

3-Year Accessibility Plan

Overview

Heritage Christian Online School (HCOS) is an independent school authority that serves approximately 4500+ K-12 students across the Province of British Columbia. The authority operates a Christian province-wide online school (HCOS), with in-person learning opportunities (“Community Connections” and “Learning Camps”) and a cross-enrollment arm (British Columbia Online School - BCOS, with approximately 2,150 seats) as well as Flex Academy, a Hybrid campus with approximately 260 students, on a physical campus, in Kelowna.

Land Acknowledgement

HCOS is grateful to be on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the many Indigenous peoples across British Columbia, who have stewarded these lands for millennia. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan outlines the measures HCOS 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.

Priorities

Based on the feedback gathered from staff, parents/guardians, and students, and the Physical and Architectural Environment Audit, The Accessibility Committee has identified the following areas as the top priority for improving accessibility in the school community.

Strategic Priority #1: Consultation

HCOS resonates with the belief that the first step of wisdom is the humility to know what we do not know and is committed to the Accessibility principle of “Nothing for us without us”. We feel the first step of our plan needs to be to intentionally build an Accessibility Committee and engage in consultation with stakeholders and to more thoroughly evaluate our existing structures, policies and practices.

Objectives & Timeline	Actions
-----------------------	---------

Build Accessibility Committee 2023/24	Create an invitation to our diverse community, encouraging participation in the committee.
--	--

Strategic Priority #2: Learning

HCOS will continue to enhance the accessibility of access to learning for all individuals, including those with disabilities, through the following actions:

Objectives & Timeline	Actions
Continue to equip teachers to design lessons using UDL principles (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development for educators on UDL • Provide collaboration time and Learning Support coaching to increase teacher capacity to use UDL lesson planning
Continue to develop relevant Universal Supports at HCOS (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual discussion between Learning Commons, Learning Supports, Accessibility Committee to determine gaps in resources or opportunities to build additional supports.
Continue to evaluate Study Forge content through the lens of UDL. (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasked to Study Forge team member • Annual report to the Accessibility Committee
Increase training in the use of accessible format materials. (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff training on the various types of accessible materials available and how to use them • Learning Commons and teachers train students on the use of accessible book and website formats • Part of Middle School curriculum in 2023/24 - Google classroom material (Using Read&Write etc.)
Develop and implement a clear and easy-to-navigate Learning Commons website. (2023/24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a website audit • Create a website improvement plan • Create a new website

Strategic Priority #3: Physical and Architectural

HCOS is currently working on a re-build of the hybrid (Flex Academy) location. This process will work to improve the accessibility of the physical and architectural environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities.

Objectives & Timeline	Actions
<p>Review all planning through an “Accessibility” lens.</p> <p>(Beginning in 2024)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the Inclusive Education and leadership of Flex to analyze, evaluate building plans and make recommendations that accommodate Universal Design principles.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Considering getting consultant to review. <p><u>Factors to consider include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide sound fields in all classrooms to support students with hearing impairments and attention issues.• Assess noise and lighting issues or sensitivities and determine solutions in classrooms and other areas of the school• Determine the current needs of students who may require alternate learning spaces from time to time• Conduct an audit of current alternate learning spaces that can meet the identified needs• Create a plan and budget for the provision of additional alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified
<p>Create a plan and budget to meet identified needs.</p> <p>(Beginning in 2025)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a plan and budget for the provision of additional alternative learning spaces or accommodations to address the needs identified