

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

April 19, 2023

Dave Eberwein



HOW ARE WE
RESPONDING?



ACCESSIBILITY IN THE SAANICH SCHOOL DISTRICT

- BC Human Rights Code
- District Health & Safety Committee
- Medical Accommodations
- Facility Improvements

ACCESSIBLE BC ACT



SEPTEMBER 2023

SCHOOL DISTRICTS &
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS

The logo for Saanich Schools, featuring the word "SAANICH" in a large, white, sans-serif font above the word "SCHOOLS" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. To the left of the text is a stylized graphic of three wavy lines in shades of blue and green, representing water or a landscape.

ACCESSIBLE BC ACT (June 2021)

- Staff, Students and the Community
- Compliant by September 2023
- Saanich Schools Accessibility Committee
 - Co-chairs:
 - Robyn Reid (Director of HR)
 - Peter Westhaver (Director of Inclusion & Diversity)
 - Partner Group participation
 - Persons with disabilities, Indigenous persons, diverse persons, and persons with diverse disabilities

ACCESSIBLE BC ACT



Our government is taking action to create a more accessible and inclusive British Columbia. More physical, virtual, and attitudinal barriers need to be removed. Our province is better when everyone, regardless of ability is able to participate fully

– John Horgan



In June 2021, The Accessible B.C. Act became law and established a legal framework to identify, remove and prevent barriers to allow full participation of people with disabilities.



OBJECTIVES OF THE ACT

Increase meaningful participation in communities

Develop standards

Enhance service delivery

Harmonize with other jurisdictions (including federal)

The Accessible Organizations Project is funded by the Government of B.C. and led by Disability Alliance B.C. to help organizations meet their requirements.



DEFINITIONS IN THE ACT

The *B.C. Human Rights Code* protects individuals from discrimination in employment and services on the basis of disability.

This Act goes a step further.

Disability

An inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

Barrier

Essentially, anything that stops those with disabilities from being included with full and equal participation.

Impairment

A physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive impairment which is permanent, temporary, or episodic.

SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

A. An **Accessibility Committee**

B. An **Accessibility Plan**

C. A **mechanism to receive feedback**

A mechanism to receive and review feedback on the plan and how accessible the organization is generally.

Will include:

- Persons with disabilities, or those who support persons with disabilities
- Indigenous peoples
- Diverse persons
- Persons with diverse disabilities
- The goal of assisting in identifying barriers and advising the district on their removal / prevention

1. **Develop a plan** which identifies barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization. Offer advise on their removal or prevention.
2. **Establish a process** for receiving comments from the public on the accessibility plan and on barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.
3. **Assist** the organization in reviewing and updating its Accessibility Plan at least once every three years.

NEXT STEPS

1. Develop Terms of Reference for the Committee
 - *Accessible BC: B.C.'s Accessibility Plan 2022/23 – 2024/25*
2. Invite Stakeholders to participate in the Committee
3. Complete an Accessibility Plan for September 2023

All school districts are required to be in compliance with all requirements including having a published plan on their website and a mechanism to receive feedback by

September 1, 2023

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