SOUTH OKANAGAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL SOCIETY (SOMSS)	POLICY AND PROCEDURES
STUDENT	ADOPTED: FEBRUARY 03, 2023 REVISED:
ACCESSIBLE CANADA ACT POLICY	POLICY AND PROCEDURE #5.17

Policy:

The purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* (established July 11, 2019) is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. This involves identifying, removing and preventing barriers in organizations in federal jurisdiction.

SOMSS is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. SOMSS will develop and deliver education in an age- and ability-appropriate manner for all children with special education needs. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

Accessibility Plan

The Head of school in cooperation with the Board of Directors will involve people with disabilities for the creation (and updating) of the Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility plan will be reviewed and modified every three (3) years, or as seen fit by the Head of School. SOMSS recognized that different levels of assistance may be required to each individual, and that it is a continuous learning opportunity preventing barriers in our organization. The following protocols are taken in the following areas:

Policies

SOMSS provides printed copies of the Policies and Procedures to each individual hired. If such an individual requires support reading or understanding these policies, the Head of School will offer a private meeting in which any areas of difficulty will be addressed.

Programs

SOMSS, and the Montessori philosophy more broadly, believe that all students should be included in the classroom environment. In practice this philosophy involves integrated layers of classroom supports, individually adapted curriculum, on going collaboration with other professionals, educational supports, learning equipment, and a focus on working with parents as a team.

Practices

In order to make sure we remain as inclusive as possible, SOMSS holds monthly Board Meetings. Our meetings remain open to the staff and public. We provide advance notice to our meetings via email and posted on our bulletin board. SOMSS will also be participating in National Accessibility Week (the week starting on the last Sunday in May), where we will raise awareness about those who are disabled.

Services

SOMSS strives to have a learning environment that is inclusive to all. The Head of School will consult with parents, teachers, and relevant professionals to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student with special needs, requiring significant adaptations or modifications to methods of instruction, methods of assessment, or instructional materials. *See SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY 4.14.*

Feedback Process

If an issue regarding SOMSS accessibility should arise, concerns should be brought to the Head of School. The Head of School in cooperation with the Board of Directors, will do everything within their power to resolve such issues.

Progress Reports

Once a year, the Head of School or appointed staff member shall report on the progress of our Accessibility Plan. This report shall include how we have dealt with feedback and how we have implemented out Accessibility Plan.

Definitions:

Barrier

"means anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice—that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation."

Disability

"means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation—whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society."

ADOPTED:

APPROVED: ___*CMoffat*_____
      Chandra Moffat, President