

# **Bridge Educational Society (Okanagan Waldorf School & Early Years Center) Accessibility Plan**

**August 30, 2023**

At Bridge Educational Society, 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), Okanagan Waldorf School, on behalf of Bridge Educational Society, 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.

Bridge Educational Society 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 to 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.

Our Three Year Plan is based on the following:

1. A physical accessibility audit has been completed for our campus, Aug. 2023
2. An accessibility survey has been created and been distributed by email to parents, staff, and community members, Sept 2023
3. A feedback tool has been created, and is posted to our website.

Based on the outcomes of the physical audit and the accessibility survey the following have been added to our Three Year Plan:

#### Physical Barriers Audit Results and Resulting Plans:

1. Accessibility parking space for OWS that is blocked will be unblocked, Fall 2023
2. Staff parking lot will have accessibility parking space assigned as needed
3. Add automatic door openers to main doors, 2027
4. Add ramp with railings and outward opening, slow close doors to Primary Building, 2029
5. Boot mats with rubber backing will replace any with slippery surfaces, Fall 2024
6. Stairs throughout campus require non-slip covering, 2025

#### Accessibility Survey Results and Plans:

1. In response to sensory concerns each classroom will be outfitted with the following by Spring 2024: sensory supports such as headphones, dimmers on lights, availability of sensory nests, appropriate fidgets and seat options, and supportive spaces for brain breaks.
2. In response to mental health concerns the school will continue to offer a 'health spending' account for access to therapies, as well the school will look for further ways to adjust the schedule for those that wish to work in the classroom less and have more breaks in the day, 2025. A staff lounge was added to the Administrative building in response to the mental health needs of staff, 2024.
3. Students with additional support needs who do not meet the criteria for special education grants from the MECC do not receive the full support they need to be successful in all programs of the school. Our goal for 2025 is to add the role of a Learning Support Lead Teacher who can oversee this discrepancy although we recognize the constraints of a lack of funding for these students who fall between the cracks.

As new information is gathered via the Feedback Form on the website, the Accessibility Plan will be updated by the Directors of Education.

Last updated: April 2024