

How to Use the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool



Land acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the territories of the First Peoples of what is now known as British Columbia. We honour the many First Nations people who have lived on and cared for these lands for thousands of years and continue to do so today. We recognize the importance of their cultural heritage, laws, and relationships with the land that continue to shape, sustain, and enrich the province of British Columbia. We are committed to learning, understanding and respecting these connections, as well as to fostering meaningful relationships based on mutual respect and reconciliation.

Creating this resource







The British Columbia Council of Administrators of Inclusive Support in Education (BC CAISE), in partnership with Untapped Accessibility, Disability Alliance BC (DABC), and the Province of BC, have created this resource to support British Columbia school districts as they continue increasing the accessibility of all of their school sites.

BC CAISE would like to thank DABC and the Province of BC for supporting this project's funding. Thanks also to Untapped Accessibility for their support in its development, and the many educators, students, and families who contributed to and inspired the creation of this resource.

Legal disclaimer

This guide provides general information only as a reference to support school districts in meeting the requirements of Accessible BC Act. Each organization is responsible for understanding and complying with its legal obligations.

Accessibility statement

This guide is accessible to PDF/UA standards.



Foreword

Committed to the principle "Nothing About Us Without Us", BC CAISE and Untapped Accessibility worked to ensure people with disabilities were highly involved in the work which led to the creation of this resource. This commitment resulted in a resource development team where at least 80% of the members were professionals with lived experience with a broad range of disabilities.

We believe the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool will benefit all school districts in British Columbia as we work to make our schools and district facilities as accessible as possible for students, staff, families, and members of the community.

We are proud to share this guide and the accompanying Assessment Tool with educational leaders across B.C., and we are hopeful that their use will lead to more accessible schools across the province.

Colin Reid, adult with ADHD

President, BC CAISE

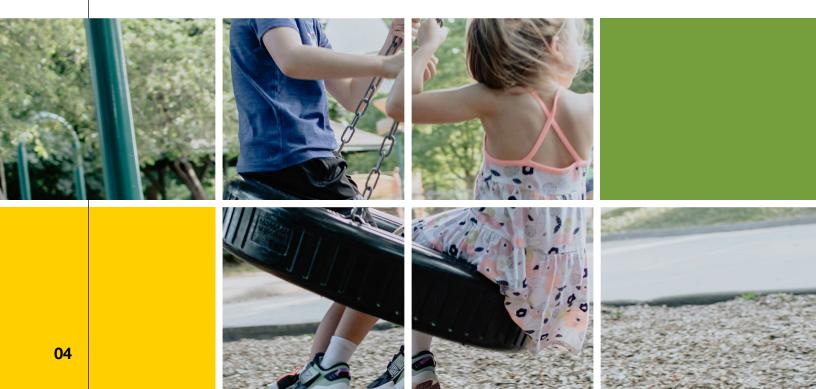


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Guide overview

Inclusive school environments are critical to an accessible future in B.C.. When students, staff, families, and community members experience and see meaningful inclusion at their school, they value and expect inclusion in the greater community. We developed this guide and the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool* to help you assess the accessibility of your school site as you work towards full inclusivity.

The How to Use the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool will help you use the actual assessment resource. Please review this guide prior to planning your school's accessibility assessment. This guide, and the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool, should be used in accordance with direction provided by your school district.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for school and district teams in British Columbia's K-12 education system who conduct school site accessibility assessments. This process is often coordinated or led by a school administrator or other educational leader. However, the information contained in this guide is relevant for all educators, students, and community members who are interested in making any educational setting more accessible.

Organizations outside of education or outside of B.C. are welcome to use this guide and may find it beneficial, however it is important to familiarize yourself with any local accessibility requirements, codes or legislation.

What is the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool?

The School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool is a practical instrument for measuring and addressing accessibility in schools so all students, teachers, family members, and caregivers can fully engage with the space. It supports school leaders to identify, assess, and record accessibility barriers so they can be addressed.







On the individual school level, the tool provides space to catalogue all types of barriers so accessibility action plans can be developed. The assessment process is also meant to ignite individual learning and conversation around physical, sensory, and social-emotional barriers and how to address them. At the district level, the tool can create an inventory of accessibility barriers that are present across schools. This can help districts prioritize decisions, funding, and actions on how to promote accessibility from a higher level.

How does the tool work?

The School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool guides users to consider school site accessibility in three areas: physical, sensory, and social-emotional.



Physical accessibility considerations

Physical accessibility considerations include anything related to the built environment that introduces physical barriers. For example, stairs without ramps, narrow doorways, inaccessible restrooms, and poor signage.



Sensory accessibility considerations

Sensory accessibility considerations include any barriers related to the sensory experience. For example, harsh lighting, strong scents, and loud noises can cause people to be over stimulated.



Social-emotional accessibility considerations

Social-emotional accessibility considerations include anything related to one's sense of belonging and being represented in a space. For example, posters, books, and other learnings materials that have no disability representation create learning and social inclusion barriers for students with disabilities.

