

SD33 Accessibility

Board Update
October 2025

*Accessibility is HOW we put our
strategic plan into action*



Accessible British Columbia Act

- The *Accessible British Columbia Act* came into force September 1, 2022
- Applies to school districts as of September 1, 2023
- Aim is to increase all persons' ability to meaningfully participate in their communities by attempting to remove barriers through the development of accessibility standards.

Requirements for School Districts:



- Create an accessibility committee to assist in identifying barriers and advise how to remove or prevent the barriers



- Develop an accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers



- Establish a process for receiving public feedback on the accessibility plan and identification of barriers to accessibility

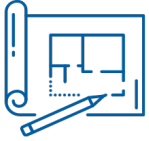


SD33 Compliance:

	Create an accessibility committee to assist in identifying barriers and advise how to remove or prevent the barriers	<u>Accessibility Plan 2023-2024</u> Section 3(c) (Page 7)
	Develop an accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers	<u>Accessibility Plan 2024-2025</u>
	Establish a process for receiving public feedback on the accessibility plan and identification of barriers to accessibility	<u>Let's Talk SD33</u>



Examples of Barriers



- **Physical:** How we design buildings, parks and other public spaces.



- **Attitudes:** The stereotypes we believe, the assumptions we make about what a person can do, and what we believe.



- **Policies:** How we design programs, the rules we create.



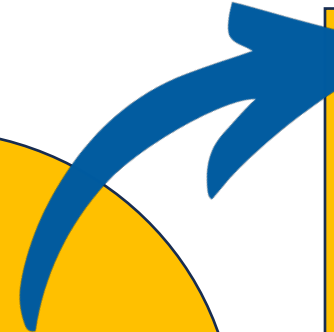
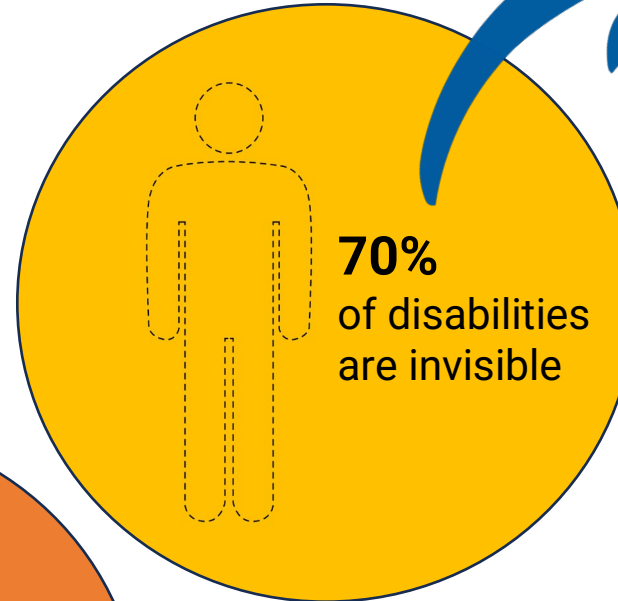
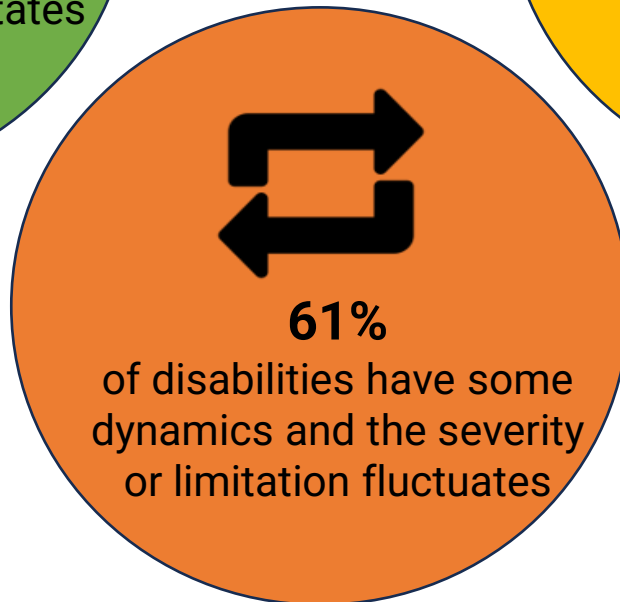
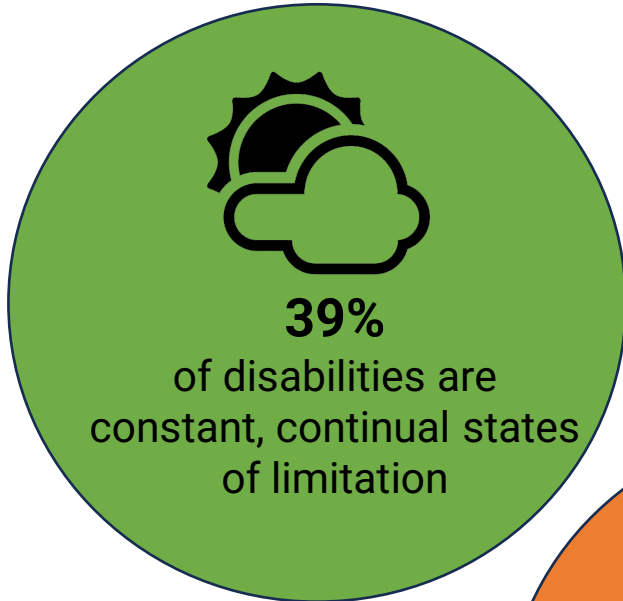
- **Information and Communication:** the ways we share information.



- **Technology:** The websites we design, the software and programs we use, and the way we commit to our responsibilities.



Dynamics of Disabilities



- ❖ Mental illness & anxiety disorders
- ❖ Autism
- ❖ Addictions
- ❖ Brain injury & memory loss
- ❖ Epilepsy
- ❖ Diabetes
- ❖ Arthritis
- ❖ ADHD
- ❖ Crohn's disease
- ❖ Dyslexia & learning disabilities
- ❖ Chronic pain
- ❖ Hearing loss



Accessibility 101: The Shift in Disability Models

Medical Model

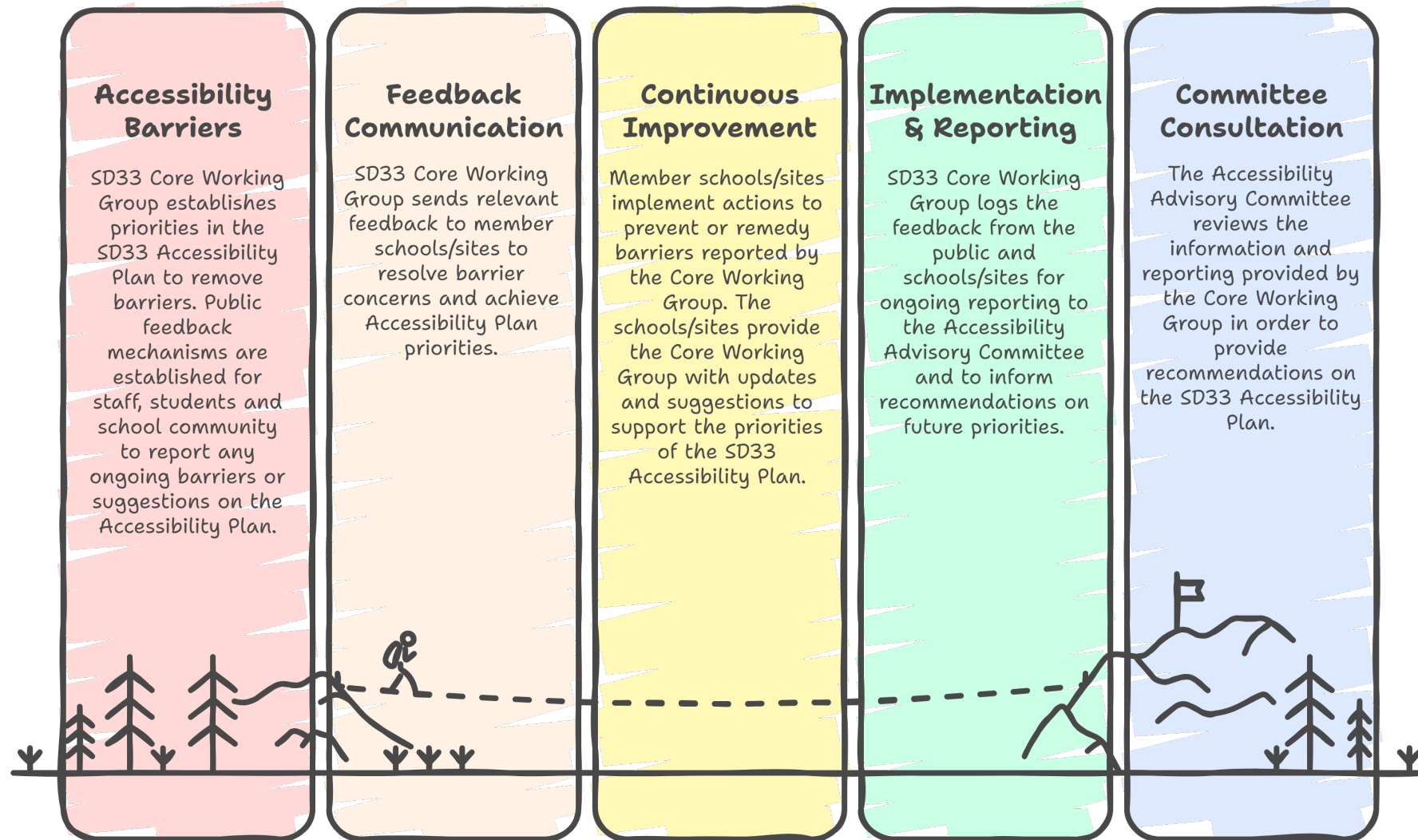
- Views those with disabilities as “not normal”
- Sees disability as an illness that needs to be cured or rehabilitated
- Disabled people are isolated to receive the care that they need
- Members are not given the opportunity to contribute and participate equally in society

Social Model

- Disabled people are no different than others
- It is the environment that causes barriers, not the disability
- Society must change, not the person with the disability
- Disabled people have equal rights and equal responsibilities to contribute to society



SD33 Accessibility Workflow:



Accessibility Core Working Group (Staff)

PURPOSE

- Provide overall leadership in carrying out the Accessibility Plan.
- Serve as the central coordinating body for accessibility initiatives across the district.
- Ensure actions align with current priorities, legal requirements, and organizational needs.
- Provide updates to the committee, and bring forward the recommendations of the committee to the district.
- Translate feedback and committee recommendations into practical strategies that advance accessibility.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Organize, categorize, and prioritize accessibility feedback.

Develop tools and resources to support accessibility practices.

Provide training opportunities for staff.

Create and implement actions tied to the current priorities of the Accessibility Plan.



Accessibility Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

- Legislative requirement with defined composition of membership.
- Advise the district on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with SD33.
- The Advisory Committee represents one collective voice, providing feedback and recommendations to SD33 on the accessibility plan and priorities.
- Recommendations made by the committee to the district are non-binding.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide input into the Chilliwack School District's barriers to accessibility.

Review feedback from the Chilliwack School District's Let's Talk SD33 engagement platform.

Provide information to the Superintendent's office on the school district's accessibility plan.

Provide information to the Superintendent's office on rolling out the Accessible British Columbia Act and of the school district's work on accessibility.



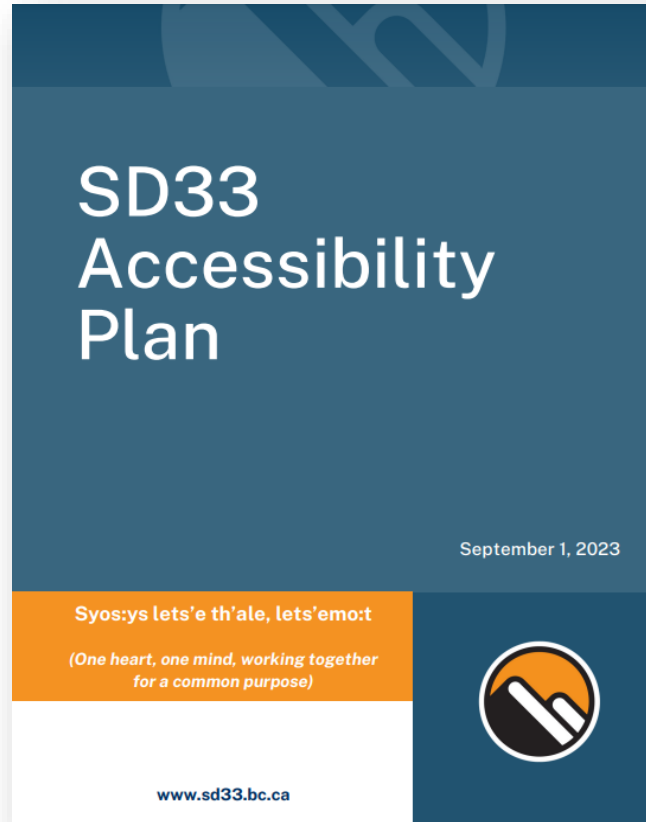
SD33 Accessibility Core Working Group

Name	Position
Rohan Arul-pragasam	Superintendent
David Manuel	Assistant Superintendent
Rachael Green	Assistant Director of Human Resources Accessibility Advisory Committee Co-Chair
Jessica Adams-Louporet	District Vice Principal of Student Services Accessibility Advisory Committee Co-Chair
Brenda Point / Cheryl Lightle	District Principal of Indigenous Education District Vice Principal of Indigenous Education
Gordon Bridge	Manager of Technology
Mayra Frose	Human Resources Coordinator
Cameron Allenby	Manager of Facilities
Talana McInally	Executive Assistant
Lisa Champagne	Executive Assistant
Amy Dhanjal	Manager of Communications

SD33 Accessibility Advisory Committee

Name	Representative Lens
Lexa Bergen	Parent Advocate – SD33 graduate
Gabrielle Bond	Student Voice – SD33 graduate
David McElhoses	Student Voice – SD33 graduate
Melissa Kendzierski	Parent Advocate – Current SD33 student
Erin Newlove	Parent Advocate – Current SD33 student
VACANT	Local Community Member – Organization service individuals with disabilities or Parent Advocate
Holli Vander Wyk	SD33 Staff Member – Lived experience
Omeet Kaler	SD33 Staff Member – Lived experience
Hannah Bils	SD33 Student – Lived experience
VACANT	SD33 Student – Lived experience
Rachael Green	Accessibility Advisory Committee Co-Chair
Jessica Adams-Louporet	Accessibility Advisory Committee Co-Chair
Lisa Champagne	SD33 Staff Member – Committee Support

SD33 Accessibility Plan



Priority 1 – Cultural Shift

- Develop a comprehensive education plan that ensures all individuals (students, parents/guardians, staff and the community) understand the goals of the Accessible BC Act, so together we can remove physical and attitudinal barriers.

Priority 2 – Barrier Scan of District Practices and Guiding Documents

- Develop a framework to review policies and procedures through the lens of accessibility. Procedures, practices and guiding documents are intended to provide structures and processes to guide every part of the District's systems.

Priority 3 – Raising Awareness

- Ensure the work is reaching a broad audience, including students, staff, parents/guardians and the community.



2024/2025 Plan Priority Completed Work



Priority 1 – Cultural Shift

FOCUS what is accessibility and why does it matter

- Learning Plan for All Leaders
- District Staff Meeting
- Pro-D Offerings
- Student Engagement – Middle School
- Accessibility Resource "Hub" on internal employee SharePoint



Priority 2 – Barrier Scan of District Practices and Guiding Documents

- Framework in progress for policy and procedure scan
- This framework will be used by PVP to assess their School Code of Conducts
- PVP to provide feedback on the framework.



Priority 3 – Raising Awareness

- Accessibility resources and guidance included in school start-up manuals
- Barrier feedback signage
- Communications training with All Leaders
- Accessibility dates in annual communications calendar
- Enhancing SD33 accessibility information on Website



2024/2025 Plan Priority Completed Work



Priority
Update



<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1053064773/22ddd856fe>



2025/26 Plan Priority Work Ahead.....



Priority 1 – Cultural Shift

- Middle School Student Voice
 - Schedule a meeting with leads to plan with the students
- Employee Voice
 - Focus group to gather voice and use it to share out
 - Year 1/Year 2 project



Priority 2 – Barrier Scan of District Practices and Guiding Documents

- EPAC
 - Scan of policies
- Web-based policy manual - can measure engagement analytics
- Website accessibility



Priority 3 – Raising Awareness

- Internal communications
 - Start Up Packages
 - Connect 33 section for Accessibility
 - Creating a feedback loop to measure impact of internal initiatives
- Red Shirt Day
- External Communications
 - 25-26 Social Media Plan
 - Feedback mechanism



Priority 2 Focus: EPAC Policy Barrier Scan



Accessible Communications Checklist

In alignment with [SD33's Accessibility Plan](#), this checklist is designed to assist with creating accessible communications, including:

- Policies and Administrative Procedures
- Site-based and other Guiding Documents
- Visuals and Presentation Materials (posters, slideshows, videos, etc.)
- Websites and other External Communications

Written Communication (general accessibility considerations)

☐	Plain language – Purpose, Audience and Structure: • Is the intention clear and specific? • Who is the target audience? • Is the information organized to serve the reader's needs? Examples included in Appendix A .
☐	Plain Language – Design and Expression: • Use a <i>conversational tone</i> with the <i>active voice</i> in the <i>present tense</i>. • Write at a Grade 8 reading level or lower (Grade Level Checker). • Use simple, common words. • Keep sentences short. • Define and/or spell-out abbreviations and acronyms. • Consider alternatives to paragraphs (use bullet points, lists and tables). • Use descriptive headings. • Avoid using all capital letters (for example, use "policy" instead of "POLICY"). Examples included in Appendix A .
☐	Use inclusive language: • Gender neutral • Person-centric Examples included in Appendix B .
☐	Include hyperlinks , where applicable (ensure the links are active): • Relevant Policies, Administrative Procedures or other documents. • Relevant Legislation, Regulations, or other guidelines/directives.

Policies, Administrative Procedures and Guiding Documents

☐	The document includes: • A clear and specific purpose. • Implementation procedures. • Title. • Headings (where possible, headings should be embedded in the document – see Appendix B). • Bullet points, lists and/or tables.
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- Barrier Scan of Education Advisory section of policy manual (sections 200 and 300)
- Disability Advocate contracted to review and provide recommendations
- Education Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC) to advise on policy changes resulting from the scan



Measures:

- ☐ Acceptance and use of the Communication Checklist
- ☐ The number of policies and procedures evaluated using the Checklist (School and District)
- ☐ Feedback received on accessibility of policy manual and website analytics / engagement

