



## CITY OF SALEM SCHOOL DIVISION

September 18, 2025

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

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

Dear Senator Hashmi and Delegate Rasoul:

Salem City Schools respectfully submits its Report on Accessibility Findings and Recommendations as required by HB 2278 (2025).

The Division Contact for this report is:

Randy Jennings, Director of Student Services  
Salem City Schools  
510 South College Avenue  
Salem, VA 24153

Respectfully submitted,

Curtis Hicks, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Salem City Schools



## **Salem City Schools HB 2278 Accessibility Report**

### **Executive Summary**

In accordance with Virginia House Bill 2278 (2025), Salem City Schools (SCS) completed a review of the physical accessibility of all school buildings, grounds, and playgrounds for individuals with disabilities.

As required, this review addresses:

1. Physical accessibility challenges in school buildings and grounds;
2. Challenges in access to programming and support;
3. The plan to eliminate barriers; and
4. How state agencies can assist.

This report affirms that:

- SCS facilities were constructed in compliance with the building codes in effect at the time of construction.
- All subsequent renovations and additions meet current accessibility standards, including the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.
- SCS is committed to ongoing review of building improvement, safety, and accessibility.

### **Methodology of Review**

As recommended by HB 2278, key stakeholders were included in the review process. Salem City Schools conducted a comprehensive, facility-by-facility review of all schools, including grounds, athletic facilities, and playgrounds.

To facilitate this review, a division accessibility committee was established. Members of this committee included: VaCorp, a parent, a teacher, a School Resource Officer, and the Director of Administrative Services. To ensure expertise in specialized accessibility needs, the committee also consulted with a Teacher of the Visually Impaired and an Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Information regarding HB 2278 and the findings of the review were presented to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) on September 15, 2025.

The methodology emphasized compliance review with multiple regulations, including:

- State and local building codes;
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and implementing regulations;
- The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

This process ensured that the review captured both regulatory compliance and practical considerations of accessibility for students, staff, and visitors.

### **Summary of Findings**

Based on the review, Salem City Schools affirms the following:

- Facilities comply with the building codes in effect at their original construction dates.
- All subsequent alterations or additions have been completed in adherence with ADA standards in effect at the time of the work.
- The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) evaluates facilities with consideration of accessibility challenges and barriers that may affect individuals with disabilities in accessing programs and activities.

### **Identified Barrier:**

- At Salem High School, Door 6 was identified as requiring a handrail on one side to support students with physical limitations. SCS has prioritized this need and will address it in the near future.
- Evacuation chairs are recommended for our six school facilities to ensure safety in the event of an evacuation when elevators may not be accessible.
- Some stairwells at Andrew Lewis Middle School have black treads. These may be hard to see for individuals with visual impairments. Consider adding a contrasting stripe to each stair to improve depth perception.
- The lower playground and field at East Salem Elementary are not easily accessible. Consider the addition of a ramp closer to the field area
- Ensure that handicap accessible swings or other playground equipment are available in locations other than Preschool playgrounds at our elementary schools.

## **Recommendations**

1. Continue incorporating accessibility reviews into the division's Capital Improvement Plan to ensure sustained monitoring and proactive barrier removal.
2. Address the specific accessibility improvement identified at Salem High School (Door 6 handrail) promptly.

## **Conclusion**

Salem City Schools respectfully submits this report in compliance with HB 2278 and affirms its commitment to maintaining safe and accessible school facilities for all students, staff, and families.

The division respectfully requests funding support from the Commonwealth to assist with sustainable accessibility improvements, ensuring that public schools remain fully inclusive learning environments for individuals with disabilities.