

**Kootenay Christian Academy School
3 Year Accessibility Plan**

2026/27 to 2028/29

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	3
Territorial Acknowledgement	3
About Our School Community	3
A Message from the Administrator	4
SECTION 2: FRAMEWORK GUIDING OUR WORK	6
Global Context – United Nations	
Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	
B.C. Context and Legislation - Accessible B.C. Act	
Our Commitment to Accessibility:	
Our Approach:	
SECTION 3: THE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE	10
Purpose of the Accessibility Committee	
Recruitment to the Accessibility Committee	
Accessibility Committee Membership	
SECTION 4: CONSULTATION CONDUCTED	12
SECTION 5: ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK TOOL	13
SECTION 6: ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND BARRIERS	14
Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Accomplishments Identified	
Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified	
SECTION 7: OUR THREE-YEAR PLAN (2023-2026)	18
SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION	23
SECTION 9: HOW TO GIVE US FEEDBACK ABOUT THE PLAN	23
SECTION 10: APPENDICES	24
Appendix A: About Disability	
Appendix B: Suggested References/Resources	
Appendix C: Universal Supports	

Section 1: Introduction

Territorial Acknowledgement

Kootenay Christian School is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Ktunaxa People. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

About Our School Community

Located in Cranbrook, BC, our school is deeply rooted in Christian principles and is attached to a church that serves families from the general public aligned with our shared value system. As an independent school, we proudly educate close to 3000 students from pre-kindergarten to grade 12. Our reach extends beyond Cranbrook, catering to municipalities from Creston to Skookumchuck, all from our single campus.

In addition to the core curriculum, we offer a variety of enriching programs such as Music, French, Drama and Outdoor Education. These programs not only enhance our students' academic experiences but also contribute to their holistic development. Our goal is to establish a reputation as the epitome of a Christ-like character in education, open to all who seek a Christian-centered learning environment.

We envision our school as a beacon in our city, widely recognized and esteemed for our commitment to community engagement and inclusivity. At the heart of our mission are highly competent staff dedicated to nurturing passionate learners. We strive to cultivate an environment where every individual feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive academically, spiritually, and socially. By embodying Christ-like virtues and fostering a culture of compassion, respect, and service, we aim to make a meaningful impact within our school community and beyond.

At our school, we seek staff members who are committed to our Christian values and dedicated to nurturing the holistic development of our students. Our staff are passionate educators with a strong sense of purpose and a genuine desire to make a positive impact in the lives of young learners. They possess excellent interpersonal skills, fostering a supportive and inclusive

learning environment where every student feels valued and respected. Our staff are innovative and adaptable, embracing opportunities for professional growth and collaboration. They demonstrate integrity, compassion, and a servant-hearted approach to education, embodying the love and teachings of Christ in all aspects of their work. Whether they are teachers, administrators, or support staff, our team members are united in their commitment to providing high-quality, Christ-centered education to our diverse community of students. Currently, we have about 20 teaching staff and 30 support/non-teaching staff.

A Message from the Administrator

At Kootenay Christian Academy, we are committed to providing a learning and working environment that supports all students and staff and provides equitable opportunities to support our diverse community. A key element to supporting our community is the development of a Three-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan identifies system needs, priorities, and action plans, and draws on feedback from our school community and the work of the Accessibility Committee to enhance equity of access to programming and our facilities.

We recognize the importance of accessibility not only for those with disabilities but also for the benefit of the entire community. We are committed to advancing the efforts of KCA to improve equity and ease of access to services, as well as access to our facilities. Through the actions in this Accessibility Plan, we commit to continuous improvements in developing an environment that supports all students, staff, and the larger 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 architectural, attitudinal, information, communications, policy or practice, and technological barriers. Types of barriers:

- 1. Architectural Barrier:** A barrier resulting from building design, the area adjacent to the building, the shape of rooms, the size of doorways, and so on.
- 2. 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.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Information Barrier:** A barrier that arises from inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, and so on.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Technological Barrier:** Barriers resulting from computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones, and switches, including the lack of assistive technologies.

- 7. Temporal Barrier:** Barriers that occur during a specific time, such as busy times of day or during special events.
- 8. 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.](#))
- 9. Impairment:** A physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic.

Section 2: Framework Guiding Our Work

The Kootenay Christian Academy's accessibility plan builds on global, national, provincial and school-specific actions to promote and support accessibility.

Global Context – United Nations

In recent years, there has been an emphasis on increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workplace and within the larger community. The United Nations has been instrumental in leading the importance of disability as a global health issue. In 2006, the United Nations led efforts to adopt the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In 2010, Canada ratified the CRPD and described the CRPD as follows:

“The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights 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 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are required to promote and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities including full equality under the law.”

Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Canada-wide, around one in five people had some form of disability in 2017. Nationally, Canadian accessibility legislation started in 1985 when disability was included in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in 1986, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) were included in the new federal Employment Equity Act. The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) came into force in 2019, with the overarching goal of realizing a barrier-free Canada by 2040. This act applies to federally regulated entities. The ACA has seven focus areas, and

was developed based on the following guiding principles:

- 1.** All persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities.
- 2.** All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities.
- 3.** All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities.
- 4.** All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities.
- 5.** Laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons.
- 6.** PWDs must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.
- 7.** The development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for PWDs.

B.C. Context and Legislation - Accessible B.C. Act

The Accessible British Columbia Act was enacted in June 2021, and initially, the accessibility planning requirements only applied to provincial government organizations.

The Accessible British Columbia Regulation, under the Accessible British Columbia Act, came into force on September 1, 2022. These regulations identify schools as accessible organizations, and school districts and independent schools will be required to have an Accessibility Committee, an Accessibility Plan, and a tool to receive feedback on accessibility by September 1, 2023:

The goal of the act is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and involve them in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to their full participation in the life of the province.

Principles in the Accessible B.C. Act:

The Accessible B.C. Act includes a list of principles that must be considered as organizations develop an accessibility plan. The Definitions are adapted from the foundational document [BC Framework for Accessibility Legislation](#).

- 1. Adaptability:** Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change as services, technology, and attitudes change.
- 2. Collaboration:** Promoting accessible communities is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play. Accessibility plans should create opportunities for Organizations and communities to work together to promote access and inclusion.
- 3. Diversity:** Every person is unique. People with disabilities are individuals with varied backgrounds. Individual characteristics and lived experience greatly inform the experiences of individuals. Accessibility plans should acknowledge the principle of diversity and need within the disability community.
- 4. Inclusion:** All British Columbians, including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equally in their communities.
- 5. Self-Determination:** Accessibility plans should seek to empower people with disabilities to make their own choices and pursue the lives they wish to live.
- 6. Universal Design:** The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design defines Universal Design as “the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.” An accessibility plan should be designed to meet the needs of all people who interact with the Organization.

Our Commitment to Accessibility:

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 Kootenay Christian Academy, 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, design, and effort in ensuring that barriers are removed, and accessibility is increased.

Our school is committed to working collaboratively with the community to provide equitable treatment to 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 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 disabilities.

Our Approach:

At Kootenay Christian Academy, 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 community. This process involved:

- Calling for applications for members of the Accessibility Committee
- Assessing the current physical and architectural accessibility of our school.
- Conducting surveys to understand the issues, challenges, and priorities of stakeholders within our school community
- Holding key discussions to identify barriers to accessibility

- Prioritization of actions to be taken
- Establishing a monitoring and evaluation process

Our approach is designed to recognize the gaps and opportunities to improve accessibility in our school community. By engaging in thoughtful planning, meaningful engagement, training, and direct action, we aim to deliver lasting accessibility improvements for all members of our community.

Section 3: The Accessibility Committee

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 school 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.

Recruitment to the Accessibility Committee

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.

A callout for applications to the Accessibility Committee was conducted in May 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 are listed below.

Accessibility Committee Membership

Committee Member	Position/Representation
Darren Spyksma	Director of Learning, Society of Christian Schools in BC (SCSBC)
Amanda Broadway	- Associate Director of Learning/Inclusive Education, Society of Christian Schools in BC (SCSBC) - Parent of children with accessibility needs
Davianna Haslam	Student Services Coordinator
Stacey Spyksma	Manager of Student Services
Ashlie Meldrum	Educational Assistant/ Métis/Parent of children with accessibility needs
Pam Reutgen	Educational Assistant/ Parent of children with accessibility needs
Andrea Gotaas	School Counsellor
Sarah Smith	Speech and Language Pathologist
Sarah Holmes	Teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TDHH)

Section 4: Consultation Conducted

Barrier-identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Committee used the following barrier-identification methods:

Methodology	Description	Completed	To be reassessed
Audit of practices	A review of current practices that promote accessibility and inclusion was conducted by key staff members.	May 2024	2026/27 School year
Survey to Staff	An accessibility survey was developed and distributed to staff.	May 2024	2026/27 School year
Survey to Parents/Guardians	An accessibility survey was developed and distributed to parents/guardians.	May 2024	2026/27 School year
School Physical Accessibility Audit	An Assessment of School Physical Accessibility was developed. An audit team was identified, and they conducted the School Physical Accessibility Audit.	June 2024	2026/27 School year
Accessibility Committee	The Accessible Committee reviewed the input and feedback from the survey, Physical Accessibility Audit, and the Universal Supports Checklist. The Committee collaborated to suggest priority areas to target in the Accessibility Plan. This was shared with administrators and the Board, who gave the final approval of priority areas for the plan.	June 2024	2026/27 School year

Section 5: Accessibility Feedback Tool

Kootenay Christian Academy developed an online feedback tool that included a series of questions about accessibility experiences that students, staff and members of the school community could complete. The tool was posted to the main page of the school website and an information announcement about the tool was provided to students, staff, and parents/guardians. Feedback could be anonymous, or people could add their names and contact information if they wished to be contacted.

A survey will be reissued in the 2026-2027 school year and the data gathered will be used to further develop, adjust and expand upon the goals listed below.

The following are the contents of the online Accessibility Feedback Tool.

Report an Accessibility Barrier or Support

At Kootenay Christian Academy, we want to learn about specific support and barriers that people face when they are trying to:

- Access a school program, building or school information
- Receive a service or support

The Accessibility Committee will review feedback and it will be used for the revision of future accessibility planning. If you need accommodation for your student or if this is an urgent matter, please contact the school directly.

1. Which group(s) do you most identify with?
 - ☐ Individuals with an accessibility need
 - ☐ Student with an accessibility need
 - ☐ Caregiver for an individual with an accessibility need
 - ☐ Service Provider/Therapist outside of school
 - ☐ Staff member
 - ☐ Other
2. Please provide the date the barrier was experienced.
3. Please select the location where the barrier was experienced.
4. What were you or someone you know trying to access?
5. Accessibility barrier details (be as specific as possible).
6. Do you have any recommendations for what would make it better?

7. What are some helpful supports you have experienced at school?
8. Is there anything else you'd like the adults at school to know?
9. Do you wish to be contacted about your responses? Yes No
If yes, please provide your name and email or phone number.

All responses submitted will be checked and considered for future versions of the Accessibility Plan. Thank you for providing your valuable feedback!

Section 6: Accessibility Accomplishments and Barriers

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Accomplishments Identified

The guiding principles of inclusive practice inform school programs, policies, practices, and services to reduce and minimize barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. We strive to create an environment that is accessible and to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

There are several initiatives at our school to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. The following is a synopsis of some of the major achievements noted in the feedback:

Learning

1. Several key universal supports were identified as being successfully implemented in classrooms.
2. The school's efforts toward inclusion and accessibility to learning was recognized by many respondents.

Physical and Architectural Environment

1. Our school conducted a Physical and Architectural Environment Audit to identify areas of physical accessibility and areas for improvement in the physical and architectural environment of the school.
2. The school has invested in several upgrades to existing facilities to new standards that support accessible school communities. Investments have been targeted to upgrade washroom accessibility and ramps at the top of the stairs.

Resources

1. The library maintains a suite of documents accessible to school staff outlining the various methods by which the librarian can support student and staff requests for accessible library resources such as audiobooks, high-interest/low-vocabulary books, and closed-captioned videos.
2. Several respondents mentioned the benefits of technological support, including FM systems, access to technology devices such as Chromebooks and tablets. These resources contribute to enhancing the learning experience for students.

School Policy and Practice

1. Adaptations for Students:
 - The school continues to assess student accommodation requirements on a case-by-case basis and uses all relevant information to respond to each scenario.
 - The school has established practices and procedures by which adaptations are offered throughout the school.
2. Mental Health and Well-being Supports
 - The school recognizes the importance of the mental health and well-being of its students and staff. Initiatives have taken place to assess and improve the mental health and well-being of students and staff to ensure support and positive outcomes.
 - Training programs are offered to staff to promote student mental health and improve personal mental health and well-being and reduce stigma associated with mental illness.
3. Universal Design for Learning Training
 - Ongoing training continues to be provided to staff and students that supports accessibility to learning.

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified

Learning Barriers:

1. Some staff indicated they needed more training to help them interact with students with specific disabilities.
2. Hearing and noise levels were rated highly by respondents as an area that interfered with both their learning and anxiety levels. Hearing announcements was one area that was indicated as a stressor to both students and adults. Another common theme was noisy classrooms and hallways which made it difficult for many students. Some respondents highlighted the need for additional resources, such as noise-cancelling headphones, more regulation of noise in the classroom and hallways, and alternative quiet learning spaces in the school.
3. Some parents and students expressed that the students were not adequately taught how to study and prepare for tests.
4. Some respondents identified universal supports as a priority area needing focus in the classroom.
5. Some students are not engaging in the universal supports provided, in part due to not wanting to stand out as needing additional support.
6. Several student respondents indicated they had trouble initiating and knowing how to go about starting assignments and tasks required of them.

Physical and Architecture Environment Barriers

1. Many classrooms have noise issues that make it difficult for some students and staff to learn and function. Noise reduction solutions would be helpful to address this noise issue.
2. Some students require quieter environments or alternative workspaces, which are not always readily available.
3. Some respondents emphasized the desire for more automatic door openers and additional buttons to open doors, which could enhance accessibility within the school.
4. Some respondents indicated that poor lighting contributed towards a learning barrier either by the lights being too bright, buzzing or too low lighting in certain areas such as stairways.
5. Heating and cooling can sometimes be an issue, so the physical comfort of students may not be optimal for learning.

Attitudinal Barriers

1. Some students identified that they felt misunderstood by staff who made assumptions that they were lazy or uncooperative or lacked motivation, when in fact they were dealing with

mental health and other disabilities that made it difficult for them to work, learn and communicate.

Resource Barriers

1. Some teachers and students are not familiar with the accessibility features on school laptops/computers such as voice-to-text, text-to-voice, web readers and other features.

School Policy and Practice Barriers

1. There is a need for further staff training to understand and better support different learning needs.
2. Systematic transition planning processes are not evident for all students with disabilities.
3. Emergency evacuation protocols, individual plans and evacuation equipment are not in place for students with physical disabilities.

Section 7: Our Three-Year Plan (2026-2029)

Overview:

In the coming years, KCA will strive to identify, reduce, and prevent barriers to learning and participation so that individuals with disabilities experience full belonging in our school communities. We will work toward practices and environments shaped by the Accessibility Principles of Adaptability, Collaboration, Diversity, Inclusion, Self-Determination, and Universal Design, as outlined in the Accessible B.C. Act. These principles will guide our efforts as we continue growing in accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility Priorities:

We gather accessibility information from staff, parents/guardians, students and from the Physical and Architectural Environment Audit. Based on this feedback, the Accessibility Committee identifies the areas that currently represent the highest priorities for improving accessibility in our school community. As new survey tools are developed, data is created and additional feedback becomes available, we will integrate those findings into our ongoing assessment so our priorities continue to reflect the evolving needs of our community.

Priority #1: Learning

Kootenay Christian Academy will enhance access to learning for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Discover successes and barriers to accessibility that have emerged since the previous plan was implemented, paying attention to both progress made and areas where challenges remain.	- Create and deliver an updated accessibility survey to the KCA school community. We resurvey staff, parents/guardians and students to gather fresh data that reflects current experiences and needs. - Integrate new findings from this expanded survey and any additional data-collection tools we develop. These insights become part of our ongoing evaluation process and help refine future priorities.	Complete this review cycle during the 2026–2027 school year, ensuring that updated information directly informs the next iteration of our Accessibility Plan

