Hope Lutheran Christian School Accessibility Plan
August 2026

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Section 1: Introduction

Territorial Acknowledgement

Hope Lutheran Christian School is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Coast Salish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Kwikwetlem Nation. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

About Our School Community

Hope Lutheran Christian School is an independent school that serves approximately 270 students from the municipalities of the Tri-Cities and the Fraser Valley. The school operates two campuses that offer education from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

At Hope Lutheran Christian School, our leadership team includes a Board of Directors, Principal, and two Vice Principals. Our staff includes nineteen teaching staff, and twenty-six support/non-teaching staff.

A Message from the Administrator

At Hope Lutheran Christian School, we are committed to providing a learning and working environment that supports all students and staff and provides equitable opportunities to support our diverse community. A key element to supporting our community is the development of a Three-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan identifies system needs, priorities, and action plans, and draws on feedback from our school community and the work of the Accessibility Committee, as well as the school based accessibility team, 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 plan identifies measurable actions across the pillars of the Accessibility Act, supporting equal opportunity for persons with disabilities by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers of access.

We recognize the importance of accessibility not only for those with disabilities but also for the benefit of the entire community. We are committed to advancing the efforts of the Accessibility Committee to improve equity and ease of access to services, as well as access to our facilities. Through the actions in this Accessibility Plan, we commit to continuous improvements in developing an environment that supports all students, staff, and the larger school community.

Definitions

Accessibility: The state of having programs, services and environments that allow all individuals to participate fully in society without encountering barriers.

Accessibility Committee: An official group formed by one or more organizations in collaboration with people with disabilities, to create an accessibility plan and feedback mechanism.

Accessibility Plan: A plan developed by an accessibility committee that identifies challenges and solutions for addressing accessibility barriers.

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability. The following is a non-exhaustive list of different 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.
8. **Disability:** The state of being unable to participate fully and equally in society as a

result of the interaction between an impairment and a barrier. (For more information about disability and types of disability and support, refer to Appendix A: Disabilities.)

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

Section 2: Framework Guiding Our Work

The Hope Lutheran Christian School Accessibility Plan builds on global, national, provincial and school specific actions to promote and support accessibility.

Global Context – United Nations

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

> "The CRPD is an international human rights treaty aimed at protecting the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.
>
> Parties to the CPRD are required to promote and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities including full equality under the law."

Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Canada-wide, around one in five people had some form of disability in 2017. Nationally, Canadian accessibility legislation started in 1985 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 seven focus areas, and was developed based on the following guiding principles:

1. All persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities.
2. All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities.
3. All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities.
4. All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities.
5. Laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the disabilities

of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons.

6. PWDs must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.
7. The development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for PWDs.

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

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

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

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

Principles in the Accessible B.C. Act:

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

1. **Adaptability:** Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change as services, technology, and attitudes change.

2. **Collaboration:** Promoting accessible communities is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play. Accessibility plans should create opportunities for Organizations and communities to work together to promote access and inclusion.

3. **Diversity:** Every person is unique. People with disabilities are individuals with varied backgrounds. Individual characteristics 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 Hope Lutheran Christian 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 policies and procedures align with the principles of accessibility.,
- Improve access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and community members.
- Continually improve accessibility for people with disabilities in our school community. disabilities.

Our Approach:

At Hope Lutheran Christian 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 April 2023, we began the process of establishing an Accessibility Committee and identifying barriers to accessibility in our school community. This process involved:

- Calling for applications for members of the Accessibility Committee
- Assessing the current physical and architectural accessibility of our school.
- Conducting surveys to understand the issues, challenges, and priorities of stakeholders within our school community
- Holding key discussions to identify barriers to accessibility
- Developing a school feedback tool
- Developing a school based accessibility team
- Prioritization of actions to be taken

- Establishing a monitoring and evaluation process

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

Section 3: The Accessibility Committee

Purpose of the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, organizations must establish an Accessibility Committee to assist with identifying and preventing barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization. The purpose of the accessibility committee is to work collaboratively to assess and improve community accessibility, focusing on the experiences of individuals with disabilities while encompassing the whole community. The Accessibility Committee also advises the school Administrator/Board/School Based Accessibility Team on strategies to reduce social, physical, sensory and other barriers that prevent people from fully participating in all aspects of school community life.

Recruitment to the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, the selection of accessibility committee members must, to the extent possible, align with the following goals:

- At least half the members are persons with disabilities (PWD), or individuals who support or are from organizations that support PWDs;
- At least one member is an Indigenous person; and
- Members reflect the diversity of persons in B.C.

A callout for applications to the Accessibility Committee was conducted in May 2023 to recruit a diverse representation as outlined above. The Accessibility Committee was formally constituted in June 2023. Current members of the Accessibility Coordinating Committee are listed below. In addition to the Accessibility Committee, Hope Lutheran Christian School also has a School Based Accessibility Team. This team acts as an “arm” of the committee, and oversees the day to day implementation of the plan.

Accessibility Committee Membership

Committee Member	Position/Representation
Darren Spyksma	• Director of Learning, Society of Christian Schools in BC (SCSBC)
Amanda Broadway	• Student Support Services Coordinator, Duncan Christian School • Parent of children with accessibility needs
Joyce Kwan	• Co-Founder, BC Association for Advancing Communication • Teacher, John Knox Christian School • Parent of a child with accessibility needs
Robert Friesen	• Architectural Technologist • Parent of children with accessibility needs

School based Accessibility Team:

Janice Klassen Jennifer Watson Taura Berg	• HLCS elementary school secretary • HLCS elementary school vice principal • HLCS principal

Section 4: Consultation Conducted

Barrier-identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Committee used the following barrier-identification methods:

Methodology	Description	Status
Audit of practices	A review of current practices that promote accessibility and inclusion was conducted by key staff members.	August 2026
Survey to Staff	An accessibility survey was developed and distributed to staff.	May 2023
Survey to Parents/Guardians	An accessibility survey was developed and distributed to parents/guardians.	May 2023
School Physical Accessibility Audit	An Assessment of School Physical Accessibility was developed. An audit team was identified, and they conducted the School Physical Accessibility Audit.	August 2026
Accessibility Committee/School Based Accessibility Team	Members of the Accessibility Committee, as well as the school based accessibility team, reviewed the input and feedback from the survey, Physical Accessibility Audit, and the Universal Supports Checklist. The Committee collaborated to suggest priority areas to target in the Accessibility Plan. This was shared with administrators and the Board, who gave the final approval of priority areas for the plan.	September-November 2026

Section 5: Accessibility Feedback Tool

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

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

Report an Accessibility Barrier or Support

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

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

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

1. Which group(s) do you most identify with?
   - ☐ Individual with an accessibility need
   - ☐ Student with an accessibility need
   - ☐ Caregiver for an individual with an accessibility need
   - ☐ Service Provider/Therapist outside of school
   - ☐ Staff member
   - ☐ Other
2. Please provide the date the barrier was experienced.
3. Please select the location where the barrier was experienced.
4. What were you or someone you know trying to access?
5. Accessibility barrier details (be as specific as possible).
6. Do you have any recommendations for what would make it better?
7. What are some helpful supports you have experienced at school?
8. Is there anything else you'd like the adults at school to know?
9. Do you wish to be contacted about your responses? Yes No
   If yes, please provide your name and email or phone number.

Please see Section 9 of this document to find information on how to give input into the current plan. Thank you for providing your valuable feedback!

Section 6: Accessibility Accomplishments and Barriers

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Accomplishments Identified

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

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

Learning

1. Several key universal supports were identified as being successfully implemented in classrooms. As a school, we differentiate instruction for students, we conference with families on how to best support and address students with needs, and we have REAL program that speaks about respect and inclusion of all students.
2. The school's efforts toward inclusion and accessibility to learning was recognized by many respondents.

Physical and Architectural Environment

1. Our school conducted a Physical and Architectural Environment Audit to identify areas of physical accessibility and areas for improvement in the physical and architectural environment of the school.
2. The school has invested in several upgrades to existing facilities to new standards that support accessible school communities. Investments have been targeted to upgrade washroom accessibility, ramps and door operators, and parking and curb cut enhancements to support main entrance access improvements.

Resources

1. The library maintains a suite of documents accessible to school staff outlining the various methods by which the librarian can support student and staff requests for accessible library resources such as audiobooks, high-interest/low-vocabulary books,

and closed-captioned videos.

2. We have an FM system in place for a student who is deaf, and access to technology devices, such as read/write tech on our computers. We also have flexible seating options (wiggle seats, pedal bikes, trampoline, treadmill) for students who benefit from this. These resources contribute to enhancing the learning experience for students.

School Policy and Practice

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

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified

Learning Barriers:

1. Some staff indicated they needed more training to help them interact with students with specific disabilities.
2. Hearing and noise levels were rated highly by respondents as an area that interfered with both their learning and anxiety levels. Hearing announcements was one area that was indicated as a stressor to both students and adults. Another common theme was noisy classrooms and hallways that made it difficult for many students. Some respondents

highlighted the need for additional resources, such as noise-canceling headphones, more regulation of noise in the classroom and hallways, and alternative quiet learning spaces in the school.

3. Some parents and students expressed that the students were not adequately taught how to study and prepare for tests.
4. Some respondents identified universal supports as a priority area needing focus in the classroom.
5. Some students are not engaging in different supports provided, in part due to not wanting to stand out as needing additional support.
6. Several student respondents indicated they had trouble initiating and knowing how to go about starting assignments and tasks required of them.

Physical and Architecture Environment Barriers

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

Attitudinal Barriers

1. Some students identified that they felt misunderstood by staff who made assumptions that they were lazy or uncooperative or lacked motivation, when in fact they were dealing with mental health and other disabilities that made it difficult for them to work, learn and communicate.

Resource Barriers

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

School Policy and Practice Barriers

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

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

Overview:

This Accessibility Plan outlines the measures Hope Lutheran Christian School will take to remove or prevent barriers to learning and participation and to promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in our school community. The Plan is based on the Accessibility Principles of Adaptability, Collaboration, Diversity, Inclusion, Self-Determination, and Universal Design, as set out in the Accessible B.C. Act and defined in Section 1.

Accessibility Priorities:

Information about accessibility was gathered from staff, parents/guardians, and students as well as from the Physical and Architectural Environment Audit. Based on this feedback the Accessibility Committee has identified the following areas as the top priority for improving accessibility in the school community.

Learning

Hope Lutheran Christian School will enhance access to learning for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Plan priority universal supports to implement in the classroom and normalize accessing supports	• Identify key universal supports being implemented in the classroom (refer to the Universal Supports document in Appendix C) • Prioritize 3-5 priority universal supports to implement schoolwide • Provide professional development on effectively implementing the priority universal supports identified above • Normalize supports within the classroom and inform students how they can be helpful for all	Ongoing
Develop effective classroom processes for modulating noise levels in the classroom and hallways	• Explicitly teach and reinforce expected behaviours around noise levels (e.g., especially during announcements, when giving instructions, etc.) • Remind students ahead of time (pre-correction) about noise levels before students move into the	Ongoing

	hallway ● Consistently monitor noise levels in the hallway	
Develop a plan for teaching study skills in middle school classes	● Provide direct instruction in developing mnemonic techniques for summarizing key ideas ● Assist in utilizing the 'splashdown' technique by encouraging students to write down their diagrams and memorized information prior to taking tests ● Facilitate anxiety reduction activities before test writing	Ongoing
Library resources feature diverse lead characters with various disabilities across a wide range of materials.	● Conduct a diversity audit of library resources.	June 2027

Attitudinal

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

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase the understanding of ableism and disability.	• Have class discussions about ableism and disability using literature in literacy instruction (refer to SCSBC Disability Literature Resources – available September 2023) • Invite adults with disabilities to speak with students • Provide professional development on Ableism https://www.bcaac.ca/services	Ongoing

Physical and Architectural Environment

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

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
People with low or impaired vision can move through the parking lot.	• The parking lot has good, consistent lighting day and night. • There is no obvious light glare in the space.	August 2027
Ensure soundproofing of surfaces where possible to reduce noise for students and staff	• Options for noise reduction devices (headphones, Loop quiet) • Explore and install different soundproofing solutions (e.g., acoustic clouds, noise panels) for the classroom and other areas of the school	Ongoing

Increase opportunities for student access to alternative learning and calming spaces when needed	• Determine the current needs of students who may require alternate learning spaces from time to time • Conduct an audit of current alternate learning spaces that can meet the identified needs • Create a plan and budget for the provision of additional alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified	Ongoing
Ensure that lighting levels are appropriate for student and staff needs (i.e., not too bright, too dim, buzzing lights, alternatives to florescent lighting).	• Determine the current needs of students and staff who may have specific lighting needs • Conduct an audit of current lighting challenges • Create a plan and budget for adjusting lighting to meet the needs of staff and students	Ongoing
Ensure paths of travel are not partially blocked, so that people that use a mobility device such as a walker or a wheelchair can navigate paths of travel unhindered	• Build awareness that paths of travel that are used by staff and students should remain clear • Develop a system for checking and clearing paths of travel as needed	Ongoing
Students can access a dedicated sensory-friendly space that supports their sensory needs.	• Space is organized and free of clutter. • Lighting is adjustable and room is scent-free. • Visuals of available activities are present.	June 2027
Anyone who wishes to access the play space can travel to and throughout the space using a clear accessible path. Play structures are designed for accessibility.	• The pathway has a smooth and level surface that is easy for assistive mobility devices to move on. • The play area is free of tripping/wheel clipping hazards. • Develop a plan and budget for implementing playground adjustments to be more inclusive • Rick Hansen Foundation: A Guide to Creating Accessible	August 2027

	Play Spaces	
Ensure that emergency evacuation equipment is installed in the school	• Install evacuation equipment at the top of each stairway (e.g., EVAC chair or sling) https://www.accessibleplaces.ca/evac-chairs-and-sleds/	June 2029

School Policy and Practice

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

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Identify and respond to areas needed for further staff training on universal design for learning (UDL) to increase student success through a.) increased engagement, b.) access to information, and c) various ways to express their learning	• Develop priorities for staff accessibility training and develop or identify training modules for staff • Develop an implementation plan to provide the accessibility training needed for current staff and new staff induction Suggested Resources: • Novak Education UDL Courses https://www.novakeducation.com/ • Novak Education Books https://www.novakeducation.com/books	Ongoing
Ensure that emergency plans are in place for each student with mobility or sensory needs. Provide staff training on transfers/lifts if part of the emergency plan.	• Identify the students and staff who may require assistance with emergency procedures • Develop emergency procedures for evacuation of students/staff with disabilities and diverse needs • Provide staff training on the individualized evacuation procedures for students with disabilities and diverse needs	Ongoing *(Completed for 2026_27 School Year)*

	• Develop evacuation procedures for students with other considerations (e.g., temporary injury, sensory needs, etc.) • Practice implementing individualized evacuation plans during emergency drills. Inform and prepare (frontload) students with sensory challenges in advance, so they can anticipate and be ready for the drills. • Refer to SCSBC Emergency Response Handbook (revised August 2023)	
Develop a plan for teaching self-regulation across grade levels and introduce self-regulation tools for all classes	• Identify students requiring individualized regulation needs. • Provide information about self-regulation needs during year-to-year transition planning. • Obtain developmentally appropriate self-regulation toolkits for each. (Available fall 2023 from SCSBC) • Provide professional development on self-regulation and self-regulation tools	Ongoing

Resources

Hope Lutheran Christian School will increase awareness and training on assistive technology and other resources that promote accessibility through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase awareness of specific assistive technology needs for students with disabilities	• Conduct class reviews of technology needs for students • Provide training for staff on the various technology needs of students https://www.bcaac.ca/services	Ongoing

Provide access to and training for the implementation of speech-to-text and text-to-speech technology.	• Professional development for staff https://www.bcaac.ca/services • Technology implementation plan for training and supporting students in technology use	Ongoing

Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation

Both the Accessibility Planning Committee, as well as the School Based Accessibility Team, meet three times yearly to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan's implementation and plan for increased accessibility throughout the school. The committee and the team will ensure the following steps are taken regarding the Three-Year Accessibility Plan:

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

Section 9: How to Give us Feedback about the Plan

In addition to the public availability of the plan, Hope Lutheran Christian School will post an annual status report on the progress of the Three-Year Accessibility Plan on the school's website. Accessible formats of the plan will be made available upon request. Questions, comments, or feedback regarding the Accessibility Plan may be directed to: info@hopelcs.ca

Feedback on this plan can be sent to info@hopelcs.ca

Section 10: Appendices

Appendix A: About Disability

The Disability Continuum

Although there is no universally accepted meaning for the word "disability". However, the Ontario Human Rights Code provides definitions of disability that form our guiding principles. Definitions of disability can be placed on a continuum. At one end, disability is explained in terms of medical conditions (medical model). At the opposite end, disability is explained in terms of the social and physical contexts in which it occurs (environmental model).

The medical model focuses on deficiencies, symptoms and treatments. The World Health Organization's (WHO) 1976 definition for disability, for example, is "any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being." Medical model definitions promote the idea that disability is a deviation from the norm.

Many people with disabilities are troubled by definitions that regard disability as abnormal, preferring instead to portray disability as commonplace, natural, and in fact, inevitable. As people age, they experience gradual declines in visual acuity, auditory sensitivity, range of motion, bodily strength and mental powers. Significant functional limitations affect almost half of people between the ages of 55 and 79, and over 70% of people over 80 (World Health Organization (WHO) report titled "Ageing and health", 2015). Beyond middle age, disability is the norm.

The environmental model explains disability in relation to social and physical contexts. In this view, the environment, not an individual's medical condition, causes disability. For example, during an electrical blackout, a person who is completely blind can effortlessly navigate around the home, hammer nails, and, if a Braille user, read a novel.

A sighted person would be unable to perform these tasks easily, if at all. In this example, the environment disables the sighted person.

The environmental model emphasizes that people with disabilities are capable individuals, and it is the barriers in the built and human environments, not their medical conditions, that create disability. Disability occurs when the world is

designed only for a certain way of living, without considering the natural variation among human beings. Barriers are created by humans, and modifying how we live, the tools we use, and our understanding of the proper way to do things can eliminate or minimize design problems that cause barriers. Systematic barriers can be eliminated by modifying policies, plans, and processes. Attitudes that cause barriers can be addressed through disability awareness, respect, and positive interactions with people with disabilities.

Types of Disability and Functional Limitations

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively challenging to perform everyday tasks such as operating a keyboard, reading a sign, differentiating colours, distinguishing sounds, climbing stairs, grasping small items, remembering words, or doing arithmetic.

There are many kinds of disabilities, including physical, sensory, hearing, mental health, developmental and learning. Disabilities can be visible or invisible.

Visual Disabilities

Visual disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Some have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light. Impaired vision can restrict a person's ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a visual disability. Others may use a guide dog or white cane.

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

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

Accessible British Columbia Act

BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary

British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Canada Ratifies the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility Planning Resources for Schools

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

Accessible Resource Centre - BC

BC Accessibility Hub

BC Association for Advancing Communications

Brain Injury Canada

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

Canadian Hearing Services

Comprehensive literacy for all: Teaching students with significant disabilities to read and write

Creating an Accessibility Committee

Gifted Children's Association of BC

Kelty Mental Health (BC Children's Hospital)

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Rick Hansen Accessibility Advisory Services

Rick Hansen Accessibility Resources for Building Accessibility

Specialist Association of Gifted Educators in BC

Spinal Cord Injury Canada

Tourette Canada

Undoing Ableism: Teaching about disability in K-12 Classrooms

Universal Design

BC Provincial Resource Programs:

Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program

Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program (Complex Needs)

Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired (PRCVI)

Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders

Provincial Outreach Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (POPDHH)

Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness

Special Education Technology BC (SET BC)

Potential Grant Sources

BC Gaming Grants

Disability Alliance BC Accessibility Projects

Enabling Accessibility Fund

Rick Hansen Accessibility Grant

Accessibility Products

Accessibile Places (B.C. Distributor of Evac Chairs/Slings)

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

Appendix C: Universal Supports

Universal Supports

Supports and strategies for students with or without a designation where certain universal supports have been successful in their overall learning

	SEL, Behavioural		**Instructional**
☐	Scheduled Movement/Water breaks/opportunity	☐	Consistent, structured classroom routines
☐	Simple, predictable directions/rules	☐	Explicitly state the purpose of each lesson
☐	Visual- step-by-step instructions	☐	Oral, written, or visual instruction, "to-do" lists, or other organizational structures.
☐	Give choices (within parameters)	☐	Front loading using outlines (chapters/tests)
☐	Acknowledge flexibility and self-control	☐	Vocabulary at the start of the lesson/unit
☐	Limit group size (group work)	☐	Teach multi-modal (i.e., visual, verbal)
☐	Positive praise & build positive rapport	☐	Provide cues / mnemonics as a memory tool
☐	Assign groups AND roles/peer support	☐	Allow for extra wait time for student response
☐	Calm space in the classroom	☐	Simplified language/directions
☐	Check-in/out with a specific adult each day.	☐	Repeat instructions to the student individually
☐	Clear specific rules consistent across settings.	☐	Allow for re-teaching of key concepts, notes provided (note taker)
☐	Front-load schedule changes	☐	Reader or Text Reader (Be specific about technology)
☐	Other:	☐	Alternatives to print (audiobooks, movies, videos, digital media.
	Physical Environment	☐	Explicit instructions
☐	Ability to move around indoor and outdoor spaces easily to access materials	☐	Teach notetaking, finding information in text
☐	Classroom zones/alternate workspaces (i.e., quiet spaces/collaborative spaces)	☐	Allow for the use of a calculator
☐	Good sight lines and placement and lighting to facilitate communication for oral and visual language	☐	High contrast materials, large print
☐	Flexible/preferential seating	☐	Use closed captioning
☐	Sound field system	☐	Provide alternate materials at the student's level
☐	Sensory Tools (fidget items, wiggle cushion, standing desk)	☐	Use cooperative learning
☐	Special lighting (dark/light spaces) or acoustics (quiet/noisy spaces)	☐	Use small group instruction/ peer tutoring
☐	Reduce visual noise	☐	Provide immediate/frequent feedback
☐	Separate setting	☐	Present lessons sequentially
☐	Vertical surfaces	☐	Alternatives to note-taking (scribe, audio recording, teachers-notes provided, photo, etc.)

☐	Other:	☐	Other:
Organizational		**Formative Assessment**	
☐	Take pictures of notes & homework board	☐	Use in-class evidence of understanding
☐	Extra time to complete assignments	☐	Adjust expectations “quality over quantity”
☐	Mini due dates to ensure task completion	☐	Reduce # of homework questions or assignment length
☐	Chunk longer projects/assignments	☐	Alternate type: oral, written, demonstration
☐	Use highlighters for important directions	☐	Vary assessment types depending on the need
☐	Provide note taker or notes of each lesson	☐	Provide samples at the beginning
☐	Supported use of an agenda, planner, calendar	☐	Adapt tests and assignments (shorten, enlarge, revise format)
☐	Graphic organizers for writing assignments	☐	Use dot procedure: work to the dot and then get feedback
☐	Use simple, concise directions	☐	Repeat instructions
☐	Pneumonic strategies; Study strategies	☐	Spelling dictionary, proofreading, word bank checklists, etc.
☐	Visual schedule/timetable (i.e., When/Then)	☐	No penalty for spelling or convention errors
☐	Visual timer	☐	Calculator/multiplication chart/number line and manipulatives
☐	Use post-it-notes	☐	Graphic organizers
☐	Home/school communication book	☐	Alternate format: short answer, point form, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, true/false, matching
☐	Checklists	☐	Provide a rubric or scoring guide
☐	Classroom Visual supports	☐	Review Criteria prior to beginning the assigned task
☐	Work organization system (color code files etc.)	☐	Framework outlines, and rubrics for longer projects
☐	Other:	☐	Reduce or eliminate oral reading in class
Summative Assessment		☐	Access to technology with dictation/word prediction and Voice-to-text abilities
☐	Allow for retests or test previews	☐	Work in groups
☐	Extra time to complete written tests/quizzes	☐	Materials available at independent reading level
☐	Allow a 1-page cheat sheet for tests	☐	Voice to text, Speech to text or Dictation
☐	Break down tests into small chunks	☐	Reduce or eliminate homework expectations
☐	Allow for test “previews” to be sent home	☐	Other:
☐	Allow oral answering of test questions	**Other**	
☐	Adapt tests (shorten, enlarge, revise format)	☐	Other:
☐	Other:	☐	Other: