



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2026-2028

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We respectfully acknowledge that Surrey Schools resides on the traditional, unceded and shared territories of Coast Salish peoples: The ḡíçəý - Katzie, the ḡʷa:ḡłəḡ - Kwantlen and the SEMYOME - Semiahmoo First Nations: the stewards of 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.

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INTRODUCTION

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear staff, students, parents, guardians and community members,

At Surrey Schools, we believe every student, staff member, parent, caregiver and community member should feel welcomed, respected and able to fully participate in all aspects of school life. Surrey Schools' Accessibility Plan allows our communities to understand our commitments and the progress we are making toward them.



Over the past two years, our Accessibility Advisory Committee and Surrey Schools staff have made significant progress together. The Accessibility Plan has been shaped by the voices and lived experiences of students, families, staff and community members. Their perspectives continue to help us better understand barriers and identify opportunities to create more equitable and accessible learning and working environments.

This plan is guiding the important work of the district by identifying priorities, setting meaningful goals and ensuring we continue to listen, learn and take action. Some of the progress from the last couple of years includes the following:

- Completing accessibility assessments at every school and district site, identifying opportunities to improve access to parking areas, entrances, libraries and emergency preparedness measures.
- Developing and launching a series of engaging, animated videos that help our community better understand accessibility, disability, barriers and inclusion. These resources have reached thousands of viewers and have been adopted by organizations beyond Surrey Schools.
- Creating an online learning module to support hiring managers in recognizing and reducing barriers to employment for people with disabilities, helping to foster a more inclusive workplace.
- Establishing Surrey Schools' first Accessibility Advisory Committee and developed our inaugural Accessibility Plan, while creating meaningful opportunities for students, families, staff and community members to share feedback through public consultation and surveys.

- Celebrating National AccessAbility Week across the district, highlighting the important contributions and achievements of people with disabilities and raising awareness of accessibility and inclusion throughout our school communities.

While we are proud of the progress we have made, we know there is more work ahead. Accessibility is an ongoing journey that requires listening, learning and acting together. Through this updated plan, we reaffirm our commitment to removing barriers, advancing inclusion and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in our schools and district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pearmain', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Pearmain
Superintendent | CEO
Surrey Schools

Acknowledgements

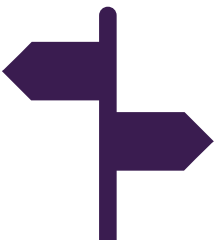


Surrey Schools would like to acknowledge and express our sincere appreciation to the members of our Accessibility Advisory Committee. Through our commitment to embracing “Nothing About Us, Without Us” when engaging in this work, the members of our Accessibility Advisory Committee have been invaluable to our progress and our ability to make meaningful change. The past and current members of this committee have provided guidance, insight, and direction which has helped to ensure our work is responsive to the experiences of students, staff members, families and community members with disabilities.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Kim Egger | Stephanie Kluch |
| Allan Henricks | Leena Sansoa |
| Nancy Johnson | Sheri Hoegler |
| Andy Zadeiks | Colin Reid |

We would like to thank everyone in the Surrey Schools community who took the time to share their feedback with us about the 2023-2026 Accessibility Plan and about accessibility and barriers across our school district. Through our online surveys we have received your comments, suggestions and priorities, and they have helped to inform this updated accessibility plan and the work we are engaging in to identify, reduce and remove barriers for people with disabilities.



About Surrey Schools

Surrey Schools proudly serves the City of Surrey, the City of White Rock, and the rural area of Barnston Island. As the largest school district in British Columbia, we provide quality education to over 80,000 students that are enrolled in our 21 secondary schools, 107 elementary schools, five learning centres, and a variety of satellite programs, including an online distributed learning program.

A rich mosaic of cultures is represented within the student population, with over half of our students speaking a language other than English at home. Of the more than 196 languages represented in our schools, the most prevalent spoken at home are English, Punjabi, Mandarin, Hindi, Tagalog, and Arabic. There are also more than 3,000 students of Indigenous ancestry (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) enrolled in our district.

The district's vision, *Learning by Design*, is to prepare our learners to think creatively and critically, communicate skillfully, and demonstrate care for self and others. We are committed to continuous improvement and the success of every student, championing evidence-informed practices that enhance learning, inclusivity, and equity of outcomes.

At Surrey Schools, we celebrate and embrace diversity, and foster the holistic development of our students, nurturing their minds, bodies and spirits.

+80,000

STUDENTS CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN THE SURREY DISTRICT

107

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

21

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

5

LEARNING CENTRES

GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Accessible B.C. Act & Accessible B.C. Regulation

As of September 1, 2023, the Accessible British Columbia Act and the Accessible British Columbia Regulation require prescribed organizations in B.C., including all public school districts and independent schools, to ensure they have the following in place:

- 1) An accessibility advisory committee;
- 2) An accessibility plan; and
- 3) A tool to receive feedback on accessibility from the public.



Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Surrey Schools Accessibility Advisory Committee meets regularly throughout the school year and assists with the identification of barriers to individuals with disabilities interacting with the school district. The Committee provides advice, shares experiences and collaborates with the Accessibility Working Group and various district departments to support Surrey Schools' work to increase accessibility.

This committee includes members who represent students, parents and caregivers, staff members from multiple employee groups, and community members. The Surrey Schools Accessibility Advisory Committee membership exceeds the Accessible B.C. Act's requirements of:

- a) At least 50% of the members are persons with disabilities or individuals who support persons with disabilities;
- b) The members reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in British Columbia;
- c) At least one member is an Indigenous person.

Accessibility Plan

This document outlines Surrey Schools' second formal accessibility plan and continues to follow through on our requirement to review and update our accessibility plan at least once every three years. Valuing the members of the Surrey Schools Accessibility Advisory Committee as partners and prioritizing a model of collaboration over consultation, the priorities, objectives and actions shared in this accessibility plan were jointly created with the support of the Advisory Committee.



During the development of this plan, the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination and universal design were considered. While the previous accessibility plan included priorities which spanned across three years, this current plan emphasizes a shorter two-year timeline. This shorter timeline is reflective of the ever-expanding understanding of accessibility and its importance across our district. A shorter timeline will help to ensure the district's accessibility priorities are responsive to the emerging needs within Surrey Schools.

Our Continued Commitment to “Nothing About Us, Without Us”

Through frequent collaboration with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the regular review of feedback we receive from students, staff members, families and community members through our feedback surveys, we remain committed to ensuring our efforts to increase accessibility are informed by the individuals with disabilities who interact with Surrey Schools each day.

Thank you to everyone who directly and indirectly contributed to this plan. We are committed to ensuring “Nothing About Us, Without Us” continues to be the foundation of this work.

Public Feedback on Accessibility

Surrey Schools utilizes two online surveys to accept public feedback on this accessibility plan and on barriers to accessibility within the school district. The surveys can be accessed from the [Surrey Schools Accessibility webpage](#), and both provide opportunities to upload photo, video or audio files when providing feedback.

Surrey Schools values the voices and stories of all members of our community. We encourage the use of these two surveys to provide feedback on accessibility across our school district as well as on this updated accessibility plan.

“Our district’s strategic plan is firmly anchored in the core belief that fostering connectedness and a sense of belonging is pivotal across all facets of learning. We are committed to nurturing inclusive environments where diverse identities, abilities, stories, experiences, and perspectives guide and strengthen the pursuit of our vision.”

Surrey Schools Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Accessibility Working Group

The Surrey Schools Accessibility Working Group is responsible for the creation of the Accessibility Plan. The Working Group meets on a regular schedule throughout the school year, consults and collaborates with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and coordinates the district’s work on the actions detailed in this plan. The membership of the Accessibility Working Group remains flexible to ensure members with specific expertise are available to support the work occurring at the time. The current membership of the Working Group includes leaders and managers from elementary schools, secondary schools and multiple district-level departments.

In addition to the specific objectives and actions detailed in this plan, the Working Group and the Advisory Committee are focused on working together to increase the influence the experiences of students with disabilities have on accessibility in our schools.

PRIORITIES, OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

Priority: Assessment & Communication

Objective 1: Continue conducting assessments and collecting information about the availability of accessibility features within each school and district building. Select new focus areas each year.

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, All Schools, All Building Managers, Administrative Services.

Actions
1.1 Create an accessibility assessment, or adapt an existing assessment, which focuses on specific areas within schools and district buildings each year.
1.2 Continue to implement an annual accessibility assessment focused on specific areas of schools and district buildings. One or more areas will be selected as the focus for each year's assessment.
1.3 The Accessibility Working Group and Accessibility Advisory Committee will review the information collected and share it with relevant district departments to support future planning and accessibility initiatives.

Objective 2: Communicate information to the community about the availability of accessibility features within each school and district building.

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, All Schools, Communications Department.

Actions
2.1 Create a consistent, easily identifiable location on each school's and district building's website where information about the availability of the building's accessibility features can be shared with the public.
2.2 Populate each website with the information collected through Objective 1, while prioritizing the accessibility features that individuals may interact with first when arriving to a building (eg. accessible parking, accessible front door, accessible front office).

Priority: Participation & Representation

Objective 3: Continue to celebrate and promote National AccessAbility Week annually.

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, All Schools, All Departments, Community Organizations.

Actions
3.1 Ensure information about National AccessAbility Week (eg. dates, background, purpose) is provided to all schools and district departments in advance of National AccessAbility Week (the week beginning on the last Sunday in May).
3.2 Create opportunities for students with disabilities to provide direct input into Surrey Schools' engagement activities related to National AccessAbility Week.
3.3 Create and share internal Surrey Schools student and staff engagement opportunities related to accessibility and disability inclusion prior to and during National AccessAbility Week.
3.4 Share information and raise awareness of local community organization events and resources in support of National AccessAbility Week.

Objective 4: Increase the awareness of and availability of school resources that include a positive representation of individuals with disabilities.

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, All Schools, Student Support Department, Priority Practices Department, Learning Resource Services Department.

Actions
4.1 Identify learning resources which feature individuals with disabilities, were written or illustrated by individuals with disabilities, raise awareness of accessibility and/or promote an increased understanding of disability.
4.2 Share recommended resources with schools throughout the year related to provincial, national and international days of recognition related to accessibility and disability inclusion.
4.3 From the resources identified in Action 4.1, make appropriate selections for both the elementary and secondary school level and provide them to school libraries at either no cost or below cost.

Priority: Parking & Navigation

Objective 5: Support the appropriate use of accessible parking spaces at all schools and district buildings.

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, All Schools, All Building Managers, Facilities Department.

Actions
5.1 Review all accessible parking space signage at all schools and district buildings. Ensure spaces are correctly identified with appropriate signage.
5.2 Develop resources to support district-wide and community conversations and education about the appropriate and intended use of accessible parking spaces.
5.3 When parking lots are repainted, support a transition to an accessible parking space design that incorporates a clearly painted access aisle next to an accessible parking space.

Objective 6: Install accessible wayfinding signage (ie. high contrast colours, raised lettering, braille) throughout Sunnyside Elementary, the District Education Centre (DEC), and the Resource and Education Centre (REC).

Involvement: Accessibility Working Group, Administrative Services, Advancement Department, Facilities Department, Sunnyside Elementary.

Actions
6.1 Assess and inventory all current wayfinding signage installed in Sunnyside Elementary, the District Education Centre, and the Resource and Education Centre.
6.2 Remove and replace wayfinding signage that does not meet the CSA/ASC B651:23 accessibility standard. Install new signage which meets the accessibility standard where signage is necessary for wayfinding and not currently present.

Note: Objective 6 will be completed with the assistance of an RBC Barrier Buster Grant presented by the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF). These three school district sites were identified as opportunities to maximize the impact of this project.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Progress Updates

Over the next two years, the Surrey Schools Accessibility Working Group will monitor progress related to each of the objectives and actions included in this accessibility plan.

Regular progress updates will be prepared and shared with the Surrey Schools Accessibility Advisory Committee.

In the Fall 2027, the Accessibility Working Group will prepare a Progress Update Report and share it publicly through the Accessibility page of the Surrey Schools website.



