



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

June 2023–2026



Dream. Believe. Achieve.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that SD22 Schools reside on the traditional, unceded, ancestral lands of the Syilx Okanagan people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial.

We highlight this history knowing that relationships and partnerships based on respect with the Indigenous peoples of this land are important for truth and reconciliation.

limləmt



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 INTRODUCTION

- 4 A Message from the Superintendent
- 5 About Our District Community
- 6 Our Commitment to Accessibility
- 7 Definitions
- 8 Guiding Framework

9 OUR APPROACH

- 10 The Accessibility Committee
- 11 our Methodology
- 12 The Public Feedback Tool

13 THREE-YEAR PLAN

- 14 Priority 1: Information and Communication
- 15 Priority 2: Physical and Architectural
- 16 Priority 3: School Policy and Practice
- 17 Priority 4: Technology
- 18 Monitoring and Evaluation

19 APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND

- 19 Global Context
- 20 National Context
- 21 Provincial
Context

22 APPENDIX B: THE DISABILITY CONTINUUM

26 APPENDIX C: SUGGESTED REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

27 APPENDIX D: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE



INTRODUCTION

A Message from the Superintendent



As Superintendent of School District 22, I am honored to serve the vibrant communities of Cherryville, Lumby, Lavington, Coldstream, Vernon, Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), and Westside Road. In my role as the appointed CEO of the Board, I am dedicated to bringing the goals of the Board's Strategic Plan to life.

A significant part of this commitment is ensuring that every individual can thrive in a learning and working environment that supports the diverse students, staff, and members of the school communities we serve. It is my responsibility to meet the expectations and standards set forth in the Accessible BC Act and other relevant legislation.

SD22 continues to be committed to the implementation of the SD22 Accessibility Plan as outlined in the Accessible BC Act. Our plan identifies measurable actions across the pillars of the Act, promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities by recognizing, removing, and preventing barriers to access. The SD22 Accessibility Committee, a diverse and multidisciplinary team, meets regularly to reaffirm our commitment to accessibility, identify priorities, and develop action plans that guide our decisions impacting accessibility across the district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Mitchell".

Karla Mitchell
Superintendent/CEO





About Our School District Community

Geographically located on ancestral Syilx territory in south-central British Columbia, School District 22 serves the communities of Vernon, Coldstream, Lavington, Lumby and Cherryville, providing excellent educational services to a diverse group of students.

The area is home to members of the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), Metis, Inuit, and Off-Reserve First Nations students. We welcome a growing immigrant and refugee population as part of the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) program and host approximately 300 international students annually.

The mission of SD22 is to inspire and nurture students to thrive in their learning, relationships, and community. Our motto is: Dream. Believe. Achieve.

To learn more about our School District, please follow this link to our district webpage: <https://sd22.bc.ca/our-district/about-sd22/>



Dream. Believe. Achieve.

The District supports students with diverse needs under the inclusion philosophy. This includes students with both visible and invisible disabilities. We believe that given the right supports all children can reach their fullest potential and we strive to provide this to the best of our ability and resources. Currently SD22 is providing support for over 1600 children with Ministry designated diverse needs. These include children who may have one or more the following identified needs:

- Physical Dependence
- Dynamic Disabilities
- Ambulatory Disabilities
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Blind or Visually Impaired
- Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities
- Physical Disabilities
- Chronic Health Impairments
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Moderate to Intensive Behavioural Challenges
- Moderate to Serious Mental Illness
- Mild Intellectual Disabilities
- Neuro/developmental Disabilities
- Gifted Abilities
- Learning Disabilities



Our Commitment to Accessibility: Never About Us Without Us

Accessibility refers to the degree of ease with which people with disabilities can use and enjoy something such as a device, service, or place. At SD22, we are committed to providing an environment that is accessible and practical for all members of our diverse community. We recognize the importance of conscious planning, universal design, and effort in ensuring that barriers are removed, and accessibility is increased.

Our school district is committed to working collaboratively with the community to provide equitable opportunities for people with disabilities in a way that respects their dignity.

