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*Superintendent*

October 23, 2025

The Honorable Ghazala Hashmi, Chair  
Senate Education and Health Committee  
201 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Virginia General Assembly Building  
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Sam Rasoul, Chair  
House Education Committee  
201 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Virginia General Assembly Building  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Hashmi and Delegate Rasoul,

Botetourt County Public Schools respectfully submits its Report on Accessibility Findings and Recommendations as required by HB 2278.

The Division Contact for this report is:  
Andy Dewease, Director of Operations  
Botetourt County Public Schools  
143 Poor Farm Road  
Fincastle, VA 24083

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Womack, Ed.D.  
Division Superintendent



## **BOTETOURT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS HB2278 ACCESSIBILITY REPORT**

### **Executive Summary**

In accordance with Virginia House Bill 2278 (2025), Botetourt County Public Schools (BCPS) conducted a comprehensive review of all school buildings and grounds to evaluate physical accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This report addresses:

- (i) physical accessibility challenges within school facilities and grounds;
- (ii) challenges related to access to programs and supports;
- (iii) the division's plan to identify and eliminate barriers; and
- (iv) potential ways state agencies can assist local divisions in advancing accessibility.

This review confirms that:

1. All BCPS facilities were constructed in compliance with the building codes in effect at the time of their original construction.
2. All subsequent renovations and additions have been designed and completed in accordance with current accessibility standards, including the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.
3. Botetourt County Public Schools maintains annual review processes to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility and inclusion.

### **Methodology of Review**

Botetourt County Public Schools conducted a division wide, facility-by-facility assessment that included all schools, athletic facilities, and exterior grounds. The review followed the methodology outlined in the U.S. Government Accountability Office's June 2020 report (GAO-20-448), *K-12 Education: School Districts Need Better Information to Improve Physical Accessibility of School Facilities*, as recommended by the legislation.

Input was gathered from key stakeholders, including the special education department, instructional services, school administrators, and facilities staff, to ensure a well-rounded assessment of both physical and programmatic accessibility.

The review considered two principal regulatory frameworks:

1. **Current Codes:** The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), including the Virginia Construction Code (VCC), the Virginia Existing Building Code (VEBC), and referenced ICC A117.1, as well as the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Facilities were evaluated for compliance with applicable accessibility requirements for any alterations or new construction since their original build date.
2. **Original Construction Codes and Maintenance Standards:** Each school's original components were reviewed for compliance with the codes in effect at the time of construction, as well as the Virginia Maintenance Code (VMC) where applicable.

## **Summary of Findings**

Based on our review, Botetourt County Public Schools confirms that its facilities meet the accessibility standards in place at the time of their construction and that all subsequent projects adhere to the current Virginia USBC and ADA design standards.

While our facilities are compliant from a regulatory standpoint, HB2278 encourages divisions to look beyond historical compliance and proactively identify opportunities for enhanced accessibility. Accordingly, this report identifies areas where future improvements may further benefit students, staff, families, and visitors with disabilities.

## **Proactive Action Plan**

Accessibility remains a central consideration in the school division's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process. Each year, the CIP evaluation includes a review of facility conditions with specific attention to barriers that may limit full participation in educational and extracurricular programs.

### **Annual Capital Improvement Plan Inputs**

- Administrator requests (program access and site-level concerns)
- Facilities Department evaluations (building conditions and barrier observations)
- Capital planning needs (lifecycle, project scope, and cost analysis)
- Security and safety assessments (circulation, egress, and operational factors)

### **Screening and Prioritization**

- Considerations include safety, accessibility, impact on students and staff, feasibility, and funding alignment.
- Planning-level scopes and estimated costs are developed for inclusion in the CIP.

This structured framework is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that planning decisions reflect current facility conditions, stakeholder feedback, and available resources.

## **Conclusion**

Botetourt County Public Schools is committed to maintaining safe, inclusive, and fully accessible learning environments for all individuals. This report confirms compliance with applicable accessibility codes and establishes a framework for ongoing improvement.

To achieve the intent of House Bill 2278 and ensure sustainable accessibility enhancements, BCPS respectfully requests targeted state funding to support implementation efforts. Meaningful progress requires continued collaboration between local school divisions and state agencies to ensure accessibility is achieved without creating unfunded mandates.

Botetourt County Public Schools looks forward to continued partnership with the Virginia Department of Education and other state entities in advancing accessibility for all students, staff, and community members.