



Chesterfield
County
Public Schools

John T. Murray, Ed.D.
Superintendent
superintendent@ccpsnet.net
804-348-2083

October 24, 2025

Senator Ghazala Hashmi, Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Health

Delegate Sam Rasoul, Chair
House Committee on Education

Virginia General Assembly
Richmond, Virginia

Re: HB 2278 Accessibility Review Report – Chesterfield County Public Schools

Dear Committee Chairs:

In accordance with the requirements of House Bill 2278, Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS) has conducted a division-wide review of accessibility across our elementary and secondary schools. This review focused on identifying physical barriers that may affect individuals with disabilities and assessing how our facilities support full participation in all aspects of school life. CCPS understands the intent of the House Bill 2278 is meant to exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, ensuring that all students have access to educational opportunities.

Review Process and Findings

CCPS completed an internal review led jointly by our Departments of Facilities and Special Education, with input from school-based leaders. The team examined all campuses for accessibility challenges related to building entrances, classroom layouts, restrooms, common spaces, and outdoor areas, including playgrounds and athletic fields. CCPS reviewed all schools, but given the time constraints of this report and the large number of schools operated by CCPS, we did the most extensive review in schools that were constructed prior to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Physically, many of our school buildings already meet or exceed accessibility expectations outlined in the June 2020 report, GAO20-448, particularly those built or renovated within the past two decades. Many older schools, however, were designed in an era that pre-dated modern approaches to accessibility and present remaining challenges related to exterior ramps, door hardware, classroom orientation, stage access, and playground inclusivity. These findings, and in particular the range of accessibility as buildings were designed, are consistent with the typical conditions of many school divisions across Virginia.



The review also included an assessment of the grounds surrounding each school. While most exterior accessibility issues have been addressed through past projects, some sites still require additional improvements to ensure that walking paths are adequately paved and that students with mobility needs can easily access campus areas outside the main building, such as temporary classroom spaces. In a small number of cases, there are also concerns about accessibility to athletic fields and other exterior learning or recreational areas.

In addition to the internal review conducted by the Departments of Facilities and Special Education of CCPS school buildings, CCPS consulted with the division's Career and Technical Education (CTE) leadership to discuss the evaluations conducted in compliance with their federally mandated six-year review schedule. The criteria included in this process are in close alignment with the full report GAO20-448.

Progress to Date

Over the past decade, CCPS has made substantial progress in modernizing facilities and ensuring that accessibility is integrated into every new construction and major renovation project. Recent school replacements including A.M. Davis Elementary School, Beulah Elementary School, Falling Creek Middle School, and Harrowgate Elementary School, among many others, were designed to provide universal access to all building areas, playgrounds, and community spaces. Renovations at Providence Middle School and other campuses have also improved accessibility through upgraded entrances, interior circulation routes, and modern restrooms. In other cases, we have added lifts and other physical improvements as student or staff needs have been identified. For instance, lifts have been added at Midlothian Middle, Robious Middle, Salem Middle, Matoaca Middle, and Chester Early Childhood Learning Academy as students or staff members who needed this equipment joined the school community.

CCPS has paired these facility investments with a sustained effort to reduce the number of trailer classrooms, ensuring that students learn in fully accessible, permanent facilities. Through strategic rezoning, improved space utilization, and construction of new buildings, the division will eliminate nearly 40 trailer classrooms in the upcoming school year, followed by another approximately 20 the following year as a new west area high school is opened. This commitment reflects our belief that accessibility includes not only compliance, but also the dignity and safety that come with high-quality, purpose-built learning environments.

Future Steps

While our internal review provided valuable insight that will be used in the creation of major maintenance plans, CCPS recognizes the need for continual and comprehensive assessments to ensure all school facilities meet the accessibility needs of all of our students. We have formulated a schedule of inspections based on the guidelines outlined in the GAO20-448 report. In order to complete this in a



Chesterfield
County
Public Schools

John T. Murray, Ed.D.
Superintendent
superintendent@ccpsnet.net
804-348-2083

timely manner, we will likely need to contract with a qualified firm to conduct these assessments on a periodic basis. We believe this process will identify remaining barriers and guide our long-term accessibility improvement plans. This process will complement our existing capital improvement planning work, which already includes the planned replacement of Grange Hall Elementary and Midlothian Middle, among others in the coming years.

We will continue to maintain a close partnership between the Departments of Facilities, Special Education, and CTE to ensure that projects, from design to completion, enhance accessibility and inclusion for students, staff, and community members.

State Support

CCPS appreciates the General Assembly's attention to this important issue. While our division benefits from local planning capacity and strong partnerships with the private sector for technical design and construction, funding support remains the most critical factor in accelerating the elimination of accessibility barriers across Virginia's schools. State-level investment targeted toward accessibility improvements, particularly for older facilities, would enable divisions like ours to act more swiftly and comprehensively. As such, CCPS respectfully requests that the Commonwealth consider establishing or expanding funding streams that support local divisions in addressing remaining accessibility barriers, while allowing divisions to leverage existing architecture and construction capabilities to complete these projects.

Conclusion

Chesterfield County Public Schools is deeply committed to ensuring that every student, staff member, and visitor experiences our schools as welcoming, inclusive, and accessible environments. Accessibility is a reflection of our values as a community, one that believes every child, by name and by need, deserves equitable access to educational opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration of this report and for your continued leadership in supporting Virginia's public schools. We stand ready to collaborate with state partners to ensure that all of our schools meet both the letter and spirit of accessibility standards.

Respectfully,

John T. Murray, Ed.D.
Superintendent