



Accessibility Plan

2023 - 2026



We respectfully acknowledge that Phoenix Magnet Academy is located on the unceded traditional territory of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation). We honor their connection to this land and their contributions to our community.

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About Our School

At Phoenix Magnet Academy (PMA) our educators support and lead students to develop their potential through formal and informal (experiential) education. PMA and its leadership extend far past student preparation for university. We prepare them for life before, during and long after their university experience.

At PMA classes are small and teachers are student focused in both the planning and delivery of the new British Columbia Ministry of Education Curriculum. With the assistance of our Experiential Education Staff and our Academic Counselling Staff, our Academic Team integrates authentic and growth focused activities inside and outside the classroom: activities that respect the diversity and engage the interests of our PMA students.

PMA families value learning, a sense of belonging, adventure and personal growth. Our students are curious, inclusive and open to discovery about themselves, others, different cultures, new activities and the natural world.

PMA staff seek out and celebrate the passions of our students, as we explore and learn together – through a carefully crafted combination of classwork, individual study, group work and collaborative experiential education in the world-renowned Squamish Valley, British Columbia, Canada.

-Geoff Taylor, Head of School

Commitment

PMA is dedicated to creating an environment where all students can thrive, regardless of their background or abilities. We will actively seek feedback and make necessary adjustments to our practices to fulfill this commitment. This plan will be in place for three years, with regular evaluations to measure progress and make necessary adjustments.

Values

PMA is committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and accessible environment for all students, staff, and families. We value every individual's unique perspectives and strive to create a space where everyone feels respected and included.

Guiding Principles

As per the requirements of the BC Accessible Act, the following guiding principles were used in the development of this plan:

Inclusion: All British Columbians, including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equally in their communities.

Adaptability: Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change as services, technology, and attitudes change.

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.

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.

Self-determination: Accessibility plans should seek to empower people with disabilities to make their own choices and pursue the lives they wish to live.

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 wish to interact with the Organization.

-Adapted from the [BC Framework for Accessibility Legislation](#).

Objectives

1. **Physical Accessibility:** Ensure all PMA facilities are accessible, including ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms.
2. **Inclusive Curriculum:** Incorporate diverse perspectives, including Indigenous knowledge, in our curriculum to reflect the diverse backgrounds of our students.
3. **Support Services:** Provide access to counselling, special education resources, and mental health support to meet the needs of all students. PMA welcomed their first clinical counsellor to the team in September 2024.
4. **Self-Determination and Accessibility:** Empower students to advocate for their own needs by promoting self-determination and providing accessible tools and resources to support their learning.

5. **Professional Development:** Offer ongoing training for staff on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility best practices.
6. **Community Engagement:** Involve families and local community members, including Indigenous leaders, in school activities and decision-making processes. PMA collaborates with a local elder who participates in orientation, leads professional development, and conducts experiential classroom activities with our staff and students.

Goals

The PMA Accessibility Committee has decided upon the following 4 goals to be included in our three-year plan:

Goal #1 Building a school culture that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion. As an international school, we will weave our students' unique backgrounds into all we do.

REQUIRED ACTION: The school aims to build on all the work already being done in the classroom regarding diversity (incorporating First Peoples' learning, using culturally diverse texts/resources, etc.) by also highlighting and celebrating our students' unique backgrounds in the dormitory through cooking, holiday celebrations and important cultural events (Chinese New Year, Day of the Dead, etc.). One resident advisor has been tasked with overseeing these activities for the 2024/25 school year.

TIMELINE: Ongoing starting September 2024

Goal #2 Ensure our staff have the necessary training to best support English language learners in the classroom.

REQUIRED ACTION: PMA will offer professional development/training focused on effective ELL strategies, including differentiated instruction, language acquisition theories, and culturally responsive teaching across all subject areas. Staff will be encouraged to complete additional certification in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

TIMELINE: Ongoing through 2026

Goal #3 Develop and implement a comprehensive support program for international students that focuses on their mental health and well-being.

REQUIRED ACTION: PMA will hire an on-site clinical counsellor for the 2024-25 school year. The counsellor will be invited to visit the school beforehand to offer professional development training around mental health to all staff. Both teaching and dorm staff will receive training to ensure they can be proactive in recognizing signs of stress, anxiety, or depression and provide/link students to the appropriate support. The school administration will work with the counsellor to develop a support program that can be implemented beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

TIMELINE: Ongoing with formal review of program at end of 2024

Goal #4 Continuous improvement of physical and digital accessibility.

REQUIRED ACTION: Accessibility audits of both our physical and digital spaces. The aim is for this to be done in collaboration with Capilano University and/or Coast Mountain Academy (PMA and CMA lease their space from Capilano University).

TIMELINE: Complete by June 2026

Our Approach

PMA held its first meeting in the fall of 2023 to discuss the formation of a PMA Accessibility Committee. As a relatively new school with only 20+ students and four teaching staff, this plan will continue to grow with the school. Regardless of our size, PMA recognizes the important work our accessibility committee is tasked with and early discussions have already resulted in identifying various barriers to accessibility and how we plan to remedy these over time. The committee will meet quarterly (September, January, April and June) with meeting notes and required follow up stored on the school's SharePoint.

As part of our commitment to this plan, PMA has developed an [online survey tool](#) to gather feedback from our students, parents, and local community. The information gathered via this survey will be used to prioritize our actions and activities in relation to our accessibility goals.

PMA Accessibility Committee

PMA's Accessibility Committee currently includes the following members:

Geoff Taylor, Head of School

Anita Airisto, Deputy Head of School

Jesse Godlington, Experiential Learning Coordinator

Travis Webber, Teacher

NOTE: The committee will look to expand to include other stakeholders, including parents, at least one Indigenous person and students in the near future.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Feedback

The Accessibility Committee will regularly monitor progress toward fulfilling the commitments of each goal in the Accessibility Plan, as well as information shared through the various feedback mechanisms.

For general inquiries please refer to the following contacts:

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