Accessibility Plan 2026-2029

Developed in accordance with the Accessible British Columbia Act, this Accessibility Plan outlines the ongoing measures Heritage Christian Online School (HCOS) and Flex Academy are taking to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers within our school community.

NOTE

Accessibility extends beyond physical spaces. Barriers may arise from practices, policies, information, communication, technology, learning environments, and the design of school activities and events. This plan builds on the 2023–2026 planning cycle.

STATUS UPDATES

2023–2026 Priorities

First, a look back at where we landed on our 2023–2026 priorities.

OBJECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACTIONS	STATUS
PRIORITY 1 **CONSULTATION**			
Build Accessibility Committee	2023/24	Create an invitation to our diverse community, encouraging participation in the committee.	Achieved
PRIORITY 2 **LEARNING**			
Equip teachers in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles	Ongoing	Provide Pro-D on UDL; provide collaboration and Learning Support coaching time to increase teacher capacity to use UDL lesson planning.	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACTIONS	STATUS
Continue to develop Universal Supports	Ongoing	Develop U/U+ Toolkits to equip teachers with resources and strategies for supporting K-12 students; invest in a schoolwide Learning Support Coaching program to build skills in universal supports.	Ongoing
Continue to evaluate Study Forge content through the lens of UDL	Ongoing	Task to Study Forge team member; annual report to Accessibility Committee.	Ongoing
Increase training in the use of accessible format materials	Ongoing	Provide staff training on accessible materials available; train students on the use of accessible book and website formats	Ongoing
Develop and implement an accessible Learning Commons website	2023/24	Conduct a website audit; create a website improvement plan; launch a new website.	Achieved
PRIORITY 3 **PHYSICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL**			
Review physical and architectural plans through an accessibility lens	Beginning 2024	Work with Inclusive Education and Leadership teams to evaluate future Flex Academy building plans and make recommendations that accommodate Universal Design principles (sound fields, lighting, and alternative learning spaces).	Achieved
Create a plan and budget to meet identified accessibility needs	Beginning 2025	Create a plan and budget to address the identified physical and architectural needs.	Achieved

2026-2029 Accessibility Plan

What we heard, what we did, and what comes next.

01 · BARRIERS

What we heard.

02 · ACHIEVEMENTS

What we did.

03 · ACTION PLAN

What we will focus on.

04 · FEEDBACK

How to share feedback.

01 · Barriers

HCOS and Flex Academy identified barriers through community feedback, internal collaboration, event-specific surveys, and the review of learning resources and physical environments. Our formal web-based feedback mechanism received minimal engagement, but direct communication with families and staff provided valuable insight. We have integrated this feedback directly into our 2026–2029 planning.

SENSORY & ENVIRONMENTAL OVERLOAD

The scale and density of large gatherings (specifically RenewED, our annual schoolwide conference) created sensory barriers. Staff reported feeling overwhelmed by the 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM schedule, high volume levels during sessions, and crowded spaces that lacked quiet areas for regulation.

SPATIAL & NAVIGATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

The physical layout of main events, particularly the use of large tables, created a crowded, difficult-to-navigate environment that restricted movement and isolated individuals.

LIMITED ACCESS TO QUIET SPACES

People with neurodivergent profiles (such as autism, ADHD, or auditory sensitivities) faced barriers due to a lack of designated quiet seating, alternative spaces for meals, and lower-volume streaming options for main sessions.

02 · Achievements

Event Accessibility (RenewED)

In response to community feedback about sensory overload, crowding, and barriers to participation, we introduced several accessibility supports at RenewED 2026:

SPATIAL EXPANSION

Expanded the event across two buildings instead of one and maintained outdoor tents to provide additional spaces for meals and networking.

OPTIMIZED SEATING

Replaced large tables with rows of chairs in the main conference room, improving navigation, safety, and comfort.

SENSORY ACCOMMODATIONS

Provided earplugs at check-in and turned down worship volume.

SCHEDULE

Implemented shorter conference days to reduce cognitive fatigue and introduced flexible networking sessions and booths.

EXEMPTIONS & REMOTE ACCESS

Provided exemptions to those who were unable to attend in person due to health concerns or other extenuating circumstances discussed with their supervisor. We provided session recordings and slide decks online so staff could access the resources virtually.

Accessibility Committee

In September 2026, we officially formalized our Accessibility Committee to govern the 2026–2029 cycle, ensuring oversight of our ongoing initiatives.

Committee Members:

- Toni Boer, Indigenous Family Liaison
- Kat Grootjes, Director of Inclusive Education
- Matthew Knegt, Office Manager
- Sara Kraushar, Head of Schools
- Spencer Moore, Inclusive Education Manager

Learning

ACCESSIBILITY-RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Delivered an extensive suite of targeted professional development sessions focused on removing barriers and supporting diverse needs. Recent training initiatives include:

- **Neurodiversity & Executive Functioning:** training to support specific cognitive profiles (e.g., Supporting Neurodivergent Students in the Classroom; Understanding and Navigating PDA; ADHD: Education & Toolkit Resources; Supporting Students with Executive Functioning)
- **Inclusive Education & Individualized Supports:** sessions focused on specialized learning frameworks (e.g., Competency-Based IEPs Goal Writing & Supports; Empowering Every Learner: Inclusive Ed Tech for Case Managers; Strong Foundations: Creating Individual SLPs)

- **Universal Supports & Differentiated Instruction:** expanding UDL principles across the curriculum (e.g., Diversifying Instruction for Different Learners; Universal Supports Training (Toolkits); Digital Tools for Classroom Use & Student Supports)
- **Regulation, Trauma, & Supportive Learning Environments:** ensuring emotionally and physically safe spaces (e.g., Trauma-Informed Practice in Educational Settings; Beyond the Desk: Movement for Regulation and Physical Literacy; Classroom Behaviour & Culture Training - Making Classrooms a Safe & Supportive Space for Students)

DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Completed accessibility evaluations and updates for the Study Forge platform.

RESOURCE ACCESS

Redesigned the Learning Commons website to improve navigation and provided staff with training on accessible digital formats and tools, such as Read&Write.

Physical Environments (Flex Academy)

Flex Academy facility plans were reviewed with the Inclusive Education and Leadership teams to identify accessibility considerations and opportunities for improvement.

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS

- **Acoustic supports:** sound fields installed in all classrooms to support students with hearing-related and auditory-processing needs, as well as those who benefit from reduced background noise
- **Variable & adaptive lighting:** multi-zone, dimmable lighting across classrooms to support sensory sensitivities and focus
- **Adaptable seating:** standing desks, single-student acoustic “Hi” pods for sensory resets, wobble stools, and calming “tuck-away” zones with crash pads inside classrooms

COMPLETED PROPOSAL FOR NOAH'S PLACE: CALM & KINDNESS

- **Noah's Place:** finalized plans for a dedicated 118 sq. ft. Multi-Sensory Counselling Suite for sensory regulation and play therapy, giving students a safe space to process, regulate, and recalibrate

COMPLETED PROPOSAL FOR JOJO'S ZONE: BELONGING & CONNECTION

- **JoJo's Zone:** finalized plans for a central, active space in the Village featuring comfortable seating, device charging stations, and integrated digital tools (interactive media displays and a

campus-wide PA system) for students to gather and linger and to keep remote/hybrid learners connected to live events

03 · Accessibility Priorities & Action Plan 2026-2029

HCOS and Flex Academy will continue to identify, remove, and prevent barriers through the following priorities and actions, in consultation with the Accessibility Committee.

OBJECTIVE	TIMELINE	PROPOSED ACTIONS
PRIORITY 1 **CONSULTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY**		
Maintain an Accessibility Committee	Annually	Committee meets on a regular schedule and reports on progress; consult the committee when developing and reviewing priorities; review feedback and progress together to inform future improvements
Review and update the plan	At least once every 3 years	Review progress regularly and update the plan at least once every three years
PRIORITY 2 **LEARNING & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**		
Strengthen UDL and universal supports	Ongoing	Continue UDL professional development; review and develop Universal Supports to address learning barriers (annual review); continue evaluating Study Forge content for accessibility
Improve access to accessible-format materials	Ongoing	Improve access to accessible-format materials and support staff and students in using them through ongoing training
Review policies and practices	To confirm	Review policies and practices for accessibility, including exemptions and accommodations
PRIORITY 3 **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS & EVENTS**		

OBJECTIVE	TIMELINE	PROPOSED ACTIONS
Sensory-friendly staff events	2027/28, then review each year	Use RenewED and other staff event feedback to implement practical sensory and participation supports: quiet room with streamed worship and quiet lunch space; low-stimulation seating labelled “quiet seating”; written agendas or note-taking outlines in advance; built-in movement breaks
Physical and architectural	To confirm	Review Flex Academy's physical environment for remaining barriers, assessing lighting, sound, washroom accessibility, navigation, and alternative learning spaces; develop action plans and budgets for alternative learning space proposals
PRIORITY 4 **COMMUNICATION & PARTICIPATION**		
Gather and welcome community feedback	Ongoing	Continue gathering feedback from families, staff, and community members; maintain a visible, accessible feedback mechanism and welcome feedback through direct communication and existing school surveys
Plan communications and events with accessibility in mind	Ongoing	Consider accessibility when planning communications, professional development, meetings, and schoolwide events

04 · Feedback

HCOS and Flex Academy welcome feedback on this Accessibility Plan and on barriers that affect individuals interacting with the school. Community members can share feedback through the school's accessibility feedback form or by contacting the Accessibility Committee members. We also consider feedback received through relevant surveys (such as RenewED event surveys).

Share Accessibility Feedback

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