To achieve this goal, we have outlined the following commitments:

- Engage with staff, community members and people with disabilities in the development and review of its accessibility plan.
- Ensure that our school board policies and procedures align with the principles of accessibility.
- Improve access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and community members.
- Continually improve accessibility for people with disabilities in our school community.



Definitions

- **Accessibility:** The state of having programs, services and environments that allow all individuals to participate fully in society without encountering barriers.
- **Accessibility Committee:** An official group formed by one or more organizations in collaboration with people with disabilities, to create an accessibility plan and feedback mechanism.
- **Accessibility Plan:** A plan developed by an Accessibility Committee that identifies challenges and solutions for addressing accessibility barriers.
- **Barrier:** Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability. This includes physical/environmental, attitudinal, information, communications, policy or practice, and technological barriers. Types of barriers:
 - **Physical/Environmental Barrier:** A barrier resulting from building design, smells/sounds, lighting, the area adjacent to the building, shape of rooms, the size of doorways, and so on.
 - **Attitudinal Barrier:** A barrier that arises from the attitudes of staff, students and the school community, including discriminatory behaviours and a lack of disability awareness.
 - **Communication Barrier:** A barrier that arises from difficulties receiving information in person, by telephone or online, interacting with teachers, peers, receptionists or other staff, and receiving training.
 - **Information Barrier:** A barrier that arises from inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, equipment labels, computer screens, and so on.
 - **Policy or Practice Barrier:** Rules, regulations and protocols that prevent a person from performing their job satisfactorily or participating in society. Policy, practice, and procedures that prevent a student from accessing the curriculum and fully participating in the school community.
 - **Technological Barrier:** Barriers resulting from computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones, and switches, including the lack of assistive technologies.



- **Disability:** The state of being unable to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction between an impairment and a barrier.(For more information about disability and types of disability and support, refer to Appendix A: Disabilities.)
- **Impairment:** A physical, sensory, learning, mental health, regulation (emotional or otherwise), intellectual, cognitive limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic.

GUIDING FRAMEWORK



The School District 22 accessibility plan builds on global, national, provincial, and school district specific actions to promote and support accessibility. Further information about each of these contexts and the associated legislative actions is provided in Appendix A.

The **Accessible British Columbia Act**, enacted in June 2021, and the Accessible British Columbia Regulation, which was brought into force in September 2022, were the catalyst for the creation of the SD22 Accessibility Plan. The Regulation requires all school districts in B.C., along with many other prescribed organizations in the province, to ensure they have the following in place by September 1, 2023:

1. An accessibility committee;
2. An accessibility plan; and
3. A tool to receive public feedback on accessibility.

Further information about how SD22 has met these three requirements is provided in the next section.



OUR APPROACH

At School District 22, we believe that all members of our community have the right to be treated with dignity, given an opportunity to participate, and provided with access to learning and community. Our approach is grounded in the core provincial principles of accessibility, including adaptability, collaboration, diversity, inclusion, self-determination, and universal design.



In April 2023, we began the process of establishing an accessibility committee and identifying barriers to accessibility in our school district community. This process involved:

- Appointing members of the Accessibility Committee
- Assessing the current physical and architectural accessibility of our schools
- Conducting surveys and interviews to understand the issues, challenges, and priorities of stakeholders within our school district community.
- Holding key discussions to identify barriers to accessibility.
- Developing a district-wide feedback tool

- Prioritizing immediate actions to be taken
- Discussion around development of a monitoring and evaluation process

The **Accessibility Committee** functions alongside the **Accessibility Working Group** to identify, remove, and prevent barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. The Committee reviews feedback received through the district's public feedback tool and consults and works with the Accessibility Working Group as it develops, updates and creates an implementation strategy for the Accessibility Plan and also responds to imminent/urgent accessibility needs on a case by case basis.



Purpose of the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, organizations must establish an Accessibility Committee to assist with identifying and preventing barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization. The purpose of the accessibility committee is to work collaboratively to assess and improve community accessibility, focusing on the experiences of individuals with disabilities while encompassing the whole community. The Accessibility Committee also advises the District Administrator/Board on strategies to reduce social, physical, sensory and other barriers that prevent people from fully participating in all aspects of school community life.