Strengthen educators' capacity to use inclusive, accessible teaching practices that reduce learning barriers and support all students in fully engaging, accessing information, and demonstrating their learning.	• Implement the Simplify Writing Literacy Program across relevant grade levels. • Provide professional development for staff on the Simplify Writing Program to ensure consistent and effective use. • Offer Elementary Numeracy professional development focused on accessible, differentiated instructional practices. • Enroll Inclusive Education Department staff in the SCSBC Inclusive Education Course to deepen expertise in inclusive design and support. • Provide SCSBC led professional development in behaviour management to strengthen staff capacity to support students presenting behavioural challenges. • Implement annual professional development focused on IEP documentation and reporting to ensure clarity, consistency, and accessibility for families and staff	Training begins in the 2026-2027 school year with a goal to be fully implemented in the last stage of this plan.
Increase staff understanding and consistency in IEP documentation and reporting so that student supports and progress are communicated clearly.	• Implement annual professional development focused on IEP documentation and reporting to ensure shared expectations and consistent practices across the school. • Create regular collaboration opportunities for staff who support the same student to share observations, discuss effective strategies, and ensure supports are implemented consistently • Periodically gather staff, student, and family feedback to identify barriers in the IEP process and determine where additional training, resources, or changes are needed.	Delivered once each school year (Fall term recommended). Scheduled at key reporting periods during the school year. Conducted when families review student IEP's with staff.

Priority #2: Attitudinal

Kootenay Christian Academy will seek to understand ableism and how it exists in society and in school. The school will reduce attitudinal barriers through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase staff awareness, understanding, and confidence in supporting students with medical needs	• Provide professional development through a Public Health Nurse during a Professional Development Day on seizure awareness, anaphylaxis, and diabetes management.	Delivered during a designated Professional Development Day each school year (Fall recommended).

	• The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing collaborates with classroom teachers and Educational Assistants to support learners and promote equitable access to learning. • Provide ongoing opportunities for staff to ask questions and receive guidance when supporting students with medical needs. • Develop clear, accessible resources and procedures for staff supporting students with medical needs.	Collaboration occurs ongoingly throughout the school year, with formal check-ins each term. Available continuously, with structured Q&A sessions twice per year. Resources drafted and finalized by June 2027, with updates annually.
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Priority #3: Physical and Architectural Environment

Kootenay Christian Academy will seek to improve the accessibility of the physical and architectural environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Grants for building and accessibility projects may be available ([Refer to Appendix B for potential grant sources](#)). The physical and architectural environment will be improved through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Promote clear communication across the school so students with hearing impairments can access spoken information reliably.	• Assess areas of the school where noise interferes with hearing receptivity. • Provide sound fields in classrooms as required. • Provide audio induction loops or FM receivers in the auditorium .	Initial assessment completed by December 2026. 2026-2027 2026-2027
Provide soundproofing where possible to reduce noise for students and staff	• Options for noise reduction devices (headphones, Loop quiet) • Explore different soundproofing solutions (e.g., carpet and area rugs) for the classroom and other areas of the school	2026-2027

Increase opportunities for student access to alternative learning and calming spaces when needed	- Determine the current needs of students who may require alternate learning spaces from time to time - Create a plan for the provision of additional alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified	Identify priority areas by January 2026-2027 Some learning spaces can be implemented immediately. Students have access spaces within the Student Services office area.
Ensure that lighting is appropriate for student and staff needs (i.e., not too bright, too dim, buzzing lights, alternatives to fluorescent lighting).	- Determine the current needs of students and staff who may have specific lighting needs - Create a plan and budget for adjusting lighting to meet the needs of staff and students	Begin transition of fluorescent lighting to LED lighting in the 2026/27 school year (budget dependent)
Ensure paths of travel are not partially blocked, so that people who use a mobility device such as a walker or a wheelchair can navigate paths of travel unhindered	- Build awareness that paths of travel that are used by staff and students should remain clear - Move Kindergarten cubbies into classroom from hallway - Find storage solutions for student items while they are in PE classes	Ongoing
Ensure playground equipment and surfaces provide meaningful access for inclusion	- Assess if some students are not able to access the playground (e.g., replace mulch and gravel with rubberized mats) - Identify potential ways to increase student inclusion and participation in playground activities (e.g., accessible swings and picnic tables, covered outdoor space with tables).	An area of success with recent additions to our outdoor playground area. Continue to assess and add where required
Provide for ongoing chairlift access for those with physical limitations to access second level..	Maintain equipment and provide a budget for upkeep and maintenance of chairlift for second storey access.	Annually provide budget and scheduled maintenance.

Priority #4: School Policy and Practice

Kootenay Christian Academy will review and revise policies and practices to ensure they align with the principles of accessibility, and to address any identified gaps in staff training or knowledge on accessibility issues. School policy and practice will be addressed through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Identify and respond to areas where further staff training in UDL is needed so students experience increased engagement and ways to express their learning.	• Develop priorities for staff accessibility training and identify or create UDL training modules. • Develop an implementation plan to provide accessibility training for current staff and new staff induction.	Priorities established by January 2027. Implementation June 2027; rollout begins September 2027 with annual updates.
Provide clear, individualized emergency procedures and ensure staff are trained to support safe evacuations for students with disabilities and diverse needs.	• Identify the students and staff who may require assistance with emergency procedures. • Develop processes for evacuation of students and staff with disabilities and diverse needs. • Plan with staff for individualized evacuation procedures, including transfers/lifts when required. • Practice implementing individualized evacuation plans during emergency drills, ensuring students with sensory challenges are prepared in advance.	2026-2027. Have in place at the start of each school year and reviewed annually or when needs change Planning takes place at the start of each school year. Individualized plans practiced during every scheduled drill.
Develop a plan for teaching self-regulation	• Identify students requiring individualized regulation needs. • Provide information about self-regulation needs during year-to-year transition planning. • Obtain developmentally appropriate self-regulation toolkits as required (Available fall 2023 from SCSBC) • Provide professional development on self-regulation and self-regulation tools	Provide professional development for staff in the 2026/27 school year.
Embed accessibility and inclusion into school planning, policies, and practices to identify and reduce barriers and ensure equitable participation for all members of the school community.	• Through our REVIVE revitalization plan, KCA is intentionally developing a campus that is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to all. Accessibility is considered as we improve our facilities and learning spaces, with a focus on reducing barriers and supporting the full participation of students, staff, families, and visitors.	Ongoing

Priority #5: Resources

Kootenay Christian Academy will increase awareness and training on assistive technology and other resources that promote accessibility through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase awareness of specific assistive technology needs for students with disabilities	- Review technology needs for students across KCA - Provide training for staff on the various technology needs of students https://www.bcaac.ca/services	Ongoing As required
Provide access to and training for the implementation of speech-to-text and text-to-speech technology.	- Professional development for staff https://www.bcaac.ca/services - Technology implementation plan for training and supporting students in technology use	As required

Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Planning Committee meets three times yearly 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. Review and update the Three-Year Accessibility Plan every three years in consultation with persons with disabilities and other relevant community members.
2. Prepare an annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the plan.

Section 9: How to Give Us Feedback about the Plan

Questions, comments, or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:

David Anger - Principal: davidanger@kcacademy.ca

Section 10: Appendices

Appendix A: About Disability

The Disability Continuum

Although 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 colours, 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.

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with visual disabilities:

- Identify yourself when you approach the person and speak directly to them.
- Speak normally and clearly.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like "handicapped".
- Unless it is an emergency, only touch the person if you have been given permission.
- If you offer assistance, wait until you receive permission.

- Offer your arm (the elbow) to guide the person and walk slowly.
- Service animals are working and have to pay attention at all times. Refrain from engaging with the animal.
- If you're giving directions or verbal information, be precise and clear. For example, if you're approaching a door or an obstacle, say so. Don't just assume the individual can't see you.
- When entering a room, show the individual to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient the person to the environment around them.
- Ensure you say goodbye prior to leaving the individual.
- Be patient. Things may take a little longer.

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- Always ask how you can help. Don't shout.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like "handicapped".
- Attract the person's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- Make sure you are in a well-lighted area where the person can see your face.
- Look at and speak directly to the person. Address the person, not their interpreter.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example, a pen and paper.
- Keep your face clearly visible when speaking.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.

- Service animals are working and have to pay attention at all times. Refrain from engaging with the animal.
- Any personal (e.g., financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing
- Be patient. Communication for people who are deaf is different because their first language may not be English. It may be American Sign Language (ASL).
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with physical disabilities:

- Speak normally and directly to the person rather than someone who is with them.
- People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like “handicapped”.
- Be patient and be sure you understand their needs.
- Unless it is an emergency, refrain from touching any assistive devices, including wheelchairs.
- Provide the person with information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with intellectual disabilities:

- As much as possible, treat the person with an intellectual disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.
- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like "handicapped".
- Use simple words and short sentences.
- Make sure the person understands what you've said.
- If you can't understand what's being said, ask again.
- Give one piece of information at a time.
- Be polite and patient.
- Speak directly to the person, not to someone who is with the person.

Learning or Cognitive Disabilities

Learning or cognitive disabilities can result in a host of different communication 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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with learning disabilities or disabilities:

- Patience and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- Recognize that some people with communication difficulties use augmentative communication systems such as Signed English and Picture Exchange Systems.
- When you know that someone with a learning disability needs help, ask how you can best help.
- Speak normally clearly, and directly to the person
- Take some time — people with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- Try to find ways to provide information in a way that works best for them. For example, have a paper and pen handy.
- If you're dealing with a child, be patient, encouraging and supportive.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like "handicapped".
- Be courteous and patient and the person will let you know how to best provide service in a way that works for them.

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 out. Be calm and professional and let the person tell you how you can best help.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with mental health disabilities:

- Treat people with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- Be confident and reassuring and listen to persons with a mental health disability and their needs.

If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask him or her to tell you the best way to help.

- Take the person with a mental health disability seriously, and work with them to

meet their needs.

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people with speech and language disabilities:

- Just because a person has one disability doesn't mean they have another. For example, if a person has difficulty speaking; make no assumption they have an intellectual disability as well.
- If you don't understand, ask the person to repeat the information.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like "handicapped".
- If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- Take some time. Be patient and polite and give the person whatever time they need to get their point across.
- Allow the individual to finish their sentences themselves without interruption.
- Patience, respect and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

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.

Here are some suggestions to help you interact with people who are deafblind:

- Make no assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. Some deaf-blind people have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- Avoid referring to the disability or using phrases like “handicapped”.
- A deaf-blind person is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.
- Speak directly to the person, as you normally would, not to the intervener.
- Identify yourself to the intervener when you approach the person who is deaf-blind.
- Don’t touch service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Unless it’s an emergency, refrain from touching a deaf-blind person without permission.

Appendix B: Suggested References/Resources

Global, Canadian, and Local Accessibility Context and Legislation

[Accessible British Columbia Act](#)

[BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary](#)

[British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation](#)

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[Canada Ratifies the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

Accessibility Planning Resources for Schools

[A Guide to Creating Accessible Play Spaces](#) (Rick Hansen Foundation)

[Accessible Resource Centre - BC](#)

[BC Accessibility Hub](#)

[BC Association for Advancing Communications](#)

[Brain Injury Canada](#)

[Canadian National Institute for the Blind \(CNIB\)](#)

[Canadian Hard of Hearing Association](#)

[Canadian Hearing Services](#)

[Comprehensive literacy for all: Teaching students with significant disabilities to read and write](#)

[Creating an Accessibility Committee](#)

[Gifted Children's Association of BC](#)

[Kelty Mental Health](#) (BC Children's Hospital)

[Learning Disabilities Association of Canada](#)

[Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada](#)

[Rick Hansen Accessibility Advisory Services](#)

[Rick Hansen Accessibility Resources for Building Accessibility](#)

[Specialist Association of Gifted Educators in BC](#)

[Spinal Cord Injury Canada](#)

[Tourette Canada](#)

[Undoing Ableism: Teaching about disability in K-12 Classrooms](#)

[Universal Design](#)

BC Provincial Resource Programs:

[Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program](#)

[Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program](#) (Complex Needs)

[Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired](#) (PRCVI)

[Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders](#)

[Provincial Outreach Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(POPDHH\)](#)

[Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder](#)

[Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness](#)

[Special Education Technology BC \(SET BC\)](#)

Potential Grant Sources

[BC Gaming Grants](#)

[Disability Alliance BC Accessibility Projects](#)

[Enabling Accessibility Fund](#)

[Rick Hansen Accessibility Grant](#)

Accessibility Products

[Accessible Places](#) (B.C. Distributor of Evac Chairs/Slings)

Advice about Placement of Automatic Door Openers alfred@accessibleplaces.ca

Appendix C: Universal Supports

<i>Universal Supports</i> Supports and strategies for students with or without a designation where certain universal supports have been successful in their overall learning			
SEL, Behavioural		Instructional	
☐	Scheduled Movement/Water breaks/opportunity	☐	Consistent, structured classroom routines
☐	Simple, predictable directions/rules	☐	Explicitly state the purpose of each lesson
☐	Visual- step-by-step instructions	☐	Oral, written, or visual instruction, “to-do” lists, or other organizational structures.
☐	Give choices (within parameters)	☐	Front loading using outlines (chapters/tests)
☐	Acknowledge flexibility and self-control	☐	Vocabulary at the start of the lesson/unit
☐	Limit group size (group work)	☐	Teach multi-modal (i.e., visual, verbal)
☐	Positive praise & build positive rapport	☐	Provide cues / mnemonics as a memory tool
☐	Assign groups AND roles/peer support	☐	Allow for extra wait time for student response
☐	Calm space in the classroom	☐	Simplified language/directions
☐	Check-in/out with a specific adult each day.	☐	Repeat instructions to the student individually
☐	Clear specific rules consistent across settings.	☐	Allow for re-teaching of key concepts, notes provided (note taker)
☐	Front-load schedule changes	☐	Reader or Text Reader (Be specific about technology)
☐	Other:	☐	Alternatives to print (audiobooks, movies, videos, digital media.
Physical Environment		☐	Explicit instructions
☐	Ability to move around indoor and outdoor spaces easily to access materials	☐	Teach notetaking, finding information in text
☐	Classroom zones/alternate workspaces (i.e., quiet spaces/collaborative spaces)	☐	Allow for the use of a calculator
☐	Good sight lines and placement and lighting to facilitate communication for oral and visual language	☐	High contrast materials, large print
☐	Flexible/preferential seating	☐	Use closed captioning
☐	Sound field system	☐	Provide alternate materials at the student’s level
☐	Sensory Tools (fidget items, wiggle cushion, standing desk)	☐	Use cooperative learning
☐	Special lighting (dark/light spaces) or acoustics (quiet/noisy spaces)	☐	Use small group instruction/ peer tutoring

☐	Reduce visual noise	☐	Provide immediate/frequent feedback
☐	Separate setting	☐	Present lessons sequentially
☐	Vertical surfaces	☐	Alternatives to note-taking (scribe, audio recording, teachers-notes provided, photo, etc.)
☐	Other:	☐	Other:
Organizational		Formative Assessment	
☐	Take pictures of notes & homework board	☐	Use in-class evidence of understanding
☐	Extra time to complete assignments	☐	Adjust expectations “quality over quantity”
☐	Mini due dates to ensure task completion	☐	Reduce # of homework questions or assignment length
☐	Chunk longer projects/assignments	☐	Alternate type: oral, written, demonstration
☐	Use highlighters for important directions	☐	Vary assessment types depending on the need
☐	Provide note taker or notes of each lesson	☐	Provide samples at the beginning
☐	Supported use of an agenda, planner, calendar	☐	Adapt tests and assignments (shorten, enlarge, revise format)
☐	Graphic organizers for writing assignments	☐	Use dot procedure: work to the dot and then get feedback
☐	Use simple, concise directions	☐	Repeat instructions
☐	Pneumonic strategies; Study strategies	☐	Spelling dictionary, proofreading, word bank checklists, etc.
☐	Visual schedule/timetable (i.e., When/Then)	☐	No penalty for spelling or convention errors
☐	Visual timer	☐	Calculator/multiplication chart/number line and manipulatives
☐	Use post-it-notes	☐	Graphic organizers
☐	Home/school communication book	☐	Alternate format: short answer, point form, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, true/false, matching
☐	Checklists	☐	Provide a rubric or scoring guide
☐	Classroom Visual supports	☐	Review Criteria prior to beginning the assigned task
☐	Work organization system (color code files etc.)	☐	Framework outlines, and rubrics for longer projects
☐	Other:	☐	Reduce or eliminate oral reading in class
Summative Assessment		☐	Access to technology with dictation/word prediction and Voice-to-text abilities
☐	Allow for retests or test previews	☐	Work in groups
☐	Extra time to complete written tests/quizzes	☐	Materials available at independent reading level

☐	Allow a 1-page cheat sheet for tests	☐	Voice-to-text, Speech to text or Dictation
☐	Break down tests into small chunks	☐	Reduce or eliminate homework expectations
☐	Allow for test “previews” to be sent home	☐	Other:
☐	Allow oral answering of test questions	Other	
☐	Adapt tests (shorten, enlarge, revise format)	☐	Other:
☐	Other:	☐	Other: