

Accessibility Plan

Updated Three Year Plan

2026-2029

(Developed August 2023)

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION 3
About Our School Community 3
A Message from the Board/Administrator 3
Territorial Acknowledgement 4
Definitions 4
SECTION 2: FRAMEWORK GUIDING OUR WORK 5
Global Context – United Nations 5
Canadian Context and Legislation – Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms 6
B.C. Context and Legislation - Accessible B.C. Act 6
Our Commitment to Accessibility: 8
Our Approach: 8
SECTION 3: THE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE 9
Purpose of the Accessibility Committee 9
Accessibility Committee Membership 9
SECTION 4: CONSULTATION CONDUCTED 10
SECTION 5: ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK TOOL 11
SECTION 6: ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND BARRIERS 12
Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Accomplishments Identified 12
Key Discussion Themes – Accessibility Barriers Identified 13
SECTION 7: OUR THREE-YEAR PLAN (2026-2029) 14
SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION 21
SECTION 9: HOW TO GIVE US FEEDBACK 21
SECTION 10: APPENDICES 225

Appendix A: About Disability 22

Appendix B: Suggested References/Resources 28

Section 1: Introduction

About Our School Community

We are located in Newton, Surrey, surrounded by multiple green spaces, industrial as well as residential neighborhoods, and retail spaces. Guru Angad Dev School is an independent school that serves students from the municipalities of Surrey, Langley and surrounding areas. The school operates one campus that offers education from Kindergarten through to Grade 11.

At Guru Angad Dev School, we pride ourselves on creating opportunities for students to challenge themselves as well as enhance their knowledge. Our Language Arts programs such as Oxford Reading Tree and the Accelerated Reader program help to give students confidence with their learning as well as track and enhance reading proficiency. We encourage our students to participate in external competitions, such as the Math League, Science Fair and Heritage Fair. We offer both Punjabi and Core French programs; Punjabi from Kindergarten to Grade 11 and Core French from Grades 3 to 9. We also have an excellent locally developed music program, which teaches students traditional Sikh religious music, Kirtan and Tabla. Applied Design and Skills Technologies is offered from K to 9, which prepares our students for the world they will be growing up in and its ever-changing technological needs. Our Arts program helps students understand colour, texture, context, culture as well as to develop their skills and abilities in representing and creating. We also have an ever-expanding Inclusive Education (Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities) program and staff that develop comprehensive plans and support all students with diverse education needs and abilities.

At Guru Angad Dev School, we have unique and diverse staff from many backgrounds and cultures. Our leadership team includes a Principal, and two Vice Principals, 45 teaching staff, and 10 support/non-teaching staff.

Guru Angad Dev School elects a Board of ten trustees who establish policies and direction of Guru Angad Dev School. Board meetings occur once a month. Parent/Guardian meetings (or an Annual General meeting with the Parents Support Group (PSG) are held either on school premises or via Zoom (as directed by members) in the last week of every month.

A Message from the Board/Administrator

At Guru Angad Dev 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 to enhance equity of access to programming and our facilities.

As a member of the Associate Member Society of the FISABC (AMS), Guru Angad Dev School participates 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.

Guru Angad Dev School has 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

Guru Angad Dev School is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Katzie, Semiahmoo and Coast Salish Peoples. 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 Guru Angad Dev School accessibility plan builds on global, national, provincial and 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 Guru Angad Dev 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 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 Guru Angad Dev 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 spring 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.

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), Guru Angad Dev School participates 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.

Guru Angad Dev School Accessibility Team/Coordinator

A school level (Accessibility Team, Accessibility Coordinator, etc.) was established to create our school's Three-Year Accessibility Plan.

Team Member	Position/Representation
Manjit S. Aulakh	Principal
Kalpna Mangat	Vice Principal K-5
Nicole Arondus	Vice Principal 6-11
Kurina Plaha	Counselor
Lokesh Yadav	PHE Teacher
Sarabjit Singh	GR 9 Teacher
Rupinder Sekhon	Office (Accounts)

Section 4: Consultation Conducted

Barrier-identification Methodologies

The Accessibility (Team/Coordinator) 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.	Initial review July 2023 Revised July 2025
Survey to Staff	An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to staff.	Initial Google Form survey sent November 2023 Open Accessibility Survey/Feedback Tool developed and posted on school website September 2025
Survey to Parents/Guardians	An accessibility and inclusion survey was developed and distributed to parents/guardians.	Initial Google Form survey sent November 2023 Open Accessibility Survey/Feedback Tool developed and posted on school website September 2025
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.	Developed August 2023 Reviewed and updated 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).	Implemented and on-going

Accessibility Team/ Coordinator	The Accessibility (Team/Coordinator) reviewed the input and feedback from the survey, assessment, and feedback tool. The (Team/Coordinator) 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.	On-going

Section 5: Accessibility Feedback Tool

Guru Angad Dev 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 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 Guru Angad Dev School, 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 Guru Angad Dev School Accessibility (Team/Coordinator) 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 Guru Angad Dev 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 Guru Angad Dev 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:

Information and Communication

1. Shared information on the accessibility act with school staff, students and parents/guardians.

2. 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.

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, especially as the world has experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects. 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. **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 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, elevator renewal and upgrades as well as new elevators, upgraded fire alarms complete with strobes, and parking and curb cut enhancements to support main entrance access improvements.

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. Communication with students and parents/guardians about assignments was provided inconsistently in various classes, resulting in some students not knowing or understanding what they needed to do for homework.
4. Some staff indicated they needed more training to help them interact with students with specific disabilities.

Physical and Architecture Environment Barriers

1. Many classrooms have noise issues that make it difficult for some students due to auditory sensitivities.
2. Most classrooms do not have sound fields to support students with hearing impairments or attention issues.
3. Some larger spaces within the school have sound echo issues.

Attitudinal Barriers

1. Some students identified that they felt misunderstood by staff who made assumptions that they were lazy or uncooperative or lacked motivation.

Technology Barriers

1. 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. Parents/guardians and staff identified a gap in staff training on a variety of disabilities and accessibility issues.
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 Guru Angad Dev School 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/Coordinator) has identified the following areas as the top priority for improving accessibility in the school community.

Priority #1: Information and Communication

Guru Angad Dev School will enhance the accessibility of information and communication for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Develop and implement a clear and easy-to-navigate school website.	• Conduct school website audit • Create a website improvement plan	A new school website was created for 2025-2026 school year and is updated regularly.
Ensure that all communication to staff, students, and parents/guardians is written in plain language and is available in alternate formats upon request	• Survey parents/guardians to determine their preferred method of communication and format • Develop guidelines and examples for communication to all stakeholders	On-going All electronic communication through the school (via Mailchimp) is sent in both English and Punjabi versions once a month(or more- as required). In addition, regular communication for Kindergarten to Grade 7 is through Class Dojo from teachers and/or administration.
Improve the number and type of accessible format resources for students with disabilities.	• Librarian provides accessible books and website suggestions for class units of study	On-going
	• Subject area teachers and inclusive educators develop unit study menus of simplified alternate resources for students with disabilities	On-going

Increase training in the use of accessible format materials.	• Provide staff training on the various types of accessible materials available and how to use them	On-going We hold Professional Development Days throughout the school year to enhance staff development and learning, i.e. Nearpod, Accelerated Reader.
	• Librarian and class teachers train all students on the use of accessible books and website formats	On-going
Develop a consistent method for teachers to convey information about homework	• Write homework instructions in a consistent place on the board in every classroom • Use a consistent format for outlining the instructions for assignments • Convey homework assignments digitally that is accessible to students, parents/guardians and inclusive education staff	On-going Instructions are written on the classroom whiteboard, in student planners, through Teams (Grades 8-11) and communicated either through Class Dojo and/or via email to parents. Emails are also sent home when necessary. Phone calls are made to follow up with documented communication.

Priority #2: Physical and Architectural

Guru Angad Dev 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
Develop a standard for both vision and hearing impairment related accessibility issues (including sound and light sensitivities)	• Provide sound fields in all classrooms to support students with hearing impairments and attention issues.	Noise cancelling headphones purchased 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
	• Assess noise issues and determine solutions in classrooms and other areas of the school	On-going
Provide alternative learning spaces for students with diverse needs and disabilities	• Determine the current needs of students who may require alternate learning spaces from time to time	On-going LST spaces are set up in each building, both primary and intermediate with new resources and furniture. More resources have also been provided to our school counsellor. For the 2026-2027 school year we are working on enhancing our LST space for Grades 3 to 11.
	• Conduct an audit of current alternate learning spaces that can meet the identified needs	In-process

	• Create a plan and budget for the provision of additional alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified	In-process

Priority #3: School Policy and Practice

Guru Angad Dev 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
Summarize and celebrate current accessibility practices within the school.	• Conduct an audit of school accessibility practices and summarize the results	In-process
	• Provide information to staff about current accessibility practices within the school and examples	On-going
Identify areas needed for further staff training on accessibility issues	• Develop priorities for staff accessibility training and develop or identify training modules for staff	On-going Staff training to accommodate Category D students. Two staff members were trained 2025-2026 school year. April 27th, 2026 Socialization Workshop was conducted to support educators with practical, evidence-informed ways to strengthen students' social participation, communication, and self-advocacy. Upcoming Professional Development Days for

		2026-2027 school year: • Class & Behaviour Management • Safer Schools: Social Media Awareness/Management to Ensure Safe & Caring School Communities • Open Parachute: How to Support Students with Social and Emotional Development
	• Develop an implementation plan to provide the accessibility training needed for current staff and new staff induction	Initially developed August 28th, 2025 Revised and updated September 1st, 2026
Develop Emergency Plans for people with disabilities	• Develop evacuation procedures for students with mobility considerations, acquire EVAC chairs, provide staff training and practice the plans in emergency drills	In-place
Improve transition planning for students with diverse needs and disabilities	• Collaborate with MCFD navigators to develop transition plans for all students with developmental disabilities • Develop a transition planning process for all students in grades K-11 • Develop a transition planning process for all students transitioning to a new school division	On-going For students with developmental disabilities, an IEP or LP are developed An AIP is developed for ELL Learners Staff training was conducted on how to take appropriate assessments for ELL

		Learners MCFD if necessary

Priority #4: Technology

Guru Angad Dev School will increase awareness and training on assistive technology for students with disabilities.

Objectives	Actions	Timeline
Increase awareness of specific assistive technology needs for students with disabilities	• Conduct class reviews of technology needs for students	Conducted Sept-Oct of each academic session and reviewed quarterly.
	• Provide training for staff on the various technological needs of students	On-going AI Course through UBC asynchronous.
Provide access and training for the various technology tools needed	• Professional development for staff. • Technology implementation plan for training and supporting students in technology use	On-going Nearpod and Accelerated Reader Training for Grades 3 to 7.

Section 8: 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 9: How to Give us Feedback

In addition to the public availability of the plan, Guru Angad Dev 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: info@gadschool.com

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 you 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 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