Accessibility Committee Members

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, the selection of accessibility committee members must, to the extent possible, align with the following goals:

- At least half the members are persons with disabilities (PWD), or individuals who support or are from organizations that support PWDs.
- At least one member is an Indigenous person; and
- Members reflect the diversity of persons in B.C.

Appointments to the Accessibility Committee were held in June 2023 to recruit a diverse representation as outlined above. The Accessibility Committee was formally constituted in June 2023. Current members of the Accessibility Coordinating Committee (2024/25) are listed below.

Assistant Superintendent	Katherine Oviatt
District Principal of Inclusion	Dianne Ballance
Education Assistants	Nancy Orchard, Anna Carter, Jennifer Patrick (alternate)
Indigenous Community Representative	Dave Lafontaine
Members of SD22 Accessibility Working Group	Brittany Weber, Aurora Cox
Parent of an SD22 student	Sara Knol
SD22 Student(s)	Matthew Leach, Areyah Stark-Gerry (alternate)
VTA Members	Christine Molaison, Melissa Reeves

Methodology:

I. Consultation

Barrier Identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Committee are utilized the following methods to identify barriers:

- Audit of policies and practices – the Accessibility Committee will review current policies and practices through the lens of accessibility and inclusion.
- Survey to Staff - An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to staff. in (June 2023).
- Survey to Parents/Guardians - An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to parents/guardians in (June 2023).
- Survey to Students - An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to students (June 2023).
- Physical Accessibility Audit - An Assessment for our school's physical accessibility was developed. A working group was identified, and continually conduct physical accessibility assessments in each of our schools.
- Accessibility Committee - The Accessible Committee reviewed the input and feedback from the survey, assessment, and feedback tool. The Committee will collaborated to suggest priority areas to target in the Accessibility Plan. This will be shared with administrators and the Board, who will give the final approval of priority areas for the plan.
- Other Barriers – To be determined.

Ongoing Consultation: A contact number and email is listed on the District website for continued input from the public, parents, caregivers, students, and partner groups.

II. Accessibility Audit

An accessibility audit was completed by an independent company for all of the SD22 physical sites. The data from this audit was used to prioritize identified areas of concern. Areas of high priority include:

- Ensuring that alarm systems have visual signals as well as audio signals.
- Ensuring that thresholds and stairways have colour identifying doorways and thresholds and tactile, non-slip warning strips or contrasting colours.
- Ensuring accessible access from parking lots and drop off areas.
- Ensuring ramps meet requirements in terms of gradients and handrails.
- Accessible washroom requirements for door widths, accessible sinks, etc. and other accessibility requirements.



Feedback Mechanism Development

School District 22 developed an online feedback tool that included a series of questions about accessibility experiences that students, staff and members of the school district community can complete. The tool was posted to the main page of the district website and an information announcement about the tool was provided to students, staff and parents/guardians.

Feedback could be anonymous, or people provided name and contact information if they wished to be contacted.

The information gained through the online Accessibility Feedback Tool was used to identify current or future accessibility issues. Survey results were monitored and analyzed by the working group and Accessibility Committee.

In addition to the public availability of the plan, SD22 will continue to post an annual status report on the progress of the Three-Year Accessibility Plan on the district website. Accessible formats of the plan will be made available upon request.

Questions, comments, or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to our committee by using our survey link (<https://forms.office.com/r/NEsLzt775V>) or by using this QR code:



SD22 is deeply committed to listening to students, staff members, families and community members when it comes to accessibility.



Dream. Believe. Achieve.

THREE-YEAR PLAN

Collaboration

The Accessibility Committee and the Accessibility Working Group looked at the feedback received through the public consultation during the creation of this Accessibility Plan. Although the Accessible British Columbia Act stipulated that the Accessibility Committee was to be consulted and the Accessibility Working Group create the Accessibility Plan, SD22 sought to ensure the members of the Accessibility Committee were seen as partners in this work. The interaction between the Accessibility Committee and the Accessibility Working Group is a collaborative partnership.

