



Creating your next accessibility plan

Federation of Independent Schools
Association in BC (FISA BC)



Untapped Accessibility's offices are on the unceded traditional territory of the x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We extend thanks, honour, and respect to our hosts.



**It's nice to
meet you!**

Trish Kelly

She/her

Managing Director, Untapped Accessibility



Accessibility for the session

- Accessible agenda and slides shared in advance
- Auto-captions and transcript enabled
- **Options for participation** – use chat function and/or unmute yourself are share verbally

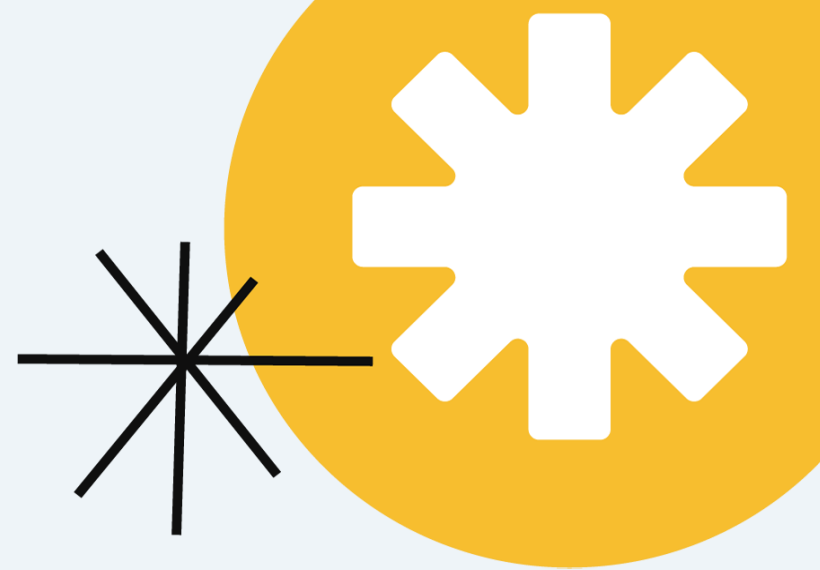
Purpose

This session will help prepare school leaders to update their school's accessibility plan



Agenda

- The Accessible BC Act – **5 min**
- Creating a plan with actionable commitments – **10 min**
- Creating accountability – **10 min**
- Breakout discussions – **15 min**
- Q+A – **10 min**
- Closing – **5 min**



The Accessible BC Act

Responsibilities under the Act

→ Applicable organizations:

- Are responsible for **identifying, removing, and preventing barriers**
- Must meet **certain requirements**

Requirements

The Act requires applicable organizations to:

- Prepare and publish **accessibility plans every three years**
- Establish a **way for the public to give feedback** on accessibility barriers
- Maintain an accessibility committee** who is consulted on barrier removal and plan development

The spirit of the Act

- Represents a **social model understanding of disability**
- If implemented well, it ensures that the work of accessibility is everyone's responsibility – to comply, organizations must learn to:
 - Listen to people with disabilities
 - Respond to their feedback
- This contrasts with the **medical model of disability**

Comparing the models of disability

Medical model	Social model
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Views disability as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An individual's problem• An illness to be cured or rehabilitated• Isolates disabled people to receive care or services.• People with disabilities don't have the same opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Views disability as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The result of inaccessible design of environments, policies, and culture• A normal part of being human• Society must change, not the person with a disability.• Disabled people have equal rights and responsibilities.

Creating a more effective plan in 2026

A “plan for a plan” approach

- Many organizations took a “plan for a plan” approach to creating their **first accessibility plan**
- This approach focused on how the organization would identify and address barriers **broadly**
- With the next round plans due in 2026, you may be ready to add more **specific accessibility commitments**



Updating policies to reflect a modern definition of disability

- Updates to language and context
- Ensuring an accessibility and inclusion focus are present policies
- Establishing a policy development process

Resource: [Guide for Developing Accessibility-Focused School District Policies and Reviewing Existing Policies Through an Accessibility Lens](#)



Engaging community to inform actions

- Following the **spirit of the Act**, your plan needs to be informed by people with lived experience
- You need to **engage disabled people and respond to their feedback**
 - Has your **committee remained active**?
 - Have you received feedback via your **feedback mechanism**?
 - **Have you surveyed your school community**?

Considerations for engaging the disability community

- **Offer options** for participation – for example:
 - Anonymous and self-paced surveys
 - In-person and virtual sessions with options for submitting feedback (beyond verbal discussion)
- **Build accessibility** into your engagement plan
- Where possible, **compensate people** for their time and lived experience



Using accessibility tools

- You can use accessibility resources/tools to inform your engagement questions and approach
- Example: **BC CAISE** resources use a framework that considers:
 - **Physical** accessibility considerations
 - **Sensory** accessibility considerations
 - **Social-emotional** accessibility considerations
- There's a **school site assessment** and **policy support**

Source: [BC CAISE Resources](#)

School Site Accessibility Framework

Physical accessibility considerations

Related to the built environment that introduces physical barriers.

Examples: stairs without ramps, narrow doorways, inaccessible restrooms, and poor signage.

Sensory accessibility considerations

Barriers related to the sensory experience.

Examples: harsh lighting, strong scents, and loud noises can cause people to be over stimulated.

Social-emotional accessibility considerations

Related to one's sense of belonging and being represented in a space.

Examples: posters or books without disability representation create learning and social inclusion barriers for students with disabilities.



You have accessibility feedback, what next?

- When you engage your disability community and start uncovering barriers, the work can feel overwhelming...
- Reflect on the context you're working in – it's **taken generations to create the deeply rooted barriers** that show up in all levels of our organizations!
- It's **not** about addressing every single barrier – focus on capturing and recording barriers in an organized way so you can **use the data to make meaningful decisions**



Managing the data

- **Theme your barrier feedback** and use themes to help you prioritize actions – for example:
 - Use themes to identify patterns
 - Focus on high impact issues (themes affecting many people or creating significant exclusion)
 - Balance quick wins with long-term systemic changes
- **Translate key themes into commitments** that set direction
 - You can also anonymously report themes back to your disability community

Creating accountability

Implementation plans

- Create an **implementation plan** for each commitment
- In these plans:
 - Break each commitment into **specific, actionable** steps
 - Define **what** will be done, **who** is responsible, and what the **timelines and milestones** are
- Ensure these plans are **practical and resourced**, not just aspirational
- Build in **flexibility** to adapt as you learn



Report and be accountable

- Share **regular updates** – for example, annual progress reports
- **Report on:**
 - What you committed to
 - What progress you've made
 - Where challenges remain
- Communicate updates **transparently and accessibly**
- Be sure to share progress back with your **community**

Breakout group discussion

Discussion

Breakout groups

What accessibility progress has your school made?

What has been challenging?

- Take a moment to reflect if you need it
- Discuss with your group

25 minutes

Session evaluation



Feedback survey





Thank you!

Get in touch

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