

Year 1 Review **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

April 2026



With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

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Accessibility in action: year one progress

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) is committed to advancing accessibility and reducing barriers for students, families, staff and community members. The 2025–2028 Accessibility Plan outlines key priorities to support more inclusive and accessible learning and working environments.

This report provides an overview of progress in the first year of implementation, including actions taken, milestones achieved and ongoing work across the school district.

VSB’s accessibility committee met seven times during the 2025–2026 school year. The committee includes individuals with lived experience of disability, as well as those who support people with disabilities or diverse abilities. Its work is guided by the Accessible BC Act and provides advice to help identify, remove and prevent barriers for individuals interacting with the organization.

The report also summarizes barriers identified through the accessibility reporting tool and outlines progress on the objectives and key actions in the Accessibility Plan.

Objective: Ensure all staff understand disability and accessibility, and how to respond when issues of accessibility are identified.

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
Develop and implement staff training and professional learning on accessibility	Ongoing	<p>A series of mandatory training sessions were delivered to all resource teachers to support consistent practice across the school district.</p> <p>Examples of sessions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roles, Responsibilities and Case Management• ABCs of Assessment• Competency Based Individual Education Plans• How to Support Neurodiverse Students

		<p>Training sessions on Non-Violent Crisis Intervention from the Crisis Prevention Institute were offered in October, November, January, February and May for education assistants, teachers and school administrators.</p>
Professional learning sessions	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 569 total professional learning sessions offered via <i>VSB Learns</i> • 158 sessions related to inclusive education • 27 sessions specifically focused on accessibility <p>Topics included: Accessibility Tools for Inclusion (Windows), Autistic and Neurodiverse Perspective, iPad Accessibility Features, Engagement with Non-Speaking Students and Levelling Text.</p>
Provide targeted professional development in Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Ongoing	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District-wide professional learning conference, Inclusion in Action, with explicit Universal Design for learning focus • Inclusive Sport - Learn & Play with OneAbility Games • Creating Neurodiverse-Affirming Learning Spaces • Learning services staff work directly with school teams to provide embedded coaching and instruction on UDL principles.
Embed accessibility and inclusion in employee onboarding	Ongoing	<p>District principals of inclusion participated in onboarding sessions on the following dates:</p> <p>2025: Aug. 27; Sept. 24; Oct. 17; Nov. 3; Nov. 26 2026: Jan. 5; Jan. 26; Feb. 26; Apr. 7</p>

Objective: Collaborate with students and staff who have lived or learned experience with accessibility to enhance organizational awareness. Their insights help staff better understand accessibility needs and drive inclusive improvements in schools and workplaces.

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
Engage students with lived experience to identify and remove barriers	Ongoing	<p>Use of Photovoice methodology in secondary schools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture student experiences through photography • Support reflection and dialogue • Identify barriers, strengths and improvement opportunities <p>Educators act as listeners and partners; participation is voluntary and accessible. This work is ongoing and will expand in the 2026–2027 school year.</p>
Engage staff with lived experience	Ongoing	<p>The Accessibility committee includes staff with lived and learned experience of disability.</p> <p>Planning underway to gather with, listen to and learn from additional staff perspectives.</p>

Objective: Celebrate and highlight the contributions and achievements of people with disabilities or diverse abilities

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
Coordinate with communications staff to highlight achievements and awareness initiatives	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual planning meetings held (fall 2025 and spring 2026) • Associate superintendent and director of communications met four times during 2025–2026 to discuss ongoing work to promote awareness of accessibility issues • Social media posts now include alt text, videos include captions and advice/guidance for accessibility by design improvements for presentations, reports and other materials produced by VSB staff • Six stories published on the VSB website about accessibility and inclusivity in schools

Objective: Increase the number of schools and work sites that are physically accessible

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
Use accessibility audit data to inform capital funding requests	2026 funding cycle	<p>School-identified accessibility projects were included in the 2025 -2026 Annual Facilities Grant which totaled \$1,029,000, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator upgrades/rebuilds • Accessible washroom construction • Accessible emergency response improvements • Playground upgrades and exterior access enhancements • Sensory rooms

Objective: Ensure that students have access to accessible playgrounds

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
<p>Prioritize playground revitalization based on accessibility needs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Work took place this year to build accessible playgrounds at four elementary schools: Britannia, Hudson, Sexsmith and Trudeau</p> <p>Five elementary schools were identified and prioritized with the three most urgent priority projects being submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care’s Playground Enhancement Program for the 2026-2027 school year. Site visits were completed, and eligibility assessed through collaboration between learning services and facilities.</p>
<p>Engage school communities during playground design</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground Request for Proposals (RFPs) require community engagement and design feedback. • Accessibility requirements are embedded at design, engagement and equipment selection stages.

Objective: Enhance and improve accessibility of information and communication sources for students, staff, families and community

Action	Timeline / Status	Updates & Evidence of Progress
Promote the accessibility reporting tool in district-wide and school communications	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accessibility reporting tool was promoted through superintendent-level communications to students’ families and staff during the back-to-school period • School principals shared the tool through newsletters and school-based communications • Information gathered through the accessibility reporting tool informs planning, operational decisions and ongoing accessibility work
Evaluate current online information and resources related to inclusion and accessibility to ensure accuracy	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning services staff reviewed VSB online information and resources during the 2025–2026 school year • Structural challenges were identified, including the distribution of accessibility-related content across multiple areas of VSB’s website • Ongoing work includes updating content, clarifying language and identifying required system-level changes • Internal-focused communications were prioritized to support educators working with students
Revamp the accessibility reporting tool to improve user experience and remove reporting barriers	Ongoing	Work is underway to revamp the accessibility reporting tool as part of the broader website refresh, with a focus on improving usability and accessibility.

Accessibility Reporting Tool Activity (September 2025 – May 2026)

Month	Category	Summary of Concern	Follow-Up / Action Taken
September	Universal awareness & understanding of accessibility issues	A parent indicated that their child is being prevented from safely participating in outdoor learning experiences (e.g., park field trips) due to the frequent presence of off-leash dogs in community spaces.	Concern shared with VSB Accessibility Committee and facilities; referred to the school for follow up with the family.
October	Physically accessible spaces	A parent reported a safety and accessibility barrier at the crosswalk directly in front of their child's elementary school. Specifically, that there are no tactile warning surfaces (tactile mats / truncated domes) on either side, making it difficult to know when a person is entering/exiting the crosswalk. The report noted the risk is heightened during drop-off time due to high vehicle volume	School principal and facilities staff engaged regarding accessibility barrier. Facilities confirmed that the site meets bylaw requirements. School administration was asked to work with family to address concerns.
October	Physically accessible spaces	A parent raised concerns that photo retake day was set up in an inaccessible location in the school. Parent also noted broader accessibility concerns: limited accessible routes within the school, planning considerations (e.g., field trips) and concerns about winter access/snow to accommodate wheelchairs	School staff worked with family to address inaccessible school setup and broader planning concerns.

November	Physically accessible spaces	A student who requires the use of an accessible entrance identified that the accessible door was obstructed by a large delivery box blocking the door-access button, with an additional trash can further restricting access. The student requested that delivery procedures be adjusted to prevent blocking accessibility features and suggested signage/reminders for staff handling deliveries	School principal was made aware of the obstruction and worked with staff regarding expectations around accessible entrances. Facilities staff followed up with the vendor and VSB's purchasing department to prevent future obstruction of accessible entrance.
December	Universal awareness & understanding of accessibility issues	Parent reported persistent systemic accessibility barriers affecting their child with a disability centred around lack of meaningful consultation and participation in educational planning and accessibility issues related to Section 11 appeals.	District follow-up enabled the appeals process to proceed through appropriate channels. Issues around accessibility of the appeals process was brought to the accessibility committee for feedback.
February	Universal awareness & understanding of accessibility issues	A parent reported that their autistic child is hearing the words "autism" and "autistic" used in derogatory ways at school, which impacts the student's sense of safety and belonging. The family asked for support to help schools teach about ableism.	Concern acknowledged; school-level response is ongoing.
February	Physically accessible spaces	A parent reported that a VSB vehicle was parked in the accessible parking stall at an elementary school on more than one occasion.	Immediate school-level action taken to address improper use of accessible parking and direction was provided to all VSB vehicle drivers that VSB vehicles are prohibited to park in accessible parking spaces.

February	Physically accessible spaces	A family planning to move to Vancouver, emailed inquiring about accessible schools.	Learning services staff supported school planning and reviewed accessibility considerations with the family.
April	Physically accessible spaces	A student reported that a recycling bin was left unattended in the school elevator, creating a preventable barrier to access and limiting safe elevator use for students who rely on it. The student also noted the need for broader awareness/training to prevent recurring barriers.	The issue was brought to the School principal for immediate resolution and to reinforce expectations for elevator use with staff. In response, custodial staff will complete accessibility awareness training. Education materials will cover respectful accessibility practices, and school-specific procedures.
May	Physically accessible spaces	A staff member reported that a student who is temporarily using a wheelchair is unable to access a portable. The staff member also noted additional site accessibility concerns, including an infrequently used lift, ramps that limit independent access and other portables without ramp access.	School principal has taken steps to support access and participation for a student with temporary physical accessibility needs. Lift maintenance has been scheduled, and contingency plans are in place to ensure alternative arrangements if portable classrooms cannot be accessed.

Looking Forward to Year Two and Three of the Vancouver School Board Accessibility Plan

As the first year of our Accessibility Plan concludes, work to advance accessibility in all our priority areas is underway. Activities this year focused on building awareness, supporting staff practice and strengthening processes to improve accessibility in learning and working environments.

Year one of the implementation of our accessibility plan has also highlighted areas requiring continued attention. These include improving approaches to gathering input from students and staff in accessible ways, addressing barriers in the physical and built environment, and continuing to address attitudinal barriers that affect participation and access.

These areas, along with the actions set out in the Accessibility Plan, will inform planning and implementation in years two and three.