

Sikh Academy

(Compliant with the Accessible BC Act, BC Ministry of Education Guidelines, and FISA BC Recommendations)

(Developed November 2024)

Section 1: Introduction

Territorial Acknowledgement

Sikh Academy operates on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples. We honor their history and strive to uphold inclusivity and respect for all individuals in our school community.

About Sikh Academy

Sikh Academy is committed to fostering an inclusive, accessible, and equitable learning environment. This Accessibility Plan aligns with the **Accessible BC Act**, the **BC Ministry of Education's Inclusive Education Guidelines**, and the **FISA BC Accessibility Resources** to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Definitions

- **Accessibility:** The process of creating environments where everyone, including individuals with disabilities, can participate fully and equally.
- **Barrier:** Anything that prevents or hinders full participation in school activities, whether physical, systemic, digital, or attitudinal.

Section 2: Framework Guiding Our Work

Global, National, and Provincial Context

- **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):** Ensuring dignity, respect, and equality for all individuals.

Accessibility Plan

- **Accessible BC Act:** Grounded in principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.
- **BC Ministry of Education Guidelines:** Promoting inclusive education through equity, respect, and universal access to learning opportunities.

Sikh Academy's Accessibility Principles

1. **Inclusion:** Ensuring all members of our school community feel valued and respected.
2. **Adaptability:** Designing systems that accommodate individual needs.
3. **Universal Design:** Implementing learning and environmental strategies that serve all students.
4. **Equity:** Addressing systemic barriers to create equal opportunities for all.

Section 3: Accessibility Committee

Purpose

The Accessibility Committee will:

- Identify and assess barriers in the school environment.
- Advise on measures to remove and prevent barriers.
- Provide input for the development, implementation, and review of the Accessibility Plan.

Composition

- **Membership Requirements:**
 - At least 50% of members are individuals with disabilities or representatives of organizations supporting individuals with disabilities.
 - At least one member is Indigenous.
- **Recruitment Process:**
 - Outreach through parent networks, local disability organizations, and Indigenous communities.
 - Registration of the committee with the **BC Accessibility Hub** .

Section 4: Consultation Process

Steps Taken

1. Audits:

- a. Physical Accessibility Audit to identify barriers in school facilities.
- b. Review of policies such as the Safe and Caring Schools Policy, Anti-Discrimination Policy, and Universal Design for Learning initiatives.

2. Surveys:

- a. Conduct surveys with students, parents, and staff to gather feedback on accessibility challenges and successes.
- b. Accessible formats, such as video or audio submissions, are available.

3. Universal Supports Checklist:

- a. Evaluate classrooms and learning environments to ensure they meet diverse needs.

Section 5: Feedback Mechanism

Feedback Tool

- Sikh Academy provides a dedicated **Accessibility Feedback Tool**, accessible at: [School Accessibility Feedback Tool](#).
- Feedback can also be submitted via email, phone, or in-person meetings.

Feedback Process

- **Acknowledgment:** Feedback will be acknowledged within 7 days.
- **Action:** The Accessibility Committee will review feedback quarterly and integrate it into updates of the Accessibility Plan .

Section 6: Accomplishments and Barriers

Achievements

- Installation of ramps, elevators, and accessible washrooms in key areas of the school.
- Implementation of Universal Design for Learning strategies across all grade levels.
- Provision of assistive technologies, including screen readers and closed captioning software.

Identified Barriers

- Limited digital accessibility in some online learning platforms.
- Gaps in staff training for supporting neurodiverse students.

Solutions

- Adopt digital tools that enhance accessibility, such as text-to-speech software.
- Expand professional development programs to include inclusive teaching practices.

Section 7: Three-Year Accessibility Plan

Year 1:

- Complete accessibility audits and surveys.
- Establish training sessions for staff on inclusive education strategies.

Year 2:

- Implement priority improvements, such as digital accessibility tools and classroom accommodations.
- Monitor progress and gather additional feedback from stakeholders.

Accessibility Plan

Year 3:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented solutions.
- Update the Accessibility Plan based on new findings and stakeholder input.

Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Frequency:** Annual reviews by the Accessibility Committee.
- **Key Metrics:** Number of barriers removed, feedback received, and effectiveness of implemented strategies.

Section 9: Accessibility Feedback

- **Contact Information:**
 - **Online feedback tool:** [School Accessibility Feedback Tool](#)
 - Email: accessibility@sikhacademy.ca
 - Phone: [Insert Contact Number]
- **Feedback Accessibility:** Provide options for submissions in text, video, or audio formats.

Section 10: Appendices

Appendix A: Examples of Disabilities and Associated Functional Limitations

1. **Mobility Disabilities:** Difficulties walking, climbing stairs, or using physical spaces without assistance.
2. **Visual Disabilities:** Needs for screen readers, Braille materials, or high-contrast settings.
3. **Hearing Disabilities:** Requirements for captioning, sign language interpretation, or hearing aids.
4. **Cognitive Disabilities:** Support for students with learning disabilities, ADHD, or autism.
5. **Mental Health Disabilities:** Accommodations for students experiencing anxiety, depression, or PTSD.

Accessibility Plan

Appendix B: Suggested Resources for Accessible Education

1. Technology Tools:

- a. Text-to-Speech (TTS) and Speech-to-Text (STT) software.
- b. Closed-captioning services for videos.

2. Guidelines and Standards:

- a. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) frameworks.
- b. BC Ministry of Education's Inclusive Education resources.

3. Professional Development:

- a. Workshops on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- b. Accessibility training modules for staff.

Appendix C: Accessibility Audit Checklist

1. Physical Environment:

- a. Accessible entrances, ramps, and elevators.
- b. Clear signage and tactile indicators.

2. Digital Accessibility:

- a. Compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards.
- b. Accessible online learning platforms.

3. Attitudinal Barriers:

- a. Staff training to address unconscious bias.
- b. Policies promoting respect and inclusion.

Conclusion

Sikh Academy is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment for all members of its community. This Accessibility Plan ensures compliance with the **Accessible BC Act**, the **BC Ministry of Education**, and **FISA BC** guidelines, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement and equitable access for all. This plan is effective immediately and will be reviewed and updated annually.

Sikh Academy

Accessibility Feedback Tool

Report an Accessibility Barrier or Support

At Sikh Academy, we are committed to ensuring everyone has equitable access to our programs, facilities, and services. We value your input in identifying specific barriers or supports you or someone you know may have encountered.

The Sikh Academy Accessibility Committee will review your feedback **quarterly** to enhance our Accessibility Plan. For urgent matters or accommodation requests, please contact the school directly.

Feedback Form

- 1. Please provide the date the barrier or support was experienced.**

(MM/DD/YYYY) _____

- 2. Please select the location the barrier or support was experienced.**

- Classroom
- School Office
- Gymnasium
- Playground
- Parking Lot
- Online Platform/Website
- Other: _____

- 3. What were you or someone you know trying to access? (e.g., program, building, service, or information)**
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- 4. Accessibility barrier or support details.**

(Be as specific as possible)

Accessibility Plan

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, or photos)

7. Do you wish to be contacted about your responses?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, please provide your contact details:

- c. Name: _____
- d. Email or Phone Number: _____

Note: Responses will be reviewed **quarterly**, and your input will be used to inform future accessibility planning at Sikh Academy. Thank you for your valuable feedback! To access the form online, please visit: [School Accessibility Feedback Tool](#) For immediate assistance, contact us at: **Email:** accessibility@sikhacademy.ca