

Fawkes Academy School Accessibility Plan
August 2026

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Section 1: Introduction

About Our School Community

Fawkes Academy Brick and Mortar School is an independent school that serves approximately 46 students from the municipalities of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Vancouver, North Vancouver, New Westminster, Richmond, and Surrey. Fawkes Academy DL is a Provincial Online Learning School that serves approximately 103 students from across the Province. The schools operate 2 physical locations that offer education from K to 12.

Fawkes Academy Brick and Mortar School is one of 13 designated Inclusive Education Schools in BC that only enrolls students with an inclusive education designation and is primarily focused on education for individuals on the Autism Spectrum. Fawkes Academy DL focuses primarily on students with an inclusive education designation and offers flexible learning options that best suit the student's needs. Most students are on Replacement programs, there is some of the student population who only have Adaptations to their curriculum and are working towards their Dogwood.

Our leadership team includes an Executive Director, Principal, three Vice Principals, Human Resources Manager/Registrar, two administrative assistants, 14 teaching staff, and approximately 50 support/non-teaching staff.

Fawkes Academy Schools operate under the authority of Group ABA Children's Society. The Group ABA Children's Society Board is a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of 8 individuals with various cultural and professional backgrounds who establish policies and direction of Fawkes Academy Schools. Board meetings occur once every 2 months with an Executive Huddle in the months without a formal meeting. Parent/Guardian meetings are held on Zoom 5 times per school year.

A Message from the Board/Administrator

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

As a member of the Associate Member Society of the FISABC (AMS), Fawkes Academy schools participate in the AMS Association Level Accessibility Committee. This committee keeps our school apprised as to the requirements of the Accessibly BC Act and shares resources among the 130 member schools to support the reduction of accessibility barriers within the independent school sector.

Fawkes Academy Schools have created a 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 improving equity and ease of access to services, as well as access to our facilities. Through the actions in this Three-Year Accessibility Plan, we commit to continuous improvements in developing an environment that supports all students, staff and the larger school community.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Fawkes Academy Schools are grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the hən̓qəmin̓əm̓ and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh speaking Peoples for both physical locations and the unceded territories of all indigenous peoples across BC for online programs including: the traditional and unceded territory of the lək̓ʷəŋən speaking peoples, today known as the Esquimalt and

Songhees Nations, Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke, W̱SÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples, the K'ómoks First Nation, including Sathloot, Sasitla, leeksun, Puledge, Cha'chae, and Tat'poos Peoples, Snuneymuxw, Snaw-naw-as, Quw'utsun, and Tla'amin First Nations on Vancouver Island; the traditional and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw, səl̓ilw̓ətaʔɬ, QayQayt First Nation, Kwantlen, q̓íc̓əy̓, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen First Nations, kʷikʷəƛ̓əm, and Stó:lō Nation in the lower mainland; the traditional and unceded territory of the T'exelcemc and Tsq'escenemc in the Cariboo Region; the traditional and unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux People, Syilx Peoples, Secwepemc Nation, Simpcw territory St'at'imc Nation territory that includes Nxwisten, Ts'kw'aylacw, Sekw'el'was, Lil'wat, Chalath, T'it'q'et, Xaxl'ip, N'quatqua, Xa'xtsa, Skatin, and Samahquam in the Thompson-Okanagan Region; the traditional and unceded territory of the Ktunaxa, the Kinbasket (Secwepemc), Syilx, and Sinixt Peoples in the Kootenay Region; and the traditional and unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh, Haida, Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Haisla, Gitxsan, Wet'suwet'en, Tahltan peoples, and on Treaty 8 territory, lands of the Sicannie, Slavey, Dene and Dane-Zaa, Cree, Saulteaux, and Métis in Northern BC. There should be no higher importance of any one nation or people implied from the order they have been listed in this territorial acknowledgement. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

Definitions

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

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

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

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability. This includes architectural, attitudinal, information, communications, policy or practice, and technological barriers. Types of barriers:

1. **Architectural Barrier:** A barrier resulting from building design, the area adjacent to the building, shape of rooms, the size of doorways, and so on.
2. **Attitudinal Barrier:** A barrier that arises from the attitudes of staff, students and the school community, including discriminatory behaviours and a lack of disability awareness.
3. **Communication Barrier**: A barrier that arises from difficulties receiving information in person, by telephone or online, interacting with teachers, peers, receptionists or other staff, and receiving training.
4. **Information Barrier**: A barrier that arises from inadequate or incomprehensible signage, difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, websites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, and so on.
5. **Policy or Practice Barrier**: Rules, regulations and protocols that prevent a person from performing their job satisfactorily or participating in society. Policy, practice, and procedures that prevent a student from accessing the curriculum and fully participating in the school community.

6. **Technological Barrier:** Barriers resulting from computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones and switches, including the lack of assistive technologies.
7. **Temporal Barrier:** Barriers that occur during a specific time, such as busy times of day or during special events.

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

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

Section 2: Framework Guiding Our Work

The Fawkes Academy School accessibility plan builds on global, national, provincial and Fawkes Academy School specific actions to promote and support accessibility.

Global Context – United Nations

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

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

Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

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, 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 Fawkes Academy Schools, we are committed to providing an environment that is accessible and practical for all members of our diverse community. We recognize the importance of conscious planning, design, and effort in ensuring that barriers are removed and accessibility is increased.

Our school is committed to working collaboratively with the community to provide equitable treatment to people with disabilities in a way that respects their dignity. To achieve this goal, we have outlined the following commitments:

- Engage with staff, community members and people with disabilities in the development and review of its accessibility plan.
- Ensure that our school board policies and procedures align with the principles of accessibility.
- Improve access to facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and community members.
- Continually improve accessibility for people with disabilities in our school community.

Our Approach:

At Fawkes Academy Schools, 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 summer 2023, we began the process of identifying barriers to accessibility in our school community. This process involved:

- Assessing the current physical and architectural accessibility of our school.
- Conducting surveys and interviews 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
- 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.

In the summer of 2026, the Brick-and-Mortar location of Fawkes Academy moved from Burnaby to Vancouver. As such, it was important to reassess the physical space. The move has made discussion of physical barriers in the Burnaby Location, and goals related to these barriers, no longer a valid point of discussion for our ongoing commitment to accessibility. It also brings a new building and the need for completely new goals. This move aligns quite well with the end of the prior 3 year cycle for the accessibility plan. We will still report on our progress on the goals from the prior building, but any identified issues not addressed will no longer remain goals for the organization.

As a result of the school move, in the summer of 2026, we went through the process again to identify barriers once again. As a living document, all feedback provided through the feedback mechanism on the website has been evaluated and added to the list of goals where appropriate.

Section 3: The Accessibility Committee

Purpose of the Accessibility Committee

Under the Accessible B.C. Act, organizations must be part of an Accessibility Committee. Under the Accessible B.C. Act, the selection of accessibility committee members must, to the extent possible, align with the following goals:

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

As a member of the Associate Member Society of the FISABC (AMS), Fawkes Academy schools participate in the AMS Association-level Accessibility Committee. This committee keeps our school apprised as to the requirements of the Accessibly BC Act and shares resources among the 130 member schools to support the reduction of accessibility barriers within the independent school sector. The AMS Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAAC) fulfills the requirements of the BC Accessibility Act on behalf of its member schools and provides accessibility perspective and advice to the AMS Board and member schools with respect to achieving goals related to universal accessibility. The mandate of the committee is as follows:

- To inform AMS member schools about the requirements of the BC Accessibility Act.
- To provide advice to member schools about the development of policies and programs to educate and inform on matters affecting students, parents, staff members and guests with disabilities and/or physical or mental challenges and universal accessibility
- To provide advice to the AMS Board about the development of AAAC policies and programs to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are considered.

Fawkes Academy School Accessibility Team

A school level Accessibility Team was established to create our school's Three-Year Accessibility Plan.

Team Member	Position/Representation
Leslie Van Dusen	Principal Parent of Child with Disability
John McGregor	Executive Director Neurodevelopmental Disorder
Redacted	EA/BI
Redacted	Fawkes Alumni Neurodevelopmental Disorder
Redacted	Parent of Student with Disability
Redacted	Support Professional with Expertise in Universal Design and Modifications/Accommodations

Section 4: Consultation Conducted

Barrier-identification Methodologies

The Accessibility Team 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.	September 2026
Survey to Staff	An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to staff.	August 2026
Survey to Parents/Guardians	An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to parents/guardians.	June 2026
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 Feedback Tool	A feedback tool was developed and posted to the school website. Information about the tool was shared with school stakeholders (i.e., students, staff, outside professionals and parents/guardians).	August 2023
Accessibility Team	The Accessibility Team reviewed the input and feedback from the survey, assessment, and feedback tool. The Team 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.	Ongoing

Section 5: Accessibility Feedback Tool

Fawkes Academy Schools 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. There was also an option for people to upload a video, voice recording or photo(s).

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

Report an Accessibility Barrier or Support

At Fawkes Academy Schools, we want to learn about specific barriers that people face when they are trying to:

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

The Fawkes Academy School Accessibility Team will review your responses to the questions below for their consideration. This information can be submitted anonymously, or you can provide your contact details at the bottom of this form if you wish to be contacted.

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

Thank you for providing your valuable feedback! You will be contacted shortly if you provide your

contact details.

Section 6: Accessibility Accomplishments and Barriers

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Accomplishments Identified

The guiding principles of inclusive practice inform Fawkes Academy 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 a number of initiatives at Fawkes Academy Schools 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

1. Shared information on the accessibility act with school staff, students and parents/guardians.
2. The administrative office maintains a suite of documents accessible to school staff outlining the various methods by which the teachers can support student and staff requests for accessible resources such as audiobooks, high interest/low vocabulary books, and closed-captioned videos.
3. Staff expertise has been leveraged to train newer staff on how best to support individuals with disabilities.

School Policies and Practices

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 mental health and well-being of its students and staff. Ther have been many world events that may have been distressing for individuals in the last half decade that may require additional supports for our school community. 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.
- Counselling supports are available for students, and staff on the rare occasion where the need is identified. Open Parachute and the grants for Mental Health have been leveraged to assist the counselling supports in place.

3. Accessibility Awareness Training
    - Ongoing training continues to be provided to staff and students that supports accessibility awareness, obligations, and inclusive environments.

Physical and Architectural Environment

1. The school conducted a Physical and Architectural Environment Audit.
2. The school has designed classrooms and areas within the schools to be accessible for the needs of the current student and staff population and has assessed the physical environment in all areas of the building to find deficits for individuals with all disabilities. Using this as a starting point for where improvements should be made the Team Lead has prepared a report on the deficits, with assistance from key staff, for reporting to the school community.

Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified

Information and Communication Barriers

1. Some community members identified that it was difficult to navigate the school website and to locate

information they hoped to access. Several people with low vision and with English as a second language had to rely on family members to read or translate information on the school website.

2. Email communication to parents/guardians and staff were not always written in language that was easy to understand or had directions that were sometimes confusing.
3. Some staff indicated they needed more training to help them interact with students with specific disabilities.
4. Not all videos have captions and therefore are not accessible to individuals with a hearing loss.
5. Policy books, handbooks, and guideline books are too large and verbose for some individuals to easily find the information they need, or to read through and have a concise idea of what the intent of these documents are and how it impacts them.
6. Materials at the policy and guidelines level are not presented in multiple formats that are easily understood by individuals with disabilities.
7. Direct communication to clarify information can be slow in coming when requested at surge times in Ministry reporting deadlines.
8. Guidelines from government bodies are sometimes unclear in their wording or contradictory between different documents or Ministries, the guidelines created by the school that reference these materials may have unclear direction on how these policies are to be operationalized due to this.
9. There is a lack of accessible language communication, including across multiple languages.

Physical and Architecture Environment Barriers

1. Many classrooms have noise issues that make it difficult for some students due to auditory sensitivities. This has resulted in some students having more difficult days at school based on staff reporting.
2. Most classrooms do not have sound fields to support students with hearing impairments or attention issues.
3. Doorways have a ledge on them that may be difficult for individuals with mobility difficulties to cross over in the Richmond site.

4. There are no automatic door openers on the main doorways in the Richmond site.
5. Main doorways in Richmond are made of glass.
6. Not all doorways are at least 3 feet wide in Richmond(some doorways in Vancouver are less than 3 feet wide but they are not areas that impede access that would be needed on a day to day basis).
7. No ramp or elevator up to the second floor in the Richmond location.
8. There are no handrails beside the ramps.
9. Some of door handles in the Vancouver location are not operable with a closed fist but these are not main entryways.
10. Both Administration offices in Richmond and the Senior Staff room downstairs in Richmond, do not have 18 inches of clearance in wall space so individuals who are in a wheelchair can easily operate the doorway.
11. One hallway downstairs in Richmond is only 0.96 m rather than the required 1.2 m, there is another route to go between these parts of the building and both sides of this hallway have two clearly marked exits for evacuation safety.
12. There are no alarm systems next to toilets in the washrooms.
13. There are no automatic openers on washroom doors.
14. No washroom doors in the Richmond location open outwards.
15. No track lift is available for those that require lift transfers.
16. Change tables are not height adjustable.
17. Sink and soap dispenser may be difficult to access by individuals in a wheelchair in the Richmond location.
18. Chairs for students in classrooms do not have arm rests.
19. Not every room has visual emergency alarms in Richmond.

20. Stairway to upstairs in the Richmond location can be a safety concern for younger students.
21. Walls are not insulated enough to block out all sounds so students can have a quiet, calm workspace.
22. Fluorescent lighting can be an issue for some students who have sensory issues.
23. Limited safe storage space in Richmond location.
24. Carpet that has worn and lifted from the floor can be a safety hazard and needs to be addressed in Richmond.

Attitudinal Barriers

1. Some students identified that they felt misunderstood by staff who made assumptions that they were lazy or uncooperative or lacked motivation.
2. Not all teaching staff understand Universal Design or an Assent model well.
3. Staff assuming that a person with a speech impairment or developmental delay can not understand them, and talk about the student as if they are not in the room.
4. Not treating individuals with disabilities with dignity and respect and giving them their own autonomy.
5. Waiting out or ignoring behaviours of students rather than using this behaviour as a cue from the student and putting in the extra effort to understand what this individual is trying to communicate.
6. Not changing the environment or activity to suit the learner.
7. Not allowing learners to self regulate or ‘stim.’

Technology Barriers

1. Emails or electronic communications are not accessible to people who use screen readers.
2. The school does not have sufficient technology resources for all individuals who need them.
3. Technology fails and becomes a very large barrier to students who do not have patience with slower technology or those that need more sophisticated programs to meet their educational goals.

4. Staff technology or office technology can slow down the production of materials to meet adaptations or modifications students need or to create communication and visuals that are easily accessible by the student population.

5. Closed captioning on zoom is sometimes difficult to set up.

School Policy and Practice Barriers

1. Parents/guardians and staff identified a gap in staff training on a variety of disabilities and accessibility issues.
2. Staff have identified that there is not enough peer support or staff counselling provided by the school.
3. Staff have identified school startup as a difficult time to manage all required expectations and fully consider the needs of individual students that are new to the school.

Section 7: Goal Completion from prior Three-Year Plan(2023-2026)

Priority #1: Information and Communication

Fawkes Academy Schools will enhance the accessibility of information and communication for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Make information easier to find on school website	• Spend time identifying how information could be more clearly communicated on websites • Edit websites to match findings	September 2026 – Website redevelopment started over summer 2026 and is planned for completion in fall 2026
Increase font size in communications and make information clearer	• Ensure font size on all outgoing communications is larger • Have multiple staff review important communications before they are sent out for ease of understanding	Immediate - Completed
Ensure communication between classrooms is consistent	• Send information to all key staff prior to it being distributed to families • Hold meetings with staff to clarify	Immediate - Completed
Clarify communications that have gone out with families	• Hold meetings and town halls after important information is sent out	Immediate - Completed
	• Provide translation services for families on an as needed basis	September 2025 – In Progress

Provide clearer communication to students in the classroom	• Provide Professional Development opportunities to staff so they can have a better understanding of how to communicate most effectively	September 2026 – In Progress Professional Development Opportunities have been provided but more are still needed

Priority #2: Physical and Architectural

Fawkes Academy School will improve the accessibility of the physical and architectural environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Provide better accessibility in washrooms	• Investigate costs of placing alarms next to toilets	September 2026 – Incomplete, Richmond toilets had some progress here, Burnaby did not, new Vancouver site also has this as an issue
Make stairs in Richmond Location safer	• Clearly identify the stairs with a sign	Immediate - Completed
	• Add door locks on doors that lead to stairways	Immediate - Completed
Reduce tripping hazards	• Add warning strips to ledges at entrances	September 2025 - Completed

	• Add warning strips along edges of stairs in Richmond	September 2025 - Completed
	• Investigate costs of replacing cracked tiles and carpet damage	September 2026 – No longer concern for Burnaby, heavy investment in new Vancouver site to address any flooring issues here so completed in Vancouver, still some carpet damage that needs to be addressed in Richmond

Priority #3: Attitudes

Fawkes Academy School will find and provide Professional Development opportunities to address any identified gaps in staff training or knowledge on accessibility issues.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Address attitudinal barriers through staff training	• Provide Professional Development opportunities to staff to address areas that have been identified as needing to change	May 2026 – Pro D by Untapped Accessibility speaker Trish Kelly September 2026 – Ongoing, lots of progress here but still work to be done.

Priority #4: Technology

Fawkes Academy School will increase awareness and training on assistive technology for students with disabilities.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase technology available for students	• Look for grant opportunities and SET-BC assistance to increase identified technology gaps	September 2026 – In Progress

Priority #5: School Policy and Practice

Fawkes Academy 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.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Make school events more inclusive	• Find field trips that all students can participate in	Immediate – Completed but Ongoing
Build peer support networks	• Explore the feasibility of creating peer support networks through the school	September 2025 – Started in 2026 and needs some refinement and further implementation
Increase hours for all students to a minimum of 5 hours per day	• Create a phased approach and budget to plan steps that can be taken so all students can attend a minimum of 5 hours per day	September 2024 for budgeting and planning, September 2025 for phase 1 implementation, September 2026 for phase

		2 implementation – Phase 2 Completed all students now at 5 hours per day minimum

Section 8: Our Three-Year Plan (2026-2029)

Overview:

This Accessibility Plan outlines the measures Fawkes Academy Schools will take to remove and prevent barriers and to promote inclusion for 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.

Accessibility Priorities:

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

Priority #1: Information and Communication

Fawkes Academy Schools will enhance the accessibility of information and communication for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline

Make information easier to find on school website	• Gain feedback on new website through surveys once it is live • Edit websites to match findings	January 2027
Investigate how captions can be added to all Zoom meetings	• Make sure settings are correct for zoom to reliably have captions	Immediate - Completed
Create Comprehensive Policy Book that is easier to navigate	• Creation of one policy document that people can click to go to the policy they would like to review	Fall 2026 – In Progress
	• Change language in policies that more aligns with current terminology that should be used	Fall 2026 – In Progress
Clarify communications that have gone out with families	• Hold meetings and town halls after important information is sent out	Immediate - Ongoing
	• Provide translation services for families and provide communications in multiple formats(written, visual, auditory)	September 2028
Provide clearer communication to students in the classroom	• Provide Professional Development opportunities to staff so they can have a better understanding of how to communicate most effectively	September 2026 – In Progress

Priority #2: Physical and Architectural

Fawkes Academy School will improve the accessibility of the physical and architectural environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline

Provide better accessibility in washrooms	• Implement placing alarms next to toilets	September 2027
Provide noise canceling ear protection for students that need it	• Have noise canceling ear protection available for those that need it provided by the school, not just for specific students that bring theirs from home	September 2027
	• Identify quiet spaces for students to work in new Vancouver site	Immediate - Completed
Implement reasonable changes on Richmond site to make safer and address Vancouver site issues that come up	• Fix damaged carpet in Richmond	September 2027
	• Replace changing table with one that will have adjustable height	September 2028
	• Replace student chairs with ones that have arm rests for students that need them across both sites	September 2028

Priority #3: Attitudes

Fawkes Academy School will find and provide Professional Development opportunities to address any identified gaps in staff training or knowledge on accessibility issues.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Address attitudinal barriers through staff training	• Provide Professional Development opportunities to staff to address areas that have been identified as needing to change • There has been lots of improvement here but staff still	Ongoing

	need to make more progress and training will be ongoing to ensure attitudes remain aligned with vision of the organization	

Priority #4: Technology

Fawkes Academy School will increase awareness and training on assistive technology for students with disabilities.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase technology available for students	• Purchase technology required for students to be successful	September 2029

Priority #5: School Policy and Practice

Fawkes Academy 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.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Make better school startup procedures	• Identify and adjust areas in school startup that could be streamlined so staff can focus more attention on the individual needs of their learners	Immediate
Build peer support networks	• Continue to provide framework for peer support network that has started to be built	Immediate
Provide staff training	• Provide ongoing staff training to increase the skill level of staff at addressing unique student needs	Ongoing

Section 9: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Team meets quarterly to review progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan's implementation and plan for increased accessibility throughout the school. 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 10: How to Give us Feedback

In addition to the public availability of the plan, Fawkes Academy School will continue to 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:

The homepage on the Fawkes Academy Website by clicking on Provide Feedback on the Accessibility of Fawkes Academy and filling out the areas in the feedback tool(located directly below the downloads for the Communicable Disease Plan and the Three Year Accessibility Plan) or by emailing the Executive Director at jmcgregor@abacentre.ca or the Principal at leslie@fawkesacademy.ca and providing the feedback via email.

Section 11: 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

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation

Accessible British Columbia Act

BC Accessibility Legislation Plan Language Summary

Accessibility Planning Resources for Schools and School Boards:

BC Accessibility Hub

Developing Your First Accessibility Plan: A Guide for BC Prescribed Organizations

Creating an Accessibility Committee

Universal Design

Special Education Technology BC (SET BC)

Accessible Resource Centre - BC

Standards Council of Canada

B6521-95 Barrier-Free Design

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

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired (PRCVI

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

Canadian Hearing Services

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

Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program

Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness

Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program (Complex Needs)

Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders

Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

Brain Injury Canada

Spinal Cord Injury Canada

Tourette Canada

Kelty Mental Health (BC Children's Hospital)

Gifted Children's Association of BC

Specialist Association of Gifted Educators in BC