Definitions and language considerations

The terms used in the *How to use the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool* and the *School Site Accessibility Tool* are reflective of those used in the Accessible BC Act, the Accessible Canada Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other provincial and federal legislation related to accessibility and disability rights. For example, we use "students with disabilities", "people with disabilities", and "staff members with disabilities" throughout this document. For more information and guidance on accessible and inclusive language, please see the *BC CAISE Guide for Developing Accessibility-Focused School District Policies and Reviewing Existing Policies Through an Accessibility Lens.*



How to Use the School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool

Conducting your assessment

Understand the context

Understanding societal context is a helpful first step in conducting your school site accessibility assessment. Whether you are assessing a school that is brand new or very old, you are likely to find many accessibility barriers. Over generations, our beliefs, and attitudes towards people with disabilities have resulted in exclusionary building codes, policies, and laws. Given that it took generations to create these exclusionary environments, it will take time to create inclusive ones. It's helpful to keep this in mind as you work through the assessment process.

This guide and the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool* will support you to begin assessing your school site towards full inclusion. It may feel overwhelming to uncover all the barriers that are present, so please remember the context in which you are working. Using these tools and going through the assessment process is an incredibly valuable first step to creating positive and lasting change to the accessibility of your school site.

Consider your audience

Schools are used by a diverse range of people. Often, when considering the accessibility of schools, we only think of students. While students are a critical part of our school systems, school sites must also be accessible to the staff, parents and caregivers, and community members who use the space.

Creating accessible environments for everyone is important from an access and equity perspective, but it's also crucial for creating a strong social-emotional learning environment. Students with disabilities deserve to see themselves represented in the staff, in the school and in the neighbourhood which together makes up their larger educational community. This level of representation only occurs when the environment is inclusive and accessible to all.

Consider your assessment team

The School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool considers the experience of using each space in a school environment. To conduct an honest and authentic evaluation of your school, you'll need individuals who navigate and interact with each space differently. This ensures various user-perspectives are represented.

While each school site varies in size, an ideal assessment team would consist of 4-8 individuals who bring diverse perspectives and include lived experience with the following:

- Physical and cognitive function,
- Sensory sensitivity, and
- Emotional regulation.

It's also important to ensure diverse age, race, and cultural representation. When possible, try to include a mix of students, caregivers, community members, and school personnel. Having someone who uses a support person and/or service animal can also be beneficial, especially when assessing space requirements.

The assessment team should have a leader who can look after the coordination and scheduling of the assessment process. They will be responsible for calling the introductory meeting and finding times for the assessment to occur. They may also manage the collection of all assessment forms, as well as the collation and sharing of findings.

Planning your introductory meeting

When you have assembled your assessment team and appointed a leader, you will need to schedule an introductory group meeting to review the assessment process and introduce the tool. The leader can coordinate scheduling and lead the in-person or virtual meeting.

We recommend that assessment team members review the tool and this guide in advance of the introductory meeting. This gives them an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the tools and process, and craft questions to bring to the meeting for discussion.

Example agenda for introductory meeting:

- Land acknowledgment
- Assessment team introductions
 - Name
 - Pronouns
 - Role at the school (student, teacher, administrator, parent etc.)
 - Discussion around why accessibility is meaningful to you
- Review of timeline, time commitment, and the School Site Accessibility

 Assessment Tool
- Time for questions or discussion related to the assessment tool and next steps

Scheduling your assessment sessions

Next, your group leader will create a schedule of assessment sessions. For smaller school sites, the full assessment may be completed on the same day as the introductory meeting. But for larger school sites, the process will likely require several sessions. Moving through the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool* can be cognitively, physically, and emotionally demanding for team members, so multiple shorter sessions are recommended.

Here are some examples of how you could break up the assessment sessions:

- 1 The assessment team can focus on one floor of the school per session, moving through the full *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool* for each floor.
- 2 The assessment team can focus on one or two sections of the tool per session, focusing on the entire school for each section.

Conducting your assessments

While each assessment team will have their own unique approach to each session, the following sequence of events is suggested:

- 1 Gather as a group and clarify the spaces you will be looking at that day.
- 2 Split your assessment team into two groups. Ensure each group has at least one person who can provide access to all needed spaces in the school (for example, they have keys to open classrooms and other spaces). Provide each group with a copy of the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool*. It may be helpful for each member of the team to have their own copy or a way to take individual notes.
- 3 Each group will move through each space and ideally, the two groups will not assess the same space at the same time. This will help each team complete their assessments independently, without the influence of the other group's decision making. It will also help to reduce distractions in the environment.
- 4 Each small group will designate one group member as their group leader. This person is responsible for moving the group through all items in each section.
- Each item is accompanied by a check box. All group members will conduct their own assessment of each item. If all group members agree that the item meets their needs, that item can be checked. If there is disagreement, the group will discuss and then decide if the item can be checked. If the group cannot come to agreement, they will highlight the point, make a note in the "Notes" column, and bring it to the larger assessment team discussion, which takes place at the end of the session. The group leader will ensure the group highlights the item if consensus is not reached within a reasonable timeline so the group can move on to a new item.
- When the assessment for the session is complete, each group will add together the number of items that were checked off and record that number in the checks section of the assessment tool.
- 7 When both groups have completed assessing all items in the assigned sections, the whole assessment team will come back together to discuss findings.
- 8 Each group will share their scores for each item section. When group scores are the same for item sections, the checked boxes and scores from that section are transferred to a new copy of the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool*. This copy will be the school's final completed version of the tool.
- 9 Where scores differ, each team will discuss their reasoning for their assessment of each item. If the assessment team can reach consensus on a score, that score will be recorded on the final copy of the *School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool*. If there's no consensus, the lower score will be recorded.
- Assessment team leader will collect the final School Site Accessibility

 Assessment Tool and collate the findings. See next section.

Sharing your findings

The results of this assessment are meant to inform internal accessibility planning for individual schools and larger-scale planning for whole school districts. Please refer to the direction from your District as to how and when the results of the assessment are shared or used for planning.

While the results of the assessment many identify areas where accessibility can be improved, it will also likely identify areas where accessibility is great. Communicating what accessibility features are currently available can be an impactful, shorter-term next step for your school community. Ensuring people know what accessibility features are available is just as important as having them in place. Consider if there are any areas where you could proactively communicate the accessibility features of your school to students, staff, parents and caregivers, and community members. Sharing information about your school's accessibility features through your school website can be a great way to communicate this information to your school community.

Engaging students in the assessment process

You may wish to involve the students more in the assessment and communication process (beyond having student representatives on your assessment team). For example, classrooms could do lessons around conducting their own assessment using a "student-friendly" tool. Schools could also help students create their own accessibility maps to complement the larger school site assessment data. For example, students would draw their routes into and through the school and identify any accessibility issues they face. Having students share their results with the school community could be part of how you communicate your findings.

Good luck on your accessibility journey!



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School Site Accessibility Assessment Tool



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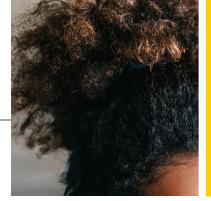
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Note: Individual sections may be photocopied to assess multiple similar spaces within a school

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Parking lots

Terms

Curb cut: A gently sloped ramp at sidewalk intersections, allowing smooth transition between sidewalk and road.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
Accessible parking spaces make up at least 10% of total spaces.		
Accessible spaces are 4.0 meters by 5.5 meters (13.1 feet by 18.0 feet). They are clearly identified with signs (painted signage on road and posted signage). They are near the building entrance.	/3	
People who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids can comfortably maneuver on the parking lot surface.		
Surface is smooth, hard, and level. It is free of large potholes and other tripping/wheel clipping hazards. Surface is consistently free of ice and other slip hazards.	/3	
People with low or impaired vision can move through the parking lot.		
The lot has good, consistent lighting day and night. There is no obvious light glare in the space.	/2	

Drop off areas are accessible.

Passengers can be dropped off in areas with curb cuts that are near all building entrances.

/1

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Pedestrians can safely move through the parking lot with minimal interact	ion with drive	ers.
There is a clear flow of traffic for pedestrians and vehicles. Crosswalks are clearly marked. There are pedestrian pathways throughout the parking lot.	/3	
Parking signage uses appropriate language.		
Signs read "accessible parking space" and not "handicapped parking".	/1	
People who require accessible parking spaces can always access them.		
Accessible spaces are respected and left open for people who need them. For example, they are not used for pick-up or drop off, or for snow storage during snow clearing.	/1	
When someone parks in an accessible space, the path they travel to get to	the building	entrance is clear and direct.
The path is unobstructed and accessible the whole way through. People can travel without passing through traffic. The path does not require the user to take a long detour. Vehicles parked in accessible spaces do not block curb cuts.	/4	



Outdoor play spaces

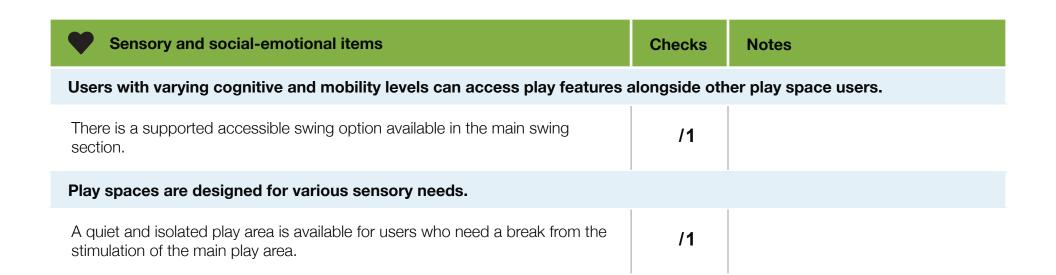
Terms

Play space: Any outdoor area where students engage in recreational activities, physical activity, or social interaction.

Play structure: Physical fixtures within the play space, like swings, platforms, slides, and climbing frames.

Accessible swings: Swings that are designed to support a broader range of children.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
Anyone who wishes to access the play space can travel to and throughout the space using a clear accessible path.		
The pathway has a smooth and level surface that is easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.		
It is free of large potholes and other tripping/wheel clipping hazards.	/4	
It is consistently free of ice and other slip hazards.	/-	
Rubber, short artificial turf or another accessible surface is used in play space instead of rocks, sand, or woodchips.		
Play structures are designed for accessibility.	'	
There are gently sloping ramps between and throughout structures.		
There's enough space for a wheelchair/mobility device user and a support person or service animal to move in all directions and turn around at any point.	/3	
All slides include an elevated flat projection at the bottom that allows users to exit in a comfortable seated position.		







Entrances and doors

Terms

Turning radius: The minimum space needed for an individual to make a complete turn. All people require a different turning radius. Wheelchairs, mobility devices and the presence of service animals and support people can impact turning radius.

Threshold: The sill of a door, much like a windowsill. A threshold usually causes a small, raised section at the bottom of the door that could be a tripping or wheel catch hazard.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
All entrances are designed for accessibility.		
Wherever stairs are required to access an entrance, a ramp and/or elevator is available.		
All main entrances have automatic double doors, or double doors that can open via a push button.	/4	
The foyer inside and outside the entrance is spacious and can accommodate various turning radius needs.		
Accessible doors are located close to the primary-use areas of the building.		

Everyone can use all doors throughout the school.	
All doors are at least 3 feet (approximately 1 meter) wide.	
They use low-force lever-style handles instead of twist doorknobs.	
Any thresholds have a warning strip and are sloped at a maximum of half an inch tall.	/5
Where possible, doors are automatic (use a sensor or push button).	
All self-closing mechanisms have a delay of 2-5 seconds.	

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Alternative entries are available.		
Anyone who requires a calm and quite entry into the building can access a separate entry that bypasses busy and noisy spaces.	/1	
Anyone who requires sensory-friendly and accessible routes can access a	school map	that highlights these features.
The map clearly marks accessible transportation features, like elevators and ramps.	12	
It marks all accessible bathrooms and water fountains.	/3	
It marks sensory-friendly building entrances and routes.		



Signage







Terms

Dual signage: The practice of displaying information or instructions in two languages or scripts. For example, English and Braille.

Signage: Any communication that dictates how to identify different areas and move through the space.

Matte: A type of surface texture or appearance that lacks gloss or shine.

Alternative text (also called alt text): A brief text description of an image, graphic, or other non-text content. It is used to provide information about the content and function of the image for individuals who are unable to see it.

Person first language: A way of speaking or writing about people that emphasizes their personhood before mentioning their condition or another distinguishing feature. For example, referring to someone as a "person with a disability". Some people prefer this language, as it emphasizes that they are more than their disability.

Identity first language: A way of speaking or writing about people that emphasizes their condition or another distinguishing feature as the primary identifier. For example, referring to someone as a "disabled person". Some people prefer this language, as it acknowledges the significance of disability in shaping their identity.

Physical items	Checks
Dual signage is available throughout the building.	
Dual signage is present throughout the building.	
Written components of signage use clear and readable fonts that have high contrast.	
All braille and tactile components of signage are consistent.	
Audio cues accompany signage where appropriate (for example, audio descriptions or QR codes that trigger audio playback on mobile devices).	/7
All signage uses matte or another non-reflective surface.	
All language and graphics used in signage are simple, clear, and concise.	
There is consistency in the design and placement of signage throughout the building.	

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
All signage displays appropriate and respectful messaging.		
Language and imagery are respectful and do not stigmatize or exclude.		
For more information on accessible and inclusive language, please see the BC CAISE Guide for Developing Accessibility-Focused School District Policies and Reviewing Existing Policies Through an Accessibility Lens.	/1	



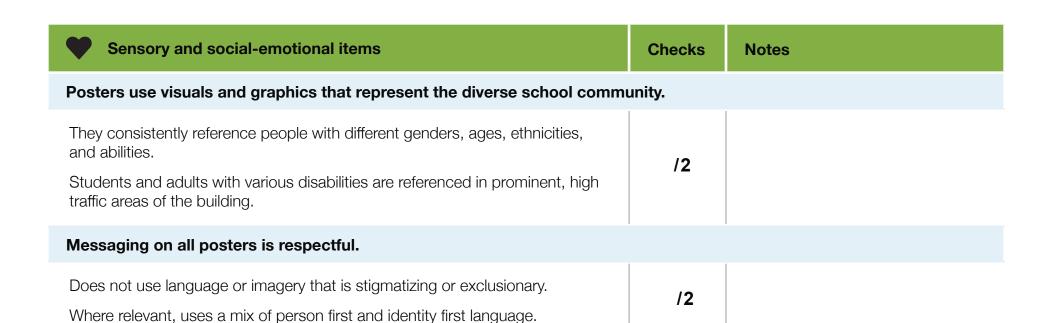
Posters, Art, Photos and Visual Displays

For this section, you will need to consider all posters throughout your school, including posters in classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, bathrooms, etc.

Terms

Posters, Art, Photos and Visual Display: Any communication tool that shares information beyond how to identify spaces and navigate through the area. These could include event posters, flyers, or brochures.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
All posters include accessible design features.		
All written text uses clear and readable fonts that have high contrast. Posters use matte or another non-reflective surface. All language and graphics are simple, clear, and concise.	/4	
There are QR codes beside posters that take you to a digital, screen-reader friendly version of the poster (that includes alternative text for visuals), or trigger audio playback on a mobile device.		







Stairs, ramps, hallways, and elevators

Terms

Tread: The horizontal flat part of the stair that a person uses to "step-up" or "step-down".

Nosing: When the surface material of the tread of a stair has an overhang.

Clearance space (water fountain): The space under an accessible water fountain that allows a wheelchair user to approach from the front, sliding their legs and/or bottom portion of their chair underneath the fountain.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
Users navigating the school site can access ramps and stairwells that are designed for accessibility.		
Ramps and stairwells are highly visible, free of obstructions, and have good, consistent lighting with no glare.		
Ramp surfaces and the tread on all steps are non-slip.		
Access Ramp signs indicate all ramps that are available.		
Ramp inclines are a reasonable angle that is safe yet effective.	/7	
Long ramps include flat sections at regular intervals.		
Tread and nosing of stairs have high contrast or warning strips.		
A map showing the accessible pathways in the school is available from the main office or near the main entrance.		

People with varying mobility can comfortably navigate all hallways.

Hallways are wide enough to accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and at least one support person or service animal.

There is good, consistent lighting throughout the length of the hallway, with no glare.

Hallways are clear of clutter, furniture, and other obstructions like rugs or thick carpets that could impede movement, cause tripping or wheel catch hazards.

Floor material is non-slip.

Long hallways include rest areas with seating options.

/5

All elevators are designed for accessibility.

The elevator car can comfortably accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and at least one support person or service animal.

Elevator cars contain handrails.

Controls can be accessed from a seated and standing position.

All controls use dual signage with clear tactile indicators.

Visual and auditory signals indicate floor level and other messaging.

Visual and auditory signals indicate when the elevator has arrived, which direction it is moving, and when the doors are opening or closing.

There are emergency communication devices inside all elevators that are accessible from seated and standing positions.

When elevator doors open to every level, the elevator car's floor is flush with the building's floor.

/8

Water fountains are designed for accessibility.	
Fountains are available at a level that is accessible from a standing and seated position.	
All fountains have appropriate clearance space.	/4
The surface under all foundations is perfectly level.	/ -
All fountain controls are easy to reach and operate for users with limited hand dexterity or mobility.	

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Elevators and ramps are well positioned throughout the building.		
Users have clear and direct access to all needed spaces without having to take long detours.	/1	
People with sensory sensitivities can comfortably use all elevators.		
Noise is minimal through use of quiet elevator mechanisms or sound- dampening materials.		
The lighting is soft and diffused.	/3	
The elevator's motion is smooth and predictable (no sudden stops, jerky movements, or irregular motion patterns).		



Washrooms

Room number or name:

Physical items	Checks	Notes
Users who require an accessible washroom can access one.		
The door to the washroom is automatic, activated by a push button, or accessible in another way (for example, it remains in an open position for 3-5 seconds). The accessible washroom comfortably accommodates one power or manual wheelchair user and at least one support person or service animal. A change table is available in a size that is appropriate for the space (for example, adult change table for a high school washroom). The toilet seat lid opens from the front and can be used as a backrest. The toilet paper and sanitary disposal are easily within reach from a seated position on the toilet. The emergency call button is within reach on and off the toilet. The flushing control does not require the user to reach across the toilet.	/7	
People with varying mobility needs can comfortably navigate all washroom	n spaces.	
There is ample space between the stalls and the wash space. Stall doors swing away from the toilet to open. All garbage cans are open, with no lids that require hand or foot activation to open. Any sanitary products are easily accessible from a seated and standing position.	/4	

People with varying mobility needs can comfortably use the wash space.

Sinks can be accessed from varying heights and positions.

Users can change water temperature using lever handles on the faucet.

The mirror has a floor length section or a section above the sinks that is angled so full reflection can always be viewed.

Soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features are easily accessible from varying heights and positions.

Access to soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features do not require an individual to travel across the room with wet hands.

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Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
People with sensory sensitivities can comfortably utilize the washroom.		
Lighting is not overly bright or can be dimmed.		
Flushing is manual and relatively quiet.		
Various hand-drying systems are available, including alternatives to noisy air dryers like paper towel dispensers.	/5	
Unscented cleaning products are used to clean the space.		
Private, single-occupancy washroom spaces are available.		



Classrooms, science rooms, mechanical/technical shop areas, and computer rooms

soom number or name:	_
Physical items	Checks
Students have a variety of desk and seating options.	
Wobble chairs/stools, rocker chairs, standing desks, bean bag chafloor cushions are available.	airs, and/or
Movement tools are available and can be added to any student-us space (for example, Bouncybands).	
Students with varying mobility needs can comfortably move	through and utilize the sp
Classroom furniture and equipment is arranged in such a way that space for mobility aids, support people, and/or service animals.	allows
The space facilitates free movement and student exploration (for emovement between desks).	xample,
Students using mobility devices can access tables and workspace that works for them.	
Work surfaces have no glare.	/7
The surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other a mobility devices to move on.	ssistive
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.	
The space is free of obstructions that can cause tripping and when hazards.	el clipping

Room number or name:		
Any washroom in a classroom is designed for accessibility – or there is an	accessible v	vashroom nearby.
The toilet is appropriately sized for the user (for example, children's classrooms use children's sized toilets).		
A change table is available in a size that is appropriate for the space (for example, children's change table for an elementary/preschool washroom).		
The washroom can comfortably accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and a support person or service animal.	/6	
The toilet seat lid opens from the front and can be used as a backrest.		
Flushing control does not require the user to reach across the toilet.		
Appropriate support tools are available (for example, step stools for children).		
Classroom sinks are designed for accessibility.		
Sinks can be comfortably accessed from varying heights and positions.		
Users can change water temperature using lever handles on faucet.		
Mirror has floor length section or a section above the sinks that is angled so full reflection can always be viewed.	/5	

reflection can always be viewed.

Soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features are easily

accessible from varying heights and positions.

Access to soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features do not require an individual to travel across the room with wet hands.

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes	
People with sensory sensitivities can comfortably use the space.			
All classroom lighting has a dimming feature. Noise reduction tools are available (for example, headphones). Sensory-friendly safety equipment is available (for example noise cancelling headphones, sensory-friendly gloves and masks). Fidgets and other attention aides are available.	/4		
Students with varying sensory needs can access regulation spaces when needed.			
Quiet spaces are available in proximity to the classroom.	/1		
Classroom layout and experience considers trauma-informed care.			
Room exits are always visible and accessible. There is a clear and direct pathway to an exit from all room locations. Various seating locations are available. Special attention paid to closing and locking doors.	/4		
Students with all learning/communication styles and needs have what they need to fully engage in classroom activities			
Assistive technology is available when needed to support student success (for example, switches to operate equipment, tools, and technology).	/1		



Sensory spaces

Room number or name:	
----------------------	--

Physical items	Checks	
Students can access a dedicated sensory-friendly space that supports	their sensory n	е
Room is organized and free of clutter.		
Lighting is adjustable.		
Room is quiet (ambient noise from hallways or classrooms is minimal).	/5	
Room is scent-free, including food-related scents.		
Visuals of available activities are present.		

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Students have access to equipment that supports their sensory needs.		
Noise cancelling headphones are available. Music or other auditory stimulation is available.		
Equipment is available to facilitate physical movement such as rocking or swinging.	/4	
Compression and weighted items are available with specific recommendations and instructions for use from District staff.		



Gymnasiums and athletic facilities

Room number or name:		
Physical items	Checks	Notes
People with varying mobility needs can comfortably move in all areas, incl spaces, and other athletic facilities.	uding the gyr	mnasium, changerooms, office
All doors throughout the space are wide enough to accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and one support person or service animal.		
All other spaces can comfortably accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and at least one support person or service animal.		
Spaces are free of clutter and other obstructions that can cause tripping and wheel clipping hazards.	/6	
Surface throughout the space is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.		
Non-slip flooring is used throughout, particularly in areas where moisture may be present (near water fountains or showers).		
There is good, consistent lighting throughout, with no glare.		

Seating is designed for accessibility.

There is designated wheelchair seating that offers a clear line of sight to the space/area of interest.

Ramps or elevators are available for any seating that requires spectators and participants to move up or down a level.

There is extra movement space surrounding all accessible seats for support people and/or service animals.

Companion seats for support people are available in proximity to wheelchair seating.

All other seating offers sufficient space between seats to accommodate mobility aids, like a cane or walker, and a service animal.

Handrails are available throughout the seating area.

A least one accessible shower stall in the change room is available.

There is a sturdy, slip-resistant shower seat and grab bars securely mounted throughout the stall.

The showerhead is adjustable to accommodate different heights and mobility levels.

A handheld showerhead is also available.

Shower controls are accessible from seated and standing positions and are easy to operate for individuals with limited dexterity or reach.

Soap holder is indented into the wall and accessible from a seated position.

/6

All users can access the weight room.

Adaptive exercise equipment is available (for example, hand cycle machine).

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
People with varying comfort levels can use the shower space.		
Shower stalls offer sufficient privacy and dignity for all users.	/1	





Performance and multipurpose spaces

Room number or name:		
Physical items	Checks	Notes
All people can comfortably navigate all areas, including main gathering ar concessions.	eas, stages, k	packstage areas, and
All areas accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and a support person or service animal.		
Areas are spacious, free of clutter, and easy to move around in.		
The surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.	/6	
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.		
Areas are free of obstructions and other tripping and wheel clipping hazards, like rugs or carpets.		
There is good, consistent lighting throughout, with no glare.		
All stage access points are designed for accessibility.		
If there are stairs used to access the stage, a ramp or elevator is also available.	/1	

Seating is designed for accessibility.

There is designated wheelchair seating that offers a clear line of sight to the stage.

Ramps or elevators are available for any seating that requires spectators and participants to move up or down a level.

There is extra movement space surrounding all accessible seats for support people and/or service animals.

Companion seats for support people or service animals are available in proximity to wheelchair seating.

All other seating offers sufficient space between seats to accommodate mobility aids, like a cane or walker, and a service animal.

Designated quiet spaces, headphones, or earmuffs are available during

Handrails are available throughout the seating area.

/6

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Sensory experiences can be anticipated and adjusted where appropriate.		
Clear communication is available on what sensory elements to expect for all performances and events.		
Flexible seating is available so individuals can choose where to orient themselves in the space.		
Sensory-friendly performances and events are offered (for example, performances that use dimmed lighting and reduced sound levels, and provide the option to move around).	/5	
Assistive listening devices are available for performances or events.		

performances and events.



Cafeteria

Physical items	Checks	Notes
All people can comfortably navigate all areas, including seating areas, foo	d preparatior	areas, concessions, and serving
Spaces are spacious, free of clutter, and easy to move around in.		
Spaces can accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and a support person or service animal.		
The surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.	/6	
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.		
The space is free of obstructions that can cause tripping and wheel clipping hazards.		
There is good, consistent lighting throughout, with no glare.		
All people can comfortably utilize the serving counter, food preparation apseating areas from standing and seated positions.	pliances (for	example, microwaves), and
Serving counter is accessible from a seated and standing position.		
All appliances are accessible from a seated and standing position.	/3	
A variety of seating and table options are available throughout the space, including wheelchair accessible tables.		

Menus and signage are accessible.

Written text uses clear and readable fonts.

Text size is large enough to be legible from a distance.

There are no bright flashy lights or complicated visuals to display food.

There is high contrast between text and visuals.

Tactile elements (for example, raised lettering or Braille) and audio cues are used where appropriate (for example, audio descriptions or QR codes that trigger audio playback on mobile devices).

Menus use materials that are matte or another non-reflective surface with minimal glare.

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
People can navigate through all spaces in a calm and coordinated manne	r.	
Space is organized in a clear and orderly manner. Signage and floor markings indicate the flow of traffic.		
Wait areas have well designed line systems (for example, lines do not extend into common movement pathways).	/4	
A quiet and isolated eating space is available (and well marked with signage) for users who need a break from the stimulation of the main area.		



Library

Physical items	Checks	Notes
All people can comfortably navigate all areas.		
All areas are spacious, free of clutter, and easy to move around in.		
All areas can accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and one support person and/or service animal.		
The surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.	/6	
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.		
Areas are free of obstructions that can cause tripping and wheel clipping hazards.		
There is good, consistent lighting throughout, with minimal glare.		
A variety of seating and table options are available throughout the space.		
Accessible/adjustable tables are available.	/2	
Accessible computer stations are available.	12	

People with varying mobility, learning, and communications needs can access books and other library resources that meet their needs.

Books and other resources are accessible from varying heights and positions.

Books and other resources are available in accessible formats (for example, large print books, audiobooks, and Braille).

Librarians are trained to assist people in locating and accessing all types of books and resources that are available, including alternative formats.

Assistive devises are available and well-maintained (for example, magnifiers, hearing loops, large print keyboards, and screen readers).

Rolling baskets are available for easy transport of books and belongings.

/5

V	

Sensory and social-emotional items

Checks

Notes

Sensory-friendly spaces are available throughout the library, including meetings rooms that can be personalized for sensory preferences.

Lighting has dimming function.

Height adjustable table.

Includes tools to create a calming atmosphere (for example, a star projector or fidget tools).

Students and adults with various disabilities are featured as lead characters in a wide variety of resources

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Staff rooms, home economic rooms, and teaching kitchens

Room number or name:		
When assessing home economic rooms or teaching kitchens, please also complete stechnical shop areas and computer rooms.	section 8. Clas	srooms, science rooms, mechanical/
Terms		
Clearance space (electric cooktop): The space under the table that holds the electrouse the cooktop from the front, sliding their legs and/or bottom portion of their characteristics confortable and safe, as it allows the person to use the electric cooktop without having	ir underneath	the table surface. This positioning is
Physical items	Checks	Notes
All people can comfortably navigate all areas, including seating areas, food	d preparation	areas, and serving areas.
All areas are spacious, free of clutter, and easy to move around in.		
Can accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and one support person and/or service animal.		
The surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.		
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.	/7	
All areas are free of obstructions that can cause tripping and wheel clipping hazards.		
There is good, consistent lighting throughout, with minimal glare.		
A variety of seating and table options are available throughout the space, including accessible tables with space for wheelchairs.		

Kitchenette has accessible tools and appliances.

Stovetop controls can be accessed from a seated position, or an electric cook top is available at an accessible height with appropriate clearance space.

All appliance controls include tactile controls, raised markings, and/or Braille to indicate function.

Sinks can be comfortably accessed from varying heights and positions.

Users can change sink water temperature using lever handles on faucet.

Soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features are easily accessible from varying heights and positions.

Access to soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features do not require an individual to travel across the room with wet hands.

Microwave, toaster over, and all other countertop appliances are accessible from seating and standing positions.

First Aid kit is easily accessible from a standing and seated position.

Assistive technology is available when needed to support student success (for example, switches to operate equipment, tools, and technology).

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes
Areas include accessibility features for staff with sensory sensitivities.		
A quiet area/private space is accessible to staff from all staff rooms and administrative areas.	/1	



Emergency preparedness

Terms

Muster area: A designated location where individuals gather after evacuating a building or area.

Physical items	Checks	Notes
Emergency exits are designed for accessibility.		
There are audible warning devices and textured handles on all emergency exits.	/1	
Audio announcements and instructions are accessible to varying commun	ication needs	S.
They are accompanied by visual cues (for example, fire alarms include flashing/blinking lights).	/1	
All emergency evacuation plans are designed for accessibility.		
There are sections for individuals using wheelchairs and other mobility aids and individuals who use assistive technology, support people, and service animals.		
All evacuation routes are clearly marked and accessible throughout	/4	
Any emergency shelters or muster areas are accessible and account for support people and service animals.	/	
There are evacuation chairs or other tools available to assist people with wheelchairs and other mobility aids when evacuating up or down floor levels.		

Emergency plans include sensory considerations.

All auditory alarms are sensory-friendly (for example, they emit a softer sound).

Headphones and/or earmuffs are available in emergency situations to help mitigate sensory overload during emergencies.

Quiet spaces are available within emergency shelters and muster areas.

Other sensory tools are easily accessible during emergency situations (for example, weighted blankets and vests, and fidget toys).





Office spaces

Room number or name:

Physical items	Checks	Note		
Staff members have a variety of desk and seating options				
Standing desks are available when required.				
Desks and chairs throughout the office are ergonomic.	/3			
All staff are made aware of accessibility seating options.				
Staff members with varying mobility needs can comfortably move through and utilize				
Furniture and equipment are arranged in such a way that allows space for mobility aids, support people, and/or service animals.				
Staff members using mobility devices can access tables and workspaces at a height that works for them.				
Reception desk is accessible from a seated and standing position.				
Work surfaces have no glare.	/7			
The floor surface is level and easy for wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive mobility devices to move on.				
Non-slip flooring is used throughout.				
The space is free of obstructions that can cause tripping and wheel clipping hazards.				

Any washroom in an office space is designed for accessibility – or there is	s an accessib	ble washı
The washroom can comfortably accommodate one power or manual wheelchair user and a support person or service animal.		
The toilet seat lid opens from the front and can be used as a backrest.	/3	
Flushing control does not require the user to reach across the toilet.		
Any sinks in an office space are designed for accessibility.		
Sinks can be comfortably accessed from varying heights and positions.		
Users can change water temperature using lever handles on faucet.		
Mirror has floor length section or a section above the sinks that is angled so full reflection can always be viewed.		
Soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features are easily accessible from varying heights and positions.	/5	
Access to soap and towel dispensers and other hand drying features do not require an individual to travel across the room with wet hands.		

Sensory and social-emotional items	Checks	Notes			
People with sensory sensitivities can comfortably use the space.					
All office lighting has a dimming feature. Noise reduction tools are available (for example, headphones). Fidgets and other attention aides are available.	/3				
Staff members with varying sensory needs can access regulation spaces when needed.					
Quiet spaces are available in proximity to office spaces.	/1				



Glossary

Accessible swings

Swings that are designed to support a broader range of children.

Alternative text (also known as alt text)

A brief text description of an image, graphic, or other non-text content. Alt text is used to provide information about the content and function of the image for individuals who are unable to see it.

Clearance space (electric cooktop)

The space under the table that holds the electric cooktop. This space allows a wheelchair user to use the cooktop from the front, sliding their legs and/or bottom portion of their chair underneath table surface. This positioning is comfortable and safe, as it allows the person to use the electric cooktop without having to stretch their body over the hot elements.

Clearance space (water fountain)

The space under an accessible water fountain that allows a wheelchair user to approach from the front, sliding their legs and/or bottom portion of their chair underneath the fountain. This allows them to use the fountain without having to awkwardly stretch their body towards the water stream.

Curb cut

A curb cut is a gently sloped ramp at sidewalk intersections, allowing smooth transition between sidewalk and road.

Dual signage

The practice of displaying information or instructions in two languages or scripts. For example, English and Braille.

Identity first language

A way of speaking or writing about people that emphasizes their condition or distinguishing feature as the primary identifier. For example, referring to someone as a "disabled person". Some disabled people prefer this language, as it acknowledges the significance of the disability in shaping that individual's experience and identity.

Matte

A type of surface texture or appearance that lacks gloss or shine.

Muster area

A designated location where individuals gather after evacuating a building or area.

Nosing (stairs)

When the surface material of the tread of a stair has an overhang.

Person first language

A way of speaking or writing about people that emphasizes their personhood before mentioning their condition or other distinguishing feature. For example, referring to someone as a "person with a disability". Some people with disabilities prefer this language, as it emphasizes that they are more than their disability.

Play space

Any outdoor area where students engage in recreational activities, physical activity, social interaction. This could include fields, athletic courts etc.

Play structure

Physical fixtures within the play space, like swings, platforms, slides and climbing frames.

Posters

Any communication tool that shares information beyond how to identify spaces and navigate through the area. These could include event posters, flyers, or brochures.

Sensory-friendly space

An environment that is created to reduce sensory overload and promote comfort and relaxation. Key features include low sensory input like dim lighting, comfortable seating, and neutral colours. Some sensory-friendly spaces include sensory tools like fidget toys, weighted blankets, and noise cancelling headphones.

Signage

Any communication that dictates how to identify different areas and move through the space.

Threshold

The sill of a door, much like a windowsill. A threshold usually causes a small, raised section at the bottom of the door that could be a tripping or wheel catch hazard.

Tread (stairs)

The part of the stair that a person will use to "step-up" or "step-down".

Turning radius

The minimum space needed for an individual to make a complete turn. All people require a different turning radius. Wheelchairs, mobility devices and the presence of service animals and support people can impact turning radius.