This Accessibility Plan outlines the measures that School District 22 will take to remove and prevent barriers and to promote inclusion for individuals with disabilities in our school district community. The plan will be based on the Accessibility Principles of Adaptability, Collaboration, Diversity, Inclusion, Self- Determination, and Universal Design, as set out in the Accessible B.C. Act, and was completed by June 2024. It is renewed and updated each subsequent year.

Accessibility Priorities

Based on the feedback gathered from staff, parents/guardians, and students, and the Physical and Architectural Environment Audit, the Accessibility Committee has identified the following areas as the top priority for improving accessibility in the school district community.

	PRIORITY	BARRIER TYPE
1	Information and Communication	Communication
2	Physical and Architectural	Physical
3	School Policy and Practice	Policy/Practice
4	Technology	Access

Priorities, Objectives and Actions

This Accessibility Plan is a three year plan that is updated and reviewed annually. This section outlines the priorities and objectives, as well as the timeline for specific actions over the duration of the three year plan.

Accessibility Plan Timeline



PRIORITY 1: Information and Communication

Timeline: 2023 – 2026

Barrier Type:
Communication

Objective:
Review and update consultation and feedback tools to monitor successful implementation of the Accessibility Plan and Accessibility in the School District Community.

- Actions Year 1:**
- District Accessibility Feedback Tool was developed, emailed to families and staff, and posted to the district website. Information about the tool was shared with district and school stakeholders (i.e., students, staff, outside professionals and parents/guardians).
 - Survey: An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed (twice in the year) to staff, Students, parents and Guardians.

- Actions Year 2:**
- Update of the website and posting feedback survey in an accessible way.
 - School Principals and Vice Principals provided their school results from the survey
 - Ongoing monitoring of Accessibility feedback from the website.

- Actions Year 3:**
- Focus groups involving students and staff as a follow-up to survey information and key points identified in the 2023-2024 survey.
 - Ongoing monitoring of Accessibility feedback from the website.



PRIORITY 2: Physical and Architectural

Timeline: 2024 to 2029 - 30 (Five Year Plan)

Barrier Type:

Physical

Objective:

Assess the accessibility of all schools and district facilities in order to obtain baseline information and inform future upgrades and renovations.

Actions year 1:

- The committee conducted a review of current SD22 practice and BC standards for accessibility.
- An Assessment for our school's physical accessibility was developed. A working group was identified, and continually conduct physical accessibility assessments in each of our schools (per the Accessibility Committee Mandate).
- The working group identified key barriers to prioritize accessibility needs for the upcoming school year.
- The survey identified both vision and hearing impairment related accessibility issues as a priority.
- Noratek Solutions Inc. was contracted by SD22 to carry out an assessment for our school's physical accessibility.

Actions Year 2:

- Noratek Solutions audit was submitted and reviewed. Priorities were identified by the committee and through the ongoing work of the Accessibility Working Group with respect to just in time support for existing students.
 - Findings were shared with SD22 Facilities Department. Multi-year plan is in progress to address these issues.
 - Students with disabilities on the committee to visit other schools and experience those through the lens of their disability and report back to the committee.

Actions Year 3:

- Continue with multi-year and just in time planning for addressing shortfalls found through the Noratek accessibility audit.
- Audit of alternate learning/regulation spaces by the working group - will be shared with the Accessibility Committee.
 - Determine the current needs for alternate learning spaces for students with diverse needs and disabilities.
- Create a plan and budget for sensory rooms and alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified in the survey.



PRIORITY 3: District Policy and School Practice

Timeline: 2023 – 26

Barrier Type:

Policy/Practice

Objective 1:

To provide clarity around policy and procedures with respect to Accessibility.

Actions Year 1:

- Develop priorities for staff accessibility training and professional development.

Actions Year 2:

- Begin work to draft an Accessibility Policy to present to the Board of Trustees.

Actions Year 3:

- Complete final draft of Accessibility Policy to present to the Board of Trustees.
- Draft an Accessibility Procedure and Guidelines to support Administrators and staff around Accessibility principles.
 - Develop emergency plans for people with disabilities and diverse needs.
 - Develop evacuation guideline procedures for students and staff who encounter various barriers (including mobility, vision, hearing, learning) by November 2024.

Objective 2:

To ensure that existing policies and procedures follow accessibility principles.

Actions Year 1, 2, and 3:

- The committee will continue to review and advise in the updating of SD22 policies to ensure they align with the principles of accessibility, and to address any identified gaps in staff training or knowledge on accessibility issues. This will be done at the Committee of the Whole as requested by the Board.
- The committee will continue to review and update current policies and practices to ensure accessibility and inclusion practices are considered.
- The Committee will review the accessibility of public documents and the SD22 Website and advise SD22 of ways to ensure these are accessible to all.



PRIORITY 4: Technology

Timeline: 2024 – 26

Barrier Type:

Multiple

Objective:

Identify and support assistive technology tools and training to support students, staff, and other members of the school community to have equitable access to learning, programs, and all facets of inclusive practice within the school community.

Actions Year 1 and 2:

- The committee will continue review School District 22 technology to increase awareness and training on assistive technology for students with disabilities.

Actions Year 3:

- The Committee and the Working Group will collaborate to develop an Inclusive Education Technology Plan

Accessible/Assistive Technology programs:

- Google Read & Write accessibility program (Text Help)
 - Licensing is available to schools.
- iPads have accessibility options for voice to text, text size for vision, and contrast adjustments.
- Technology Innovation Coordinators offer training to EAs and teachers for options built into access tools.
- The Technology Coordinators also offer district and school one-on-one training as requested.
- Programs offered and supported with training once a year: Boardmaker, TouchChat, Read & Write, Kurzweil
- SeeSaw – voice recording and text to speech.
- The Technology department looks at and considers multiple ways to support assistive technology options when purchasing district programs that can assist for all users.

Note: This is neither a recommended nor a curated list but are existing programs in use supporting SD22 students and staff.





Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Planning Committee will meet quarterly to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan's implementation and plan for increased accessibility throughout the school. The committee will ensure the following steps are taken regarding the Three-Year Accessibility Plan:

1. Prepare an annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the plan.
2. Review and update the Three-Year Accessibility Plan annually in consultation with persons with disabilities and other relevant community members.

How to Give Us Feedback

In addition to the public availability of the plan, SD22 will continue to post an annual status report on the progress of the Three-Year Accessibility Plan on the district website. Accessible formats of the plan will be made available upon request. Questions, comments, or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to our committee by using our survey link: <https://forms.office.com/r/NEsLzt775V>



APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND

The SD22 Accessibility Plan builds on significant prior work at the global, national and provincial levels to promote and support accessibility. A few notable legislative changes and advancements are included below to provide context for the work currently undertaken by SD22.



Global Context

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006. The Government of Canada describes the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the following way:

“The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human right treaty aimed at protecting the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. Parties to the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are required to promote and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities including full equity under the law.”

Canada ratified the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010.



National Context

National milestones in Canada include the inclusion of disability in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which occurred in 1985, and in 1986, when persons with disabilities were included in the Employment Equity Act.

In 2019, the Accessible Canada Act received Royal Assent and came into force. The intent of the Accessible Canada Act is to create a barrier-free Canada by 2040.

“The Act is to be implemented in recognition of, and in accordance with, the following principles:

- Everyone must be treated with dignity
- Everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have
- Everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society
- Everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire
- Laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect
- Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures, and
- Accessibility standards and regulations must be made with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility”

Provincial Context

The Accessible British Columbia Act received Royal Assent in 2021 and the accompanying Accessible British Columbia Regulation came into effect on September 1, 2022. The regulation requires prescribed organizations in B.C., including public school districts, to have an Accessibility Committee, an Accessibility Plan and a tool to receive public feedback on accessibility in place by September 1, 2023.

The regulation, and its requirements, highlight the importance of involving persons with disabilities and those with lived experience in the process of identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.



The Accessible British Columbia Act identifies six principles (inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination and universal design) which must be considered as organizations develop and update their accessibility plans. The Act also stipulates that an organization must consult with its accessibility committee during this process.



APPENDIX B: ABOUT THE DISABILITY CONTINUUM

There is no universally accepted meaning for the word "disability". However, the Ontario Human Rights Code provides definitions of disability that form our guiding principles. Definitions of disability can be placed on a continuum. At one end, disability is explained in terms of medical conditions (medical model). At the opposite end, disability is explained in terms of the social and physical contexts in which it occurs (environmental model).

The medical model focuses on deficiencies, symptoms and treatments. The World Health Organization's (WHO) 1976 definition for disability, for example, is "any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being." Medical model definitions promote the idea that disability is a deviation from the norm.

Many people with disabilities are troubled by definitions that regard disability as abnormal, preferring instead to portray disability as commonplace, natural, and in fact, inevitable. As people age, they experience gradual declines in visual acuity, auditory sensitivity, range of motion, bodily strength and mental powers.

Significant functional limitations affect almost half of people between the ages of 55 and 79, and over 70% of people over 80 (World Health Organization (WHO) report titled "Ageing and health", 2015). Beyond middle age, disability is the norm. The environmental model explains disability in relation to social and physical contexts. In this view, the environment, not an individual's medical condition, causes disability. For example, during an electrical blackout, a person who is completely blind can effortlessly navigate around the home, hammer nails, and, if a Braille user, read a novel. A sighted person would be unable to perform these tasks easily, if at all. In this example, the environment disables the sighted person.

The environmental model emphasizes that people with disabilities are capable individuals, and it is the barriers in the built and human environments, not their medical conditions, that create disability. Disability occurs when the world is designed only for a certain way of living, without considering the natural variation among human beings. Barriers are created by humans, and modifying how we live, the tools we use, and our understanding of the proper way to do things can eliminate or minimize design problems that cause barriers. Systematic barriers can be eliminated by modifying policies, plans, and processes. Attitudes that cause barriers can be addressed through disability awareness, respect, and positive interactions with people with disabilities.

Types of Disability and Functional Limitations

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively challenging to perform everyday tasks such as operating a keyboard, reading a sign, differentiating colors, distinguishing sounds, climbing stairs, grasping small items, remembering words, or doing arithmetic.

There are many kinds of disabilities, including physical, sensory, hearing, mental health, developmental and learning. Disabilities can be visible or invisible. Responses to people with disabilities will vary depending on the individual and the relationships that exist between parties.

Visual Disabilities

Visual disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Some have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light. Impaired vision can restrict a person's ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a visual disability. Others may use a guide dog or white cane.



Hard of Hearing and Deafness

People who have hearing loss may be deaf or hard of hearing. Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. People who are hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating. While some people may use sign language, notes or hearing aids when communicating, others may also use email, pagers, TTY telephone service or Bell Canada Relay Service.

Physical Disabilities

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities and not all require a wheelchair. For example, people who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions, or amputations may also have difficulty moving, standing, or sitting. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Intellectual Disabilities

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not be able to know that someone has one of these disabilities unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or body language.

Ambulatory Disabilities

An ambulatory disability is an impairment that prevents or impedes walking. A person is considered to have an ambulatory disability if they cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest, or cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device.

Neurodevelopmental Disabilities

Neurodevelopmental disorders emerge in childhood (although some may not be diagnosed until adulthood) and affect a person's development. Autism and ADHD are the most common NDs, but these conditions also include intellectual disabilities, learning disorders, and cerebral palsy, among others. While such conditions can affect memory, language, behavior, learning, emotions, and motor skills, people can effectively manage their challenges with the right interventions, support, and accommodations.

Mental Health Disabilities

People with mental health disabilities look like anyone else. You won't know that the person has a mental health disability unless you're informed of it. But if someone is experiencing difficulty in controlling their symptoms or is in a crisis, you may need to help. Be calm and professional and let the person tell you how you can best help.



Dynamic Disabilities

A dynamic disability refers to a condition or impairment that fluctuates in severity and impact over time. Unlike a static disability, such as amputation or paralysis, which remains constant, a dynamic disability may have periods of remission or exacerbation. This can make it challenging for individuals with dynamic disabilities to predict and manage their symptoms, as the level of impairment can change unexpectedly.

Consider this the next time you see someone with a mobility aid one day and then without it another time. They are not faking their disability, it just fluctuates. The same goes for someone with an invisible disability (including fatigue, brain fog, and other stamina related symptoms) and their ability to do something one day and then struggle to do it the next.

Deaf-Blind Disabilities

A person who is deafblind cannot see or hear to some extent. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities. Most people who are deafblind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who helps with communicating. Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling, and may guide and interpret for their client.

Learning or Cognitive Disabilities

Learning or cognitive disabilities can result in a host of different communications difficulties for people. They can be subtle, as in having difficulty reading, or more pronounced, but they can interfere with the person's ability to receive, express or process information. You may not be able to know that someone has one of these disabilities unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or body language

Speech and Language Disabilities

Some people have communication challenges. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express oneself or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards, sign language or other assistive devices.



APPENDIX C: SUGGESTED REFERENCES/RESOURCES

Global, Canadian and Local Accessibility Context and Legislation

- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Canada Ratifies UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation](#)
- [Accessible British Columbia Act](#)
- [BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary](#)

Accessibility Planning Resources for Schools and School Boards

- [BC Accessibility Hub](#)
- [Universal Design](#)
- [Special Education Technology BC \(SETBC\)](#)
- [Accessible Resource Centre - BC](#)
- [Standards Council of Canada](#)
- [B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design](#)
- [A Guide to Creating Accessible Play Spaces](#) (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- [Canadian National Institute for the Blind \(CNIB\)](#)
- [Canadian Hard of Hearing Association](#)
- [Canadian Hearing Services](#)
- [Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program](#)
- [Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program](#) (Complex Needs)
- [Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada](#)
- [Learning Disabilities Association of Canada](#)
- [Brain Injury Canada](#)
- [Spinal Cord Injury Canada](#)
- [Tourette Canada](#)
- [Kelty Mental Health](#) (BC Children's Hospital)
- [Gifted Children's Association of BC](#)

APPENDIX D: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Vision

The vision of School District No.22 is to become a community where all are respected, and each person is encouraged to develop their potential. The Accessibility Advisory Committee (the Committee) will assist the District by ensuring the spirit of the “nothing about us, without us” (David Warner) is at the heart of its work to improve the experiences of people with disabilities.

Mandate

The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall function alongside the Accessibility Working Group (the Working Group) to identify & make recommendations, reduce, and remove barriers and improve accessibility for people with disabilities. The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall review feedback received through the District and shall be consulted in the Working Group’s development and updating of the District’s Accessibility Plan.

Membership

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will include :

- Superintendent Appointment: e.g. Director of Instruction – Inclusion or Assistant Superintendent
- District Principal of Inclusion
- Indigenous community representative (1)
- Members of the SD22 Accessibility Working Group (4)
- CUPE Representative (2)
- VTA Representative (2) – TBD (in consultation with VTA)
- SD22 student (1)
- Parent/Guardian/Caregiver of a Vernon Schools student (1)

To the extent possible, the members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee should be selected in accordance with the following goals as detailed in Section 9 of the Accessible British Columbia Act:

1. At least half of the members are:
 - Persons with disabilities, or
 - Individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities
2. The members described in paragraph (a) reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in British Columbia
3. At least one of the members is an Indigenous person
4. The Committee reflects the diversity of persons in British Columbia & the population of the local area.



The Accessibility Advisory Chair will be the Superintendent of Schools or their designate.

- Members are appointed to the Accessibility Advisory Committee by the Chair.
- Members are expected to attend the Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings, act with integrity and honesty, be tolerant of other's opinions, and interact with others in a respectful and inclusive manner. Members are expected to excuse themselves from any Committee discussions or activities which may be viewed as a conflict of interest.

Scope of Work

As detailed in Section 9 of the Accessible British Columbia Act, the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall:

- Assist the organization to identify barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization, and
- Advise the organization through an accessibility plan on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.

Meetings

The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall meet 4 times during each school year (September – June).

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Reporting

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the Superintendent.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair or delegate shall be responsible for report writing.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee will provide advice to the Working Group
- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the Accessibility Advisory Committee.