



# ROANOKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Office of the Superintendent

5937 Cove Rd. Roanoke, VA 24019 ♦ (540) 562-3700



October 15, 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,

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

The Division Contact for this report is:

Todd Kageals, Director of Facilities and Operations  
Roanoke County Public Schools  
5937 Cove Rd  
Roanoke, VA 24019

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Nicely".

Ken Nicely, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Roanoke County Public Schools



# ROANOKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Facilities and Operations

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## Roanoke County Public Schools Accessibility Review Report

### Pursuant to Virginia House Bill 2278 (2025 Session)

School Division	Roanoke County Public Schools (RCPS)
Division Superintendent	Dr. Ken Nicely
Report Date	October 15, 2025
Reporting Mandate	Virginia House Bill 2278, Chapter 566 (2025)
Report Recipient	Chairs of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education

## I. Executive Summary

In compliance with the mandate of Virginia House Bill 2278, Roanoke County Public Schools (RCPS) conducted a comprehensive review of the physical accessibility of all public elementary and secondary school buildings and grounds within the division. The review focused on identifying physical accessibility barriers and ensuring compliance with applicable building codes and accessibility standards in effect at the time of construction or renovation. The findings affirm that, across the 27 schools reviewed, all facilities met historical regulatory requirements. Current challenges identified were minimal, localized, and primarily relate to stage access in certain older elementary school facilities. Critically, none of the identified issues are currently preventing students with disabilities from accessing required school programs. All identified items are currently being reviewed, and RCPS is developing a prioritized Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to establish a budget, identify funding sources, and implement full remediation.

## II. Methodology and Scope of Review

**A. Facilities Reviewed** The review encompassed all 27 public elementary and secondary schools operating within the Roanoke County Public Schools division.

**B. Review Objectives** The assessment was designed to achieve two primary objectives, consistent with

the requirements of HB 2278:

1. Verify that all school buildings and renovations were constructed and/or renovated in full compliance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design applicable at the time of construction or modification.
2. Identify existing physical accessibility challenges and barriers that may limit individuals with disabilities from fully participating in school activities, services, and programs, considering current best practices for inclusive design.

**C. Stakeholder Consultation** The comprehensive review was conducted through collaborative site inspections and planning sessions involving key divisional stakeholders:

- **Facilities and Operations Staff:** Responsible for plan review and physical condition assessments.
- **Special Education (SPED) Staff:** Provided critical input regarding programmatic access needs, student supports, and specific challenges related to IEP and 504 plan implementation.
- **School Administration:** Provided site-level feedback, prioritized access concerns, and affirmed current levels of program accessibility.

**III. Key Findings and Identified Challenges**

**A. Historical Code Compliance** The review confirmed that every RCPS facility, including its original construction and subsequent renovations, was compliant with all relevant Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and federal ADA guidelines applicable *at the time of project completion*.

**B. Physical Accessibility Challenges** The systematic review identified several areas of opportunity for improved accessibility. The most notable challenges are:

Category	Challenge Description	Scope of Impact
Stage Accessibility (Primary Concern)	Lack of permanent, code-compliant accessible routes (ramps or lifts) to the performance stage area in certain older elementary school gymnasiums/auditoriums.	Impacts five (5) elementary school buildings.
Non-Primary Entrances	Minor issues regarding slopes or pathway materials at select secondary or service entrances that fall below current standards, though not the main, accessible entrance.	Minimal, site-specific issues.

<b>Interior Signage</b>	Opportunities for updating older interior signage systems to current ADA standards for clarity, contrast, and tactile/Braille elements.	Division-wide opportunity for enhancement.
<b>Playground Access</b>	Surface texture issues. Wheelchair access to equipment is limited due to playground mulch and extended travel paths.	Impacts three (3) elementary schools.
<b>Handicapped Parking</b>	Location of handicapped parking in relative proximity to event entrances.	Impacts three (3) secondary schools.

**C. Programmatic Access Assessment** A critical component of the review was the assessment of whether identified physical challenges currently prevent access to educational programming and student supports.

- **Current Impact:** RCPS confirms that **none of the identified physical accessibility challenges are currently preventing students with disabilities from accessing or participating in school programs, services, or activities.**
- **Mitigation:** Where stage access is required, programs are relocated to the accessible floor to ensure full participation in performances and events until permanent solutions are in place.

## IV. Action Plan and Recommendations

Roanoke County Public Schools is committed to the full elimination of all identified physical barriers to ensure equitable access throughout the division, aligning with the intent of HB 2278.

### A. Remediation Planning and Prioritization

1. **Prioritization:** The current focus is on permanently resolving stage accessibility issues in elementary schools, as this represents the most significant, localized physical barrier.
2. **Detailed Review:** Facilities staff members are reviewing possible solutions for the identified elementary school stages to determine the most cost-effective and compliant remediation strategy (e.g., permanent ramping, platform lifts, or conversion of performance spaces).
3. **Ongoing Maintenance:** Remaining identified items (e.g., non-primary entrance updates and signage improvements) will be addressed through scheduled preventative maintenance and minor capital project allocations.

### B. Financial Plan

1. **Budget Establishment:** RCPS is currently establishing a detailed, comprehensive budget for the full scope of necessary permanent accessibility improvements, which will be integrated into the upcoming five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
2. **Funding Identification:** The division is actively exploring potential funding mechanisms, including:
  - Dedicated local funding (CIP allocation).
  - Federal grant opportunities (e.g., IDEA or EANS).
  - State capital improvement assistance programs.

#### **C. Request for State Assistance**

RCPS encourages the General Assembly to continue exploring avenues through which state agencies can provide necessary assistance, particularly for school divisions facing substantial capital needs.

Specifically, additional state funding dedicated to ADA/accessibility improvements in existing facilities would significantly accelerate the timeline for full remediation and prevent such costs from diverting funds away from educational programming.

#### **V. Conclusion**

Roanoke County Public Schools is dedicated to fostering an environment of inclusivity where all students and community members can fully and equitably participate in school life. The HB 2278 review confirms RCPS's adherence to historical compliance standards while providing a clear roadmap for advancing accessibility to meet modern expectations for inclusive design. Remediation planning is underway, and RCPS anticipates full compliance with current accