Mission Public Schools

Mission
Public Schools

Artwork by
Paris O. and Ryder J.
Grade 5

Accessibility Plan

2023-2026

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Territorial Acknowledgement

Il stl'i kw'els spipetstexw kw'eset ite xwelmexwelh stexwlaq temxwe's ye Stó:lō mestiyexw.

Mission Public School District is located on the Traditional, Ancestral, Unsurrendered, and Shared territories of Stó:lō people, of Leq'á:mel, Semá:th, Máthxwi, Sq'éwlets and Qwó:ltl'el First Nations, stewards of this land since time immemorial.

Halq'eméylem is the language of this land and of Stó:lō ancestors. The place from where Halq'eméylem (Upriver dialect) originates is Leq'á:mel. The language comes from the land, and it has been this way since time immemorial.

Le Conseil scolaire de Mission est situé sur les terres traditionnelles, ancestrales, non cédées et partagées du peuple Stó:lō, des Premières nations Leq'á:mel, Semá:th, Máthxwi, Sq'éwlets et Qwó:ltl'el, peuples de cette terre depuis des temps immémoriaux.

About Our School Community

School District 75 'Mission Public Schools' is a medium sized school district in the Fraser Valley, servicing the urban centre of Mission, as well as a number of smaller communities running east towards the Harrison Mills/Kent area. Mission Public School District is located on the Traditional, Ancestral, Unceded, and Shared land of the Stó:lō people, of Sq'éwlets, Leq'á:mel, Sema:th, Matheqwí and Qwó:ltl'el First Nations, peoples of this land since time immemorial. Mission Public School District (MPSD) serves approximately 6500 students, and the geographic area has over 40,000 residents and is growing. The western portions of the district serve as an exurb to Metro Vancouver, while the eastern portion is highly rural. MPSD has 13 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, a large senior secondary, an alternate school, and a vocational college.

Mission is a growing district. We offer French Immersion streams, a wide range of elective courses, 2 elementary schools of choice, and a variety of programs for learners, especially those with disabilities and diverse support needs.

MPSD has around 1000 employees, including a small senior team: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Directors of Student Services and Human Resources, as well as various operational officers, and a number of district staff including District Principals for Indigenous Education, Inclusive Support/Curriculum, and Early Learning and Childcare.

MPSD is governed by 5 elected trustees: 4 from the City of Mission area, and one representing the rural area east of the city. The Board of Education establish policies and direction for Mission Public Schools. Board meetings occur on the third Tuesday of the month, and other committee meetings occur on other Tuesdays. The District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) meets on Monday evenings, generally the third of the month.

A Message from the Superintendent

Mission Public School District is committed to a safe, equitable, and inclusive educational system for ALL students. Mission students benefit from our diverse community, skilled staff, natural environment, and local history. We are dedicated to honouring student agency and empowering our students to reach their potential. Our Strategic Plan outlines our commitment to:

⊕ Support Honouring Culture and Territory
⊕ Focus on being Future Oriented
⊕ Promote Student Centered Learning
⊕ Create Effective Learning Environments
⊕ Build Quality Teaching and Leadership

In turn, these goal areas demonstrate Mission's commitment 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 which identifies system needs and priorities, and action plans. The Plan draws feedback from our school community and the work of the Accessibility Committee to enhance equity of access to programming and our facilities.

Our Accessibility Committee is a diverse and multi-disciplinary team that meets regularly to affirm our commitment to identify priorities and develop and monitor action plans highlighted in the Three-Year Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan identifies measurable actions across the pillars of the Accessibility BC Act and supports the rights of equal opportunity for persons with disabilities by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers of access.

The importance of accessibility is recognized to not only support those with needs, but also benefit others in the community. We are committed to advancing the efforts of the Accessibility Committee to improve equity and ease of access to services, as well as access to our facilities. Through the action in this Three-Year Accessibility Plan, we commit to continuous improvements in developing an environment that supports all students, staff, and the community.

Definitions

- **Accessibility:** Having programs, services and environments that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers.

- **Accessibility Committee:** An official group established by one or more organizations in collaboration with people with disabilities to develop an accessibility Plan and feedback mechanism.

- **Accessibility Plan:** A plan, developed by an Accessibility Committee, that identifies accessibility challenges and solutions for addressing those challenges.

- **Barrier:** A 'barrier' is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including an architectural barrier, an attitudinal barrier, an informational or communications barrier, a physical barrier, a policy, procedure, or a practice, or a technological barrier, or intersecting forms of discrimination. Types of barriers include:

  1. **Architectural Barrier:** building design, area adjacent to the building, shape of rooms, size of doorways, etc.

  2. **Attitudinal Barrier:** staff, students, and school community who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, discriminatory behaviours, disability awareness.

  3. **Communication Barrier:** difficulties receiving information in person or by telephone, difficulties interacting with teachers, peers, receptionists, or other staff, difficulties receiving training.

  4. **Information Barrier:** inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, etc.

  5. **Policy or Practice Barrier:** rules, regulations, and protocols that prevent a person performing their job satisfactorily, or from serving the public, or that restrict participation. Policy, practice, and procedures that prevent a student from accessing the curriculum and fully participating in the school community.

  6. **Technological Barrier:** computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones, and switches, (lack of) assistive technologies.

- **Disability:** An inability to participate fully and equally in society because of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

Our accessibility plan builds on global, national, provincial, and local 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 CPRD as follows:

"The Convention on the Rights of Personas 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

Canada-wide, around 1 in 5 people had some form of disability in 2017. Nationally, Canadian accessibility legislation started in 1985 where 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 to realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040. This act applies to federally regulated entities. The ACA has 7 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 consider 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. Persons with disabilities mut 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 persons with disabilities.

BC Context and Legislation – Accessible BC 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 the following by September 1, 2023:

  ⊕ An Accessibility Committee,
  ⊕ An Accessibility Plan, and
  ⊕ A tool to receive feedback on accessibility.

The intent of the ***Accessible BC Act*** is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to their full participation in all aspects of life in BC.

Principles in the Accessible BC Act

The Accessible BC Act includes a list of principles that must be considers as organizations develop an accessibility plan. These same principles were used to develop the legislation itself. The Definitions are adapted from the foundational document: BC Framework for Accessibility Legislation.

1. **Adaptability:** Accessibility plans should be flexible and 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 people, organizations, and communities to authentically work together to promote access and inclusion.

3. **Diversity:** Every person is unique. People with disabilities are individual with varied backgrounds. Individual characteristics including race, gender sexual orientation, religion, and lived experience greatly inform the experiences of individuals. Accessibility plans should acknowledge, promote, and prioritize the principle of intersectionality and the diversity within the disability community.

4. **Inclusion:** All people residing in the land known as British Columbia, and including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equitably in their communities.

   "Inclusion is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and difference and promotes equal opportunities for all. Inclusion is not just about people with disabilities. When our communities include and embrace everyone, we are ALL better able to reach our full potential".

   Advancing Rights, Promoting Abilities – Inclusion BC

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. In schools we call this empowering student agency.

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 peoples who interact with the Organization.

Our Commitment to Accessibility:

Accessibility is a general term used to describe the degree of ease that something (e.g., a device, service, place) can be used and enjoyed by people with disabilities. Accessibility requires conscious planning, design, and effort to ensure barriers are removed, and the environment is highly useable and practical for the general population.

Mission Public School District is committed to working to provide equitable access to people with disabilities in a manner that emanates inclusion. We will continue to work with the school community and plan to allocate resources toward the identification, elimination, and prevention of accessibility barriers. The school district is committed to increase accessibility by:

- ⊕ Consulting with staff, families, nations, educational organizations, community members and organizations while prioritizing feedback provided by people with disabilities in the development and review of its accessibility plans.
- ⊕ Advising on school board policies and procedures to ensure consistency with the principles of accessibility.
- ⊕ Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parent/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community.
- ⊕ The continual improvement of accessibility for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the community with disabilities.

Our Approach:

All members of the school community have a right to access learning within their school community, as well as the usual spaces of the school community. MPSD used the core provincial principles on accessibility, including adaptability, collaboration, diversity, inclusion, self-determination, and universal design, in the foundation of its approach.

For services to students, many projects have been underway in the past 5 years including the creation of procedures and policies, staff handbooks for resource and specialist teachers, as well as Educational Assistants. In addition, the school district staff have undergone extensive training in Equity through work led by the Siwal Si'wes Indigenous department, Trauma Informed Practice, and Mental Health in Schools. Increases in staffing have also occurred, with student services teaching staff increasing from 30 positions in 2016, to now over 60 positions. As the district continues to grow, we will strive to increase staffing to meet the demands. As well, Educational Assistant staffing has increased from 155 in 2018 to 200 in 2023. We employee Counsellors, Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Physical and Occupational Therapists, Inclusion Mentor Teachers, Hearing and Vision Specialist Teachers, as well as Youth Care Workers, Indigenous Liaison Workers, and Success Advocates, and an Advocate for Children and Youth in Care.

Working in collaboration with parents, we have created a parent guide to student services and provide workshops and information seminars in partnership with DPAC and Family Smart.

In September 2021, in response to the launching of the Act, MPSD began creating accessibility feedback tools, raising awareness, building staff capacity, and gathering information to support the process of identifying barriers

to accessibility. In December 2022, we began the process of establishing an accessibility committee and call out for participation. The process thus far included:

- ✥ Creating an internal audit checklist for schools to use to assess current physical and architectural accessibility.
- ✥ Developing Emergency Evacuation Procedures for students with mobility considerations, including installing Evacuation chairs in schools with multi levels.
- ✥ Creating an accessibility reporting tool that is prominent on all school and district websites
- ✥ A callout for applications for members of the Accessibility Committee.
- ✥ Identifying barriers to accessibility.
- ✥ Setting priorities for actions.
- ✥ Developing a monitoring and evaluation process.

This approach aims to recognize the gaps and opportunities to improve accessibility throughout the school community. Thoughtful planning, meaningful engagement, training, and direct action will help to deliver accessibility improvements in our school community.

SECTION 3: THE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

Purpose of the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible BC Act, an accessibility committee must be established to assist organizations to identify barriers and advise on how to prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization. The purpose of the accessibility committee is to work collaboratively to assess and improve accessibility focusing on the experiences of personals with disabilities, while encompassing the whole community. The accessibility committee provides advice to the Director of Instruction, Student Services, and the Superintendent of Schools with recommendations on strategies to reduce attitudinal, physical, sensory, informational, communication, systemic and technological barriers that prevent people from fully participating in all aspects of Mission Public School District.

Recruitment to the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible BC Act, the selection of accessibility committee members must, to the extent possible, be in accordance 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 BC

A callout for applications to the Accessibility Committee was conducted in February 2023 to recruit a diverse representation as outlined above. The Accessibility Committee was formally constituted in March 2023. Current members of the Accessibility Committee are listed on the following page.

Accessibility Committee Membership

Committee Member	Position/Representation
⊕ Elizabeth Birak	Parent
⊕ Susan Chang	Teacher
⊕ Kerridan Dougan	Parent, Inclusion BC
⊕ Tracy Drott	Parent, Education Assistant
⊕ Krysta Hamm	Teacher
⊕ Nicole Israelov	Parent
⊕ Emily Keenan	Parent, Business Manager
⊕ Ross Lightburn-Renaud	Parent
⊕ Jo-Ann Lindahl	Parent, Teacher
⊕ Joelle Reynolds	Parent
⊕ Carolynn Schmor	Director of Instruction, Student Services
⊕ Amanda Sidhu	Parent, Education Assistant
⊕ Jen Tench	Parent, Teacher
⊕ Emma Wikdahl	Student
⊕ Angus Wilson	Superintendent
⊕ Linda Hamel	Trustee - Observer

SECTION 4: CONSULTATION CONDUCTED

Barrier-Identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Committee used the following barrier-identification methods:

Methodology	Description	Status
✦ Audit of policies and practices	A review of current policies and practices that promote accessibility and inclusion was conducted by key staff members.	On-going
✦ School Physical Accessibility Audit	An Assessment of School Physical Accessibility was developed. School Audit teams conducted internal site-based audits.	September 2021
✦ Accessibility Feedback Tool	A feedback tool was developed and posted to the school and district website.	February 2023
✦ Accessibility Committee	The Accessibility Committee reviewed the input and feedback from the audits, feedback tool and committee input. The Committee collaborated to suggest priority areas to target in the Accessibility Plan.	March 2023 April 2023 May 2023 June 2023

SECTION 5: ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK TOOL

MPSD 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 district website and to all school websites. An information announcement about the feedback tool was provided to students, staff, and parents/guardians.

The following is the contents of the online Accessibility Feedback Tool:

Report an Accessibility Barrier

We want to know the specific barriers people with disabilities face when they are trying to:
- Access a school district program, building or information.
- Receive a service or support.

Tell us about your experience

1. I am describing a barrier that I experienced, or I am describing a barrier that someone else experienced.
2. Provide the name of the school or district site.
3. What recommendations do you have for the school district to improve accessibility?
4. Tell us something that has improved accessibility in the province that the school district should do more of.

Thank you for providing your valuable feedback!

Personal information is collected by MPSD under section 26 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for the purpose of surveying the public. If you have questions about this form, or the collection and use of this information, call School District No. 75 (Phone: 604-826-6286) and speak to the Privacy Coordinator.

SECTION 6: ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS AND BARRIERS

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Actions Identified

The guiding principles of inclusive practice inform MPSD School programs, policies, procedures, and services to minimize or eliminate barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. We strive to create an accessible environment for all who interact with the organization.

There are several initiatives in MPSD 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:

Information and Communication
- Created a physical and architectural environment audit tools for schools to use.
- High parent involvement in planning for student needs including in depth parent, child, school team in-take meetings and an information evening session for parents with kindergarten children with support needs done in partnership with Mission Association for Community Living (MACL).
- Transition Fairs for families and youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to adulthood in partnerships with community and provincially based organizations.
- Sharing of information on the Accessible BC Act with school staff, student services staff, principals and vice-principals, Committee of the Whole including a presentation at a school board meeting.
- Support for complex communication needs, including training for everyone who work with students is effective. Incredible inclusive opportunities for students with complex communication support needs has been identified as a strength.

Student Supports
- The school continues to assess student accommodation requirements with a personalized child/youth centered approach, consulting with families, therapists, teachers, and school teams, and district staff as required.
- Advocating that an effective support is one that respects the dignity of the student with a disability, meets individual needs, best promotes inclusion and full participation.
- Promoting the aim of accommodation and support which is the inclusion and full participation of students with disabilities in an educational program as well as all aspects of school life. School and district staff must make efforts to build or adapt educational services to accommodate students with disabilities in a way that promotes their full participation.
- Supports are strength based to ensure student needs are met with effective an optimistic strategies and interventions.

Mental Health and Well-being

- MPSD recognizes the importance of mental health and well-being of its students and staff, specifically post COVID as the schools react to the unfinished learning that occurred for many students at a key time in their development. Planning has taken place to address implementation of effective services to improve the mental health and well-being of students and staff to ensure support and positive outcomes.
- Training programs continue to be offered to staff to promote student mental health and improve personal mental health and well-being as well as providing support and care in times of crisis.
- Offering spaces and supports for students with anxiety such as a quiet place to start the day, soft starts, filling gaps of social/online, making friends and connections.
- Outdoor schools and programs effectively meet many needs for health schooling in a natural environment.
- Sessions for parents in collaboration with Family Smart and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) while connecting discusses services for child and youth who are experiencing mental health concerns.
- Social Emotional Leads in schools focusing on awareness of how staff and students 'show up' in a space through emotional check-ins and an understanding that all emotions are acceptable.

Physical and Architectural Environment

- A Physical and Architectural Environment Audit for most schools has been conducted (HMS, HPMS, MSS, FLC and Dewdney, Deroche, Cherry Hill, ESR, Hatzic, Silverdale and Stave Falls Elementary schools).
- MPSD continually invests in upgrades to existing facilities to new standards that support accessible school communities, such as, automatic doors, contrast painting, washroom upgrades, and sensory spaces.
- Investments have been made in Evacuation Chairs (EVAC) allowing children with mobility considerations to access classes on the second floor of buildings safely even in times of emergency evacuations.
- Painting to improve.

School Practices

- Providing training and support for staff to continually improve both attitudes and practice and to adapt to meet the learning needs of students, such as, Indigenous Teachings, Indigenous Cultural Safety, and Sensitivity Learning Opportunities, Equity, Anti-Racism, Science of Reading, Mandt, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Low-Arousal training, Pathological Demand Avoidance, Sign Language, to list a few.
- Continuous research and trials of accessible technologies, such as reader pens, Microsoft accessibility tools for education, Boardmaker, and proven media platforms that allow for varied expression of learning for students and learning capture for teachers.
- Assessment supports allow for varied methods of supporting differentiated instructions base on individual student needs.
- MPSD is a leader in Indigenous and equity education as noted in our committee feedback.

- Continued access and partnership with our provincial outreach programs: Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program (POIP), Provincial Outreach Partner for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD), Provincial Outreach Partner for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD), Provincial Outreach Partner for Early Years (POPEY), Assistive Technologies (SETBC).

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified

Information, Communication or Technical Barriers
- Websites do not meet accessibility guidelines for web content (including closed captions)
- Signage:
  - Signs to show all are welcome
  - Braille on all signs
  - Signs to indicate accessible entrances
- Technology support for families is needed:
  - Help for parents
  - Online permission forms
  - Support for ELL families with online communication
  - Financial support for families with technology needs
- Technology in schools:
  - Better understanding and training for staff and students on speech to text and other accessibility tech features to replace the demands of physical writing
  - Insufficient technology available
  - Increased Wi-Fi access required throughout buildings so communication can occur in all the ordinary spaces
  - Students feel stigmatized if they're the sole tech user in their class
  - Universal supports include the use of technology

Physical, Architecture or Environmental Barriers
- Classrooms:
  - Noise or light issues for those with sensitivities
  - No sound fields to support hearing differences or attention issues
  - Rooms are too crowded when considerations aren't made for mobility aids and EAs
- Schools:
  - Sounds systems in large spaces aren't effective at amplifying for clear sound
  - Need for all genders washrooms, single stall washrooms, change rooms
  - Toilets are too low, need accessible stalls

- NO visual alarms, only auditory
- Not all front doors have working automatic features
- Guardrails need two-toned contrast paint
- All schools need accessible water fountains
- Extending adapted PE curriculum and equipment
- Many classrooms not accessible from the outside door for mobility aids
- Ramp landings are difficult to maneuver, not large enough
- Plan for wheelchairs in assemblies, so not blocking views or having to be at the back
- Quiet spaces needed for calming and sensory regulation
- Accessible desks in classrooms (adjustable)
- Use of low lighting (for calming) when seeing and reading is required
- Auditory supports beyond the classroom, like gym and outside

⊕ Outdoors:
- Playgrounds are not accessible, middle schools don't have any
- Fields are not accessible for those with mobility considerations
- Consistent and appropriate handicap parking stalls that are accessible from all sides
- More sidewalk dips needed for mobility aids, curbs need more yellow paint
- Service vehicles can NOT park in front of sidewalk dips
- Accessible paths from bus stops to school campus
- Exterior doors often have steps to individual classrooms
- Poorly maintained concrete and grounds with holes are difficult or not possible for all to traverse or navigate safely

Attitudinal Barriers

⊕ Training:
- Better understanding for ALL in district on visible/invisible disabilities
- Better understanding of adapting based on student needs, differentiation to meet all student needs for those with disabilities
- Better understanding of replacement curriculum
- More education for students and families on disabilities, barriers, and limitations, i.e., so ambulatory wheelchair users aren't accused of being a fraud
- Strength-based practice is not being used at all times
- Clarification on modifications vs. adaptations
- Clarification on Evergreen vs. Dogwood degree
- More training for Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC) use
- Thought that you can't have adaptations because they aren't available in the real world

Technology Barriers

- Better understanding of accessibility features on school laptops/computers such as voice to text, text to voice, web readers and other features
- For many classes there is insufficient technology available for students to use accessibility features for reader/scribe. In addition, students express feeling stigmatized when being the only technology user in a classroom. Technology can be a universal support that many students can benefit from readily having it available for use in classrooms.
- Support, training, and consistency in support staff for students with Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Wi-Fi access throughout buildings so technology for communication can be used everywhere

School Policy and Practice Barriers

- More consistent EA support, how to avoid chronic turnover
- Student need for supports exceeds allocated resources
- Support for teachers regarding assessment and reporting for students with disabilities

Key Barriers Identified as Priorities for our Initial Focus:

The barriers identified for the initial priorities for our accessibility plan were determined by the accessibility committee. Understanding of actions being low cost or high cost, as well as short term or long term was considered in the identification of the priorities. The committee members believe that all the identified barriers are important, but that prioritization is necessary to create a plan of action. This plan is intended to provide advisement on possible actions for addressing these barriers.

SECTION 7: OUR THREE-YEAR PLAN (2023-2026)

The 2023-2026 Three-Year Plan consists of four key priority areas of focus. For each area, there are details about the actions that will be undertaken and the timeline over the next three years.

While there are distinct priority areas to the plan, no one area stands alone or above another. There is connectedness and synergy between all areas, with the work in any one area supporting the work in the other areas.

Key Priorities: (Please note that the position in bold under Key Departments is the lead person on the project).

⊕ **Priority #1: Physical**

Objectives	Actions	Key Departments	Outcomes
MPSD sports fields are accessible for all people with mobility considerations	Conduct an environmental scan to determine the needs at each school site	⊕ **Principals and Vice Principals (PVP)** ⊕ Facilities	Site specific field access information collected and stored centrally
	Assess Site specific field access information to create project plan	⊕ **Director of Instruction, Student Services** ⊕ Facilities ⊕ Finance	A prioritized plan created with timeline
MPSD playground spaces are accessible for all children and youth at every elementary and middle school	Conduct a detailed inclusive playground scan to determine the needs at each school site	⊕ **Director of Instruction, Student Services** ⊕ Students ⊕ PVP ⊕ Facilities ⊕ Finance	Site specific accessible playground information collected and stored centrally
	Research options for accessible designs and playground equipment	⊕ **Inclusive Mentor Teachers / Physiotherapist** ⊕ PVP ⊕ Director of Instruction, Student Services ⊕ Parents	At least one play structure at each site
MPSD will continue with contrast painting throughout all district property for curbs, railings, columns, and edges	Continue to identify and address contrast painting needs at each school site	⊕ **Facilities** ⊕ PVP	All curbs, railings, columns, and edges will have contrast painting

⊕ **Priority #2: School Policy and Practices**

Objectives	Actions	Key Departments	Outcomes
MPSD will optimize supports for all students with diverse needs and disabilities	Increase in-service in Universal Design for learning	⊕ **Student Services** ⊕ School Staff	All teachers will have taken at least one session on UDL
	Work collaboratively with Curriculum, Indigenous Education, and Student Services to provide resources to schools to support student learning	⊕ **Assistant Superintendent** ⊕ Mentor Teachers ⊕ Siwal Si'wes ⊕ Student Services	All schools will have an inventory of inclusive resources that contain representation from the disability community
	Maximize meaningful in class supports with resource staff (EA, ILW, LST, YCW, etc.) when feasible	⊕ **School Resource Staff** ⊕ PVP	Evidence of classroom teachers and resource staff and therapists
	Offer/Recruit practicum placements for EAs and teachers for increased professional reciprocity and growth	⊕ **Human Resources** ⊕ PVP	Practicum students working and learning alongside our MPSD employees
MPSD will provide reporting order in-service for staff and parents to promote universal, specific, and targeted assessment supports for students	Create assessment documents for teachers and families	⊕ **Assessment Leads** ⊕ Mentor Teachers ⊕ PVP ⊕ Teachers ⊕ Curriculum ⊕ Student Services	Assessment Information Materials created for staff and families
	Provide in-service and training on reporting considering assessment support needs	⊕ **Assessment Leads** ⊕ Mentor Teachers ⊕ PVP ⊕ Teachers ⊕ School Resource Staff ⊕ Student Services	Assessment workshops offered for staff
MPSD will seek to hire a diverse workforce	Work with assistive community-based organizations to connect more people from the disability community to employment opportunities within MPSD	⊕ **Human Resources** ⊕ Student Services ⊕ Equity Leads	A more diverse work force in MPSD
	Create an open and inclusive environment for staff with disabilities	⊕ **Human Resources** ⊕ Student Services ⊕ Equity Leads	A collaborative network for staff with disabilities to connect

Objectives	Actions	Key Departments	Outcomes
	Create formative opportunities for staff with disabilities to find support networks	✦ **Human Resources** ✦ Student Services ✦ Equity Leads	Staff with disabilities report a sense of belonging in MPSD
	Create a staff survey regarding the inclusiveness of the school district for all staff	✦ **Human Resources** ✦ Student Services ✦ Equity Leads	Data for planning collected from the survey results

✦ **Priority #3: Attitudinal**

Objectives	Actions	Key Departments	Outcomes
MPSD will increase understanding for ALL in the district on visible/invisible disabilities	Provide Inservice training to all staff	✦ **Student Services** ✦ PVP ✦ School Resource Staff	All staff will have taken at least one session on the stereotyping, stigma, and discrimination as it relates to accessibility
	Review school act and legal requirements regarding responsibilities regarding IEPs and their implementation	✦ **Director of Instruction, Student Services** ✦ PVP	Included in orientations and opening week activities is materials pertaining to responsibility for students with diverse needs
	Panels of presenters representing the disability community at professional development	✦ **Director of Instruction, Student Services** ✦ PVP ✦ Student Services	A panel presentation occurring at a major MPSD sanctioned professional development day
	Survey school librarians on inclusive resources and materials	✦ **District Mentor Teacher** ✦ **Teacher Librarian** ✦ Student Services ✦ Curriculum	A summary of available resources by site

	With representation, seek out inclusive resources for schools and libraries	✦ **Curriculum** ✦ Student Services ✦ District Mentor Teacher Librarian	A collection of inclusive resources is developed and recommended for each site
MPSD will improve understanding of differentiated instruction for adapting curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students	Have school staff take universal supports and identify 5 things they do well, but also 5 things they could work on	✦ **PVP** ✦ Student Services	Each school completes this activity every three years as a method of identifying training and capacity
	Use interviews with students from Competency Based IEPs to learn more about student learning or support needs	✦ **School Resource Staff** ✦ Classroom Teachers	Students report a balance of shared responsibility when advocating or accessing their support needs
MPSD will actively create an environment where 2SLGBTQ+ people feel safe, valued, and respected at all times	Include a module during onboarding to recognize our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion	✦ **SOGI Leads** ✦ Human Resources ✦ PVP ✦ Senior Management	2SLGBTQ+ people will report
	Provide Inservice training for all staff	✦ **SOGI Leads** ✦ Human Resources ✦ PVP ✦ Senior Management	All staff will have taken at least one session on the stereotyping, stigma, and discrimination as it relates to 2SLGBTQ+
	Create positions for developing actions and resources related to SOGI spaces and education	✦ **SOGI Leads** ✦ Human Resources ✦ PVP ✦ Senior Management	A paid position or position with release time created for SOGI
	Visible signage welcoming 2SLGBTQ+ people	✦ **SOGI Leads** ✦ Human Resources ✦ PVP ✦ Senior Management	Welcoming Signage in all school foyers

⊕ **Priority #4: Technical**

Objectives	Actions	Key Departments	Outcomes
MPSD will increase the use of technology in classrooms specifically to support students benefiting from a reader or scribe	Provide District-wide in-service required on accessibility through technology	⊕ **Technology** ⊕ Finance ⊕ Student Services	Annual training for accessibility offered
	Increase the number of devices available for student use	⊕ **Technology** ⊕ Finance ⊕ PVP ⊕ Parent Advisory Council (PAC)	School and families report sufficient device allocation has been achieved at each site
MPSD will increase availability of technology for universal use in classrooms	Conduct a detailed technology survey to determine the needs at each school site	⊕ **PVP** ⊕ Technology ⊕ School Resource Staff	A comprehensive list is created at each site outlining technology support needs
	Ensure student accessibility needs are addressed in district technology plan	⊕ **Technology** ⊕ Mentor Teachers ⊕ Superintendent	Tech plan includes student accessibility goals
MPSD will upgrade District and School Websites for improved accessibility	Consider accessibility when choosing platforms when upgrading communication channels or websites	⊕ **Senior Management Team** ⊕ Technology	Accessibility is included in the decision-making process for any new process

SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Accessibility Committee meets six times during the year to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of barrier removal and prevention strategies and to plan for increased accessibility throughout the school.

The Accessibility Planning Committee will ensure that in respect of the Three-Year Accessibility Plan, the following steps take place:

1. An annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the plan is prepared.
2. At least once every three years, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is reviewed and updated by the accessibility committee in consultation with persons with disabilities, and other relevant school district staff and community members.

Artwork by
Malia and Jayden
Grade 6

SECTION 9: HOW TO GIVE US FEEDBACK

In addition to the public availably of the plan, Mission Public Schools will continue to post an annual status report on the progress of the Three-Year Accessibility Plan on the district's website. We will accommodate requests for accessible formats of the Plan.

Questions, comments, or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to:
- Director of Instruction, Student Services: Carolynn Schmor or
- Superintendent: Angus Wilson or
- The District Information Mailbox: info.sd75@mpsd.ca

Artwork by
Alia S.
Grade 5
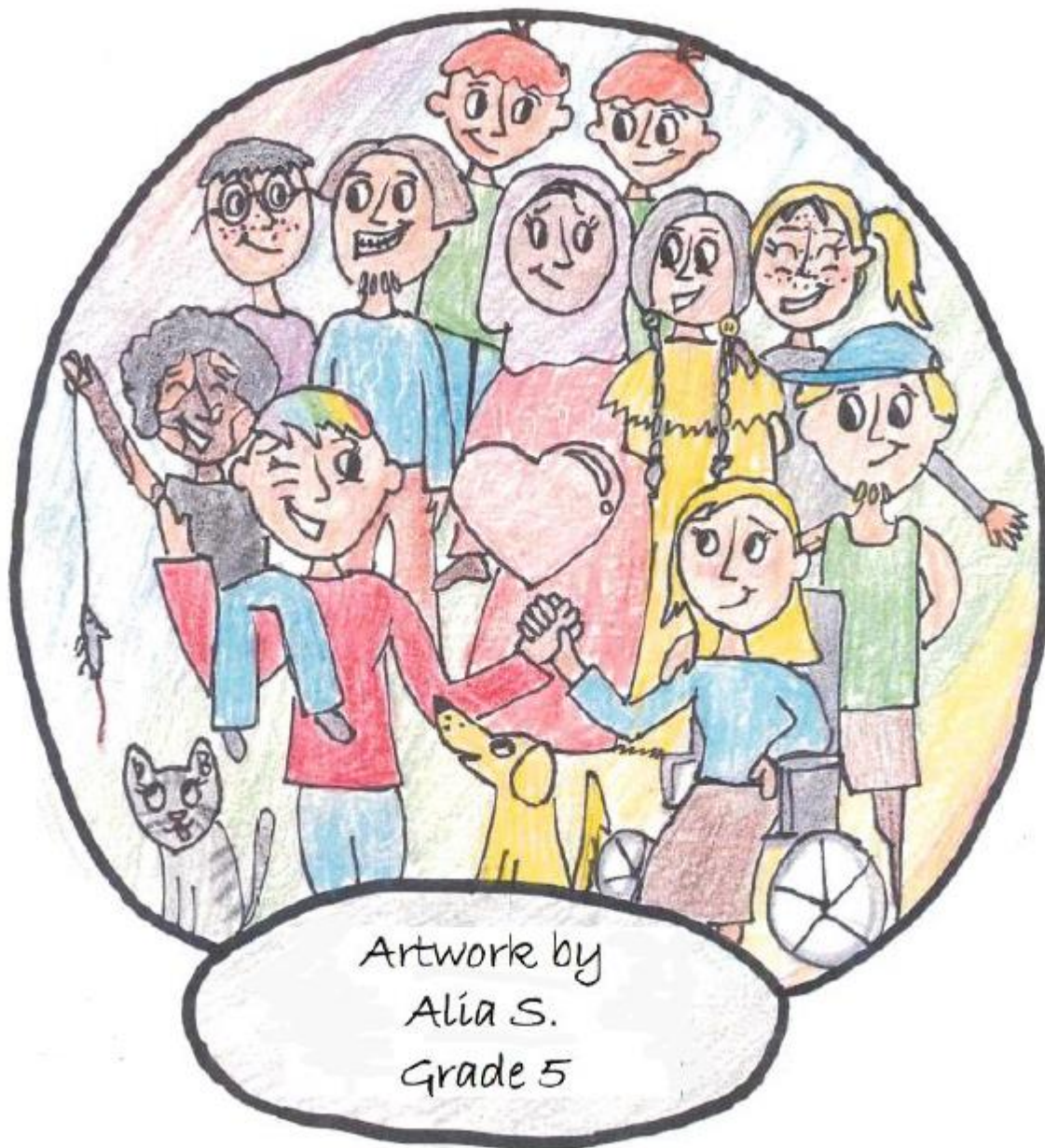
SECTION 10: APPENDICES

Appendix A: Suggested References/Resources

Global, Canadian and Local Accessibility Context and Legislation:

- Accessible British Columbia Act
- Accessible Canada Act
- British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation
- BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary
- 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 and School Boards:

- A Guide to Creating Accessible Play Spaces (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- Accessible Resource Centre - BC (ARC)
- Autism Canada: Words Matter
- B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design
- BC Accessibility Hub
- Brain Injury Canada
- Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
- Canadian Hearing Services
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
- Creating an Accessibility Committee
- Developing Your First Accessibility Plan: A Guide for BC Prescribed Organizations
- Gifted Children's Association of BC (GCABC)
- Kelty Mental Health (BC Children's Hospital)
- Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)
- Multiple Sclerosis Canada
- Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program (Complex Needs)
- Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD)

- Provincial Outreach Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (POPDHH)
- Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD)
- Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness (POPDB)
- Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired (PRCVI)
- Special Education Technology BC (SET BC)
- Spinal Cord Injury Canada
- Standards Council of Canada (SCC)
- Tourette Canada
- Universal Design

Artwork by
Makenzie A.
Grade 6

Artwork by
Cyrianna and April
Gr. 6 and 5