features improving access to the buildings on site.	June 2018-June 2019

Category: Technical	Date Completed
▪	
▪ Our student/staff portal was also refreshed to better align to the WCAG 2.0 AA standard as well. This included changes to navigation and mobile compatibility focused changes.	March 2018
▪ Updating all online courses and their material to be AODA compliant.	September 2018/Ongoing
▪ Purchased additional laptops with assistive technology licenses for students/apprentices with disabilities to use.	February 2019
▪ Purchased updated assistive software licenses for College wide use.	July 2019
▪ New/updated Accessible Content ePortal – searchable database for accessible material - Library	August 2019
▪ New/updated list of accessible features for each online library resource	August 2019
▪ Library databases have various accessibility features added including: increasing font size and text readers	Ongoing
▪ Sault College Library is part of Provincial Library working group looking at adding and enhancing accessibility services to meet requirements of AODA	Ongoing
▪ Various forms of media are used to present course material in accessible formats.	Ongoing
▪ Academic Upgrading and Peer Tutoring supports digital literacy instruction for learners.	Ongoing
▪ Class material is available on LMS in advance and after class to improve access to class information.	Ongoing
▪ Virtual Orientation sessions delivered live and made available with captioning	May & August 2020
▪ New College website development to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA	Dec 2019-Aug 2020

Category: Communication	Date Completed
▪ Posted the College's Accessibility Plan & Annual Status Report on the website https://www.saultcollege.ca/Accessibility/AdCommittee.asp	Ongoing
▪ Accessibility Services trained students with disabilities on evacuation procedures	Ongoing
▪ The Academic Calendar (web based) was added the College website.	Ongoing
▪ Online courses have implemented colour branding, alternate texts for images and captioning/transcripts for videos.	September 2018/Ongoing
▪ All domestic offer letters include the information describing how students can access accommodations.	Ongoing
▪ Barrier identification signage and awareness enhancements posted	January 2020

▪ Recorded lectures training with captioning and transcripts to be provided as an accommodation for students with disabilities for the fall 2020 semester.	August 2020

Category: Other	**Date Completed**
▪ Counsellors and disability staff work with students with disabilities to ensure appropriate accommodations are identified and received.	Ongoing
▪ The Accessibility Services Department is an active participant of the College Committee on Disability Issues (CCDI)	Ongoing
▪ Remote testing with accommodations processes developed for students with disabilities	April – August 2020
▪ Library has increased purchase of ebooks – enhances accessibility for students	Ongoing
▪ Library has increased streaming video with closed captioning	Ongoing
▪ Library purchases databases with speech software, zoom capability (where available) and all databases have increase/decrease font size capability	Ongoing
▪ New library search system implemented with additional accessibility features such as concept maps	June 2020

7.0 Barrier-Identification Methodologies

Sault College continuously strives for the betterment of its accessibility services. Some ways we work towards fulfilling our commitment to accessibility include the following:

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee meets as required to identify barriers and offer suggested resolution for such.
- The College invites outside organizations to provide recommendations on how to improve its facilities as required.
- Students and staff are encouraged via college communication systems to identify and submit any barriers identified in association with disabilities.
- College building audits are completed as required with students requiring accessibility in order to see first-hand any barriers they may encounter.
- The customer service policy includes a barrier identification form for students or staff to submit accessibility concerns to the Student Services Office.

Sault College is committed to making every effort to establish policies, practices and procedures that are consistent with the principles laid out in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulations:

- The services provided by members of the Sault College staff are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The goods and services provided to persons with disabilities are integrated unless an alternative measure is necessary, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services provided.
- Sault College encourages the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities.

- When communicating with a person with a disability, Sault College staff does so in a respectful manner that takes into account the person's disability.
- A copy of the Sault College document describing its policies, practices and procedures relating to persons with disabilities, is available online and upon request and in alternate formats.

8.0 Barriers addressed in 2019/20

- Staff awareness training on Universal Design on Instruction, accommodating students/customers/staff with disabilities.
- Providing accessible design input on upcoming projects
- Parking access for people with disabilities along with access to accessible locker options
- Staff and student awareness of challenges associated with living with a wide variety of disabilities (Mental Health)
- Access to information and teaching material in accessible formats

The winter 2020 Student Satisfaction Survey – a Ministry-mandated Key Performance Indicator for all Ontario Colleges – resulted in an 80% satisfaction rate with Sault College Accessibility Services. (Compared to 73% across the province).

9.0 Barriers to be addressed in 2020/21

- Management and Staff awareness training on Universal Design on Instruction accommodating students/customers/ and staff with disabilities.
- Providing accessible design input on upcoming projects
- Campus access for people with disabilities along with access to accessible locker options
- Staff and student awareness of challenges associated with living with a wide variety of disabilities (Mental Health)
- Access to information and teaching material in accessible formats
- Review service and learning provision gaps for students learning remotely

10.0 Review and Monitoring Process

- Communicate in an ongoing manner with staff/students regarding accessibility issues.
- Refresh committee membership as required.

11.0 Communication of the Accessibility Annual Status Report

- Post on the Sault College Website and Intranet.
- Create a print copy and keep on file in:
    - The Ron Doyle Library
    - The Accessibility Services Office – also in alternative formats
    - The Sault College Students' Union Office

12.0 Summary

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2004, which aims to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate fully in the life, Sault College prepared its Accessibility Annual Status Report for release in December 2020

Sault College is committed to the continual improvement of access to college premises, facilities and services for students and staff with disabilities as well as the participation of people with disabilities in the ongoing development and review of its annual Accessibility Status Reports. Sault College intends to use available and emerging resources, including a review of other institution plans, government documents and templates and consultation with members of the accessibility community in an effort to maintain the best possible process for the identification, prevention and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities and beyond.

Approved by: The Accessibility Advisory Committee January 15, 2021
Sault College Executive January 20, 2021