

Discovery School

Draft Three-Year Accessibility Plan

2026–2029

Consultation and Board Review – September 2026

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	3
About Our School Community	3
A Message from the Board/Administrator	4
Territorial Acknowledgement	4
Definitions	5
SECTION 2: FRAMEWORK GUIDING OUR WORK	7
Global Context – United Nations.....	7
Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	7
B.C. Context and Legislation – Accessible B.C. Act.....	8
Our Commitment to Accessibility	10
Our Approach.....	10
SECTION 3: THE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE	12
Purpose of the Accessibility Committee	12
Discovery School Accessibility Team	12
SECTION 4: CONSULTATION AND BARRIER IDENTIFICATION.....	13
SECTION 5: ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK TOOL.....	14
SECTION 6: ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND BARRIERS.....	15
Accessibility Accomplishments Identified.....	15
Accessibility Barriers Identified	16
SECTION 7: OUR THREE-YEAR PLAN (2026–2029).....	18
SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION	22
SECTION 9: HOW TO GIVE US FEEDBACK.....	22
SECTION 10: APPENDICES	23

Appendix A: About Disability	23
Appendix B: Suggested References/Resources	31

Section 1: Introduction

About Our School Community

Discovery School is an independent school serving approximately 75–80 students in Grades 3–12 from Greater Victoria and surrounding communities, including Saanich, Sidney, Sooke, Duncan, and the Gulf Islands.

Discovery School specializes in supporting students with learning disabilities and other diverse learning needs. Students have individualized education programs that balance challenge with success, strengthen self-confidence and self-advocacy, and provide access to the curriculum through specialized instruction, small classes, and coordinated supports. Staff monitor student progress closely and communicate regularly with parents and guardians. As a non-denominational school grounded in Christian values and virtues, Discovery School supports the development of the whole child.

The school leadership and support team includes a Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers, educational support staff, office and operations staff, and contracted therapists and specialists.

Discovery School is governed by an elected Board of Directors that establishes policy and strategic direction. The Board meets regularly throughout the school year. The Parent Support Group also meets to support school programs and community initiatives. Meetings may be held online or in person, as communicated by the school.

A Message from the Board/Administrator

At Discovery School, accessibility is central to our commitment to providing an inclusive learning and working environment. We aim to ensure that students, staff, families, volunteers, and visitors can participate with dignity and have equitable access to programs, services, information, and facilities.

As a member of the Associate Member Society of the Federation of Independent School Associations of British Columbia (AMS/FISABC), Discovery School participates in the AMS association-level accessibility committee. This committee supports member schools in understanding the Accessible B.C. Act, sharing resources, and identifying ways to reduce barriers across the independent school sector.

This draft Three-Year Accessibility Plan for 2026–2029 builds on the work completed during the 2023–2026 plan. It identifies priorities, actions, timelines, and monitoring processes intended to prevent, identify, and remove barriers. The draft will be refined through consultation with the school community and presented to the Board for approval.

We recognize that accessibility benefits the entire school community. Through this plan, Discovery School commits to continuous improvement, responsible use of resources, meaningful consultation, and practical actions that support participation, belonging, independence, and student success.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Discovery School acknowledges with respect the Lekwungen-speaking peoples of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the WSÁNEĆ peoples, on whose traditional territories we learn and work. We are grateful for their enduring relationship with the land and commit to continued learning, respect, and relationship-building.

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 Team 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, 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.

Disability: The state of being unable to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction between an impairment and a barrier. ([For more information about disability and types of disability and support, refer to Appendix A: Disabilities.](#))

Impairment: A physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, cognitive limitation, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.

Section 2: Framework Guiding Our Work

The Discovery School 2026–2029 Accessibility Plan builds on global, national, provincial, and school-specific commitments to promote accessibility, remove barriers, and support full participation.

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

Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

In Canada, disability rights are protected through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and related human rights and accessibility legislation. The Accessible Canada Act came into force in 2019 with the goal of advancing a barrier-free Canada in areas under federal jurisdiction. Its guiding principles emphasize dignity, equal opportunity, meaningful choice, full participation, and the involvement of persons with disabilities in the development of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.

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, 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 including race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and lived experience greatly inform the experiences of individuals. Accessibility plans should acknowledge the principle of intersectionality and the diversity 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 Discovery School, 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 board policies and procedures align with the principles of accessibility.
- Improve access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and community members.
- Continually improve accessibility for people with disabilities in our school community.

Our Approach

At Discovery School, 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 preparing this 2026–2029 draft, Discovery School is building on the barrier-identification work begun in 2023. The ongoing process includes:

- Reviewing the physical, sensory, technological, and architectural accessibility of the school.
- Gathering feedback from students, staff, parents/guardians, people with disabilities,

and community partners.

- Reviewing policies, procedures, communication practices, and school routines for potential barriers.
- Maintaining an accessible feedback tool and reviewing submissions regularly.
- Prioritizing actions according to impact, urgency, feasibility, and available resources.
- Monitoring progress, reporting annually, and adjusting actions when needs or circumstances change.

This approach is intended to identify practical opportunities for improvement and to ensure that accessibility remains an ongoing responsibility. Through consultation, training, planning, and direct action, Discovery School will continue working toward an environment in which all members of the community can participate as fully and independently as possible.

Section 3: The Accessibility Committee

Purpose of the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, organizations must be part of an 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.

As a member of AMS/FISABC, Discovery School participates in the AMS Association-Level Accessibility Committee. The committee supports member schools and provides an accessibility perspective to the AMS Board and participating schools. Its mandate includes:

Informing AMS member schools about the requirements of the Accessible B.C. Act.

Providing advice and resources to support accessible policies, programs, services, communications, and environments for students, families, staff, and visitors.

Advising the AMS Board and member schools so that the needs and perspectives of people with disabilities are considered in accessibility planning and decision-making.

Discovery School Accessibility Team

A school-level Accessibility Team coordinates the development, implementation, monitoring, and annual review of Discovery School's plan. Membership will be reviewed annually and may be expanded to include students, parents/guardians, staff, community partners, and people with lived experience of disability.

Team Member	Position/Representation
Sherri Ko	Principal / Accessibility Coordinator
Sherry Fraser	Vice-Principal / Inclusive Education Representative
Lesley Stuart	Teacher / Inclusive Education Representative
Hartley Nash	Office / Operations Representative
Christine Thornton & Olivia Reid	Staff Representatives
Jaime Rogers	Disability Advocate

Section 4: Consultation and Barrier Identification

Barrier-Identification and Consultation Methods

The Accessibility Team will use the following methods to identify barriers, gather input, and review progress during the 2026–2029 plan:

Methodology	Description	Status / Cycle
Review of policies and practices	Review school policies, procedures, forms, routines, and practices through an accessibility lens.	Initial review: Fall 2026; one-third of policies annually
Staff input	Use surveys, staff meetings, professional development requests, and direct feedback to identify barriers and training needs.	Fall 2026 and annually; ongoing feedback
Parent/guardian input	Invite feedback on communication, programs, facilities, services, and accommodation processes.	Fall 2026 and annually
Student input	Gather age-appropriate student feedback, including the experiences of students with disabilities and diverse learning needs.	At least annually and during relevant reviews
Physical and sensory accessibility audit	Review entrances, routes, classrooms, washrooms, signage, parking, emergency routes, noise, lighting, heat, and alternative spaces.	Summer/Fall 2026; annual walk-through
Accessibility feedback tool	Maintain the online feedback tool and allow anonymous submissions and alternate formats.	Ongoing; reviewed quarterly
Accessibility Team review	Review feedback, progress, emerging barriers, and priorities; recommend updates to administration and the Board.	Quarterly

Section 5: Accessibility Feedback Tool

Discovery School maintains an online feedback tool so that students, staff, families, visitors, and community members can report an accessibility barrier, identify an effective support, or suggest an improvement. The tool is available through the school website. Feedback may be submitted anonymously, and people may provide contact information when they would like a response.

The feedback tool may include the following questions:

Report an Accessibility Barrier or Support

At Discovery School, we want to learn about barriers and supports experienced when people are trying to:

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

The Discovery School Accessibility Team reviews submissions quarterly and sooner when a concern is urgent. Information may be submitted anonymously. When contact details are provided, the school will acknowledge the feedback and respond as appropriate.

1. Please provide the date the barrier or support was experienced.
2. Please select the location where the barrier or support was experienced.
3. What were you or someone you know trying to access?
4. Accessibility barrier or support details (be as specific as possible).
5. Do you have any recommendations for what would make it better?
6. Attach files if you wish to provide additional information (e.g., video, voice recording, photos).
7. Please provide your name and email or phone number if you would like to be contacted.
(optional)

Thank you for helping Discovery School identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers.

Section 6: Accessibility Accomplishments and Barriers

Accessibility Accomplishments Identified

The guiding principles of inclusive practice continue to inform Discovery School programs, policies, practices, and services. The 2023–2026 plan supported progress in accessible communication, individualized supports, staff learning, technology, and the physical and sensory environment.

The following 2023-2026 accomplishments provide a foundation for the 2026–2029 plan:

Information and Communication

1. Accessibility requirements and inclusive practices have been shared with staff and the wider school community. The school has continued to improve communication formats and has increased attention to clear instructions, accessible documents, and consistent digital communication.
2. Accessible learning resources have expanded through audiobooks, high-interest/low-vocabulary materials, captioned media, accessible websites, interactive flatboards, and improved methods for creating and sharing accessible PDFs and digital worksheets.

Inclusive Programs, Policies, and Practices

1. Individualized Supports and Adaptations

- Student needs are reviewed through individualized education planning, consultation, assessment information, and ongoing observation. Staff provide adaptations, accommodations, assistive tools, and alternative ways for students to access learning and demonstrate understanding.
- Classroom practices increasingly include visual supports, structured routines, accessible digital materials, flexible pacing, alternative spaces, and coordinated support from teachers, educational assistants, therapists, and specialists.

2. Mental Health, Well-being, and Self-Regulation

- The school provides counselling, self-regulation supports, smaller learning

environments, and individualized responses to mental health, sensory, behavioural, and attendance-related barriers.

- Professional learning has supported staff understanding of mental health, inclusive education, disability-related needs, and strengths-based approaches.

3. Accessibility Awareness and Staff Learning

- Accessibility and inclusion are addressed through staff orientation, professional development, case consultation, and ongoing discussion of effective strategies and emerging needs.

Physical, Sensory, and Technological Environment

1. The school completed a physical and architectural accessibility audit and has continued to consider accessibility in facility maintenance and capital planning, including ramps, washrooms, entrances, door access, parking, and emergency routes.
2. Investments in interactive flatboards, sound-field review, accessible digital tools, and alternative learning spaces have increased options for students with hearing, attention, sensory, communication, and learning needs.

Accessibility Barriers Identified

Information and Communication Barriers

1. Some website information, forms, and school communications may still require improvement to support people who use screen readers, have low vision, require translation, or need information in alternate formats.
2. Plain-language expectations and accessible formatting are not yet applied consistently across all school communications.
3. Assignment and homework information may be communicated differently across classes, creating confusion for some students and families.
4. Staff confidence varies in communicating with and supporting people with specific disabilities, particularly when needs are complex or unfamiliar.

Physical and Sensory Environment Barriers

1. Heat, ventilation, lighting, noise, and competing sensory input can create barriers in some classrooms and common areas.
2. Sound fields and acoustic supports require ongoing review, maintenance, and consistent use.
3. The availability, suitability, and scheduling of quiet or alternative learning spaces remain limited at some times of day or during special events.

Attitudinal Barriers

1. Students may feel misunderstood when disability-related behaviour, fatigue, processing time, anxiety, or executive-function challenges are interpreted as laziness, defiance, or lack of motivation.

Technology Barriers

1. Staff and students do not yet use accessibility features and assistive technology consistently. Training, setup, troubleshooting, and access to appropriate devices and software require continued attention.

School Policy and Practice Barriers

1. Transition planning is not yet documented with the same level of consistency for all students entering, leaving, or preparing for post-secondary education, employment, and adult services.
2. Individual emergency supports, event-specific accessibility planning, and procedures for students with mobility, hearing, sensory, or high-anxiety needs require regular review and practice.

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

Overview

This draft plan outlines the measures Discovery School proposes to take from September 2026 through August 2029 to prevent, identify, and remove barriers and to promote inclusion for people with disabilities. It is guided by the Accessible B.C. Act principles of adaptability, collaboration, diversity, inclusion, self-determination, and universal design. Actions may be adjusted in response to consultation, emerging needs, available resources, and annual evaluation.

Accessibility Priorities

The following priorities build on the 2023–2026 plan, feedback received to date, the school's physical and sensory accessibility reviews, and ongoing discussion with students, staff, families, specialists, and community partners.

Priority #1: Information and Communication

Discovery School will improve the accessibility, clarity, consistency, and availability of school information and communication.

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Maintain an accessible, easy-to-navigate website and online information.	• Complete an annual accessibility review of key pages, forms, and posted documents. • Use clear headings, readable formatting, descriptive links, alt text, and accessible PDFs. • Correct high-priority issues and document improvements.	Year 1 audit and improvements; review each spring
Use plain language and provide alternate formats.	• Develop communication guidelines, templates, and examples for staff. • Provide translation or alternate formats upon request and clearly identify how to request support. • Review a sample of communications annually.	Develop in Year 1; implement and review in Years 2–3
Standardize assignment and homework communication.	• Use a common location and format for instructions, due dates, materials, and homework. • Provide accessible digital information for students, families, and inclusive education staff. • Review consistency through staff meetings and student/family feedback.	Implement in Year 1; monthly review in Year 1 and annual review thereafter

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Expand accessible learning resources.	• Increase access to audio, captioned, high-interest/low-vocabulary, accessible digital, and alternative-format resources. • Build subject-area resource banks with teachers, inclusive education staff, and the library. • Use accessible worksheets and PDFs whenever practicable.	Ongoing in all three years; priority units identified annually
Build staff and student skills in accessible communication.	• Provide training on plain language, accessible documents, disability-responsive communication, and available supports. • Include essential accessibility practices in new-staff orientation and student instruction.	Each August/September with follow-up during the year
Gather and respond to accessibility feedback.	• Maintain the feedback tool and provide alternate ways to submit feedback. • Review submissions quarterly, track actions, and summarize themes in the annual status report.	Quarterly and annually throughout the plan
Improve accessibility information for school events.	• Include venue access, parking, seating, sound, sensory, and accommodation information in event notices. • Provide a clear contact for accommodation requests.	Templates developed in Year 1; used throughout Years 1–3

Priority #2: Physical, Architectural, and Sensory Environment

Discovery School will continue to improve access to the built environment and reduce physical and sensory barriers within available resources.

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Conduct annual physical and sensory accessibility reviews.	• Review entrances, routes, parking, washrooms, signage, classrooms, common areas, and emergency routes. • Prioritize barriers according to impact, urgency, feasibility, and cost. • Report recommendations through annual planning and budgeting.	Summer/Fall each year; annual report to administration and Board
Improve sensory classroom conditions.	• Review sound fields, acoustics, lighting, heat, ventilation, seating, and competing sensory input. • Consult relevant specialists, including TDHH and occupational therapy, when appropriate. • Implement practical improvements and evaluate their effectiveness.	Year 1 assessment; Years 1–2 improvements; Year 3 evaluation
Strengthen alternative learning and regulation spaces.	• Identify student needs and audit the suitability and availability of current spaces. • Establish clear procedures for using quiet, low-stimulation, or alternative learning areas. • Include additional space needs in facility and strategic planning.	Year 1 audit and procedures; enhancements in Years 1–2; review in Year 3

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Improve building access as resources allow.	• Maintain and improve ramps, door access, accessible washrooms, parking/curb access, signage, and interior routes. • Include accessibility considerations in all capital and maintenance projects.	Reviewed annually through the 2026–2029 capital plan
Plan for accessible events and temporary arrangements.	• Use an accessibility checklist for school events, off-site venues, temporary classrooms, and special activities. • Consider seating, sound, lighting, sensory needs, washrooms, transportation, and emergency access.	Checklist in Year 1; applied and refined throughout the plan

Priority #3: School Policy, Practice, Safety, and Transitions

Discovery School will review and strengthen policies and practices so that accessibility is considered consistently in decision-making, student support, safety, and transition planning.

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Review policies and practices through an accessibility lens.	• Review approximately one-third of relevant policies, procedures, forms, and routines each year. • Address accessibility, accommodation, communication, complaints, feedback, and participation. • Document recommended revisions and Board approvals.	Annual cycle; complete full review by June 2029
Strengthen staff learning and inclusive attitudes.	• Provide annual learning on disability awareness, neurodiversity, strengths-based communication, accommodations, and barrier prevention. • Use case consultation and onboarding to reinforce expectations. • Gather staff feedback on additional training needs.	Annually in all three years
Develop and practice individualized emergency supports.	• Identify students and staff who require individualized emergency or drill supports. • Review plans for mobility, deaf/hard-of-hearing, sensory, medical, and high-anxiety needs. • Acquire, maintain, and train staff in the use of equipment or procedures where appropriate.	Review and update in Year 1; practice and review at drills and annually
Strengthen transition planning.	• Use a consistent transition-planning process for Grades 9–12, school entry/exit, and movement to other programs. • Include student voice, self-advocacy, family input, community agencies, and post-secondary or employment planning as relevant. • Audit documentation annually.	Framework refined in Year 1; implementation and annual review in Years 1–3
Ensure meaningful consultation and student voice.	• Include people with disabilities and lived experience in plan review whenever possible. • Gather student, family, staff, and specialist input during relevant planning and review processes. • Document themes and actions in annual reporting.	At least annually; feedback reviewed quarterly

Priority #4: Technology and Assistive Tools

Discovery School will improve access to, confidence with, and effective use of assistive technology and built-in accessibility features.

Objectives	Actions and Indicators of Progress	Timeline
Identify and document assistive technology needs.	• Complete class and student reviews and link identified tools to IEPs or support plans where appropriate. • Maintain an inventory of devices, software, licenses, and accessibility features.	Each September and during IEP review cycles
Build proficiency with existing tools.	• Train staff and students in interactive flatboards, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, captions, readers, OCR/accessible PDFs, and browser or operating-system features. • Provide coaching and examples connected to classroom tasks.	Annual training with follow-up coaching
Create consistent technology support processes.	• Establish procedures for setup, access, troubleshooting, storage, updates, and replacement. • Create short guides and identify staff who can provide first-line support.	Process developed in Year 1; reviewed in Years 2–3
Evaluate effectiveness, privacy, and equity.	• Gather student and staff feedback on whether tools reduce barriers and improve independence. • Review privacy, security, cost, and equitable access before adopting new tools.	Annual review throughout the plan

Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Team will meet quarterly to review progress, feedback, emerging barriers, and the effectiveness of actions in this plan. The team will recommend adjustments when needs, resources, legislation, technology, or school circumstances change. Significant revisions will be brought forward to administration and the Board.

1. Prepare an annual status report by the end of each school year describing actions completed, evidence of progress, barriers that remain, and priorities carried forward.
2. Review feedback quarterly and complete a full consultation and renewal process by June 2029 to prepare the next Three-Year Accessibility Plan for 2029–2032.

Section 9: How to Give Us Feedback

Discovery School welcomes feedback about accessibility barriers, effective supports, and this plan. Feedback may be submitted through the Accessibility Feedback Tool on the school website, by contacting the school office, or by asking to speak with the Principal. Feedback may be anonymous. Accessible formats of this plan and the annual status reports will be made available upon request.

When contact information is provided, the school will acknowledge the feedback and respond as appropriate. Feedback will be reviewed by the Accessibility Team and used to inform annual priorities and future accessibility planning.

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

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 System.
- When you know that someone with a learning disability needs help, ask how you can best help.
- Speak normally and 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

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

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

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation](#)

[Accessible British Columbia Act](#)

[BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary](#)

Accessibility Planning Resources for Schools and School Boards:

[BC Accessibility Hub](#)

[Developing Your First Accessibility Plan: A Guide for BC Prescribed Organizations](#)

[Creating an Accessibility Committee](#)

[Universal Design](#)

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

[Accessible Resource Centre - BC](#)

[Standards Council of Canada](#)

[B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design](#)

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

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

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

[Canadian Hard of Hearing Association](#)

[Canadian Hearing Services](#)

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

[Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program](#)

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

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

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

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

[Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada](#)

[Learning Disabilities Association of Canada](#)

[Brain Injury Canada](#)

[Spinal Cord Injury Canada](#)

[Tourette Canada](#)

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

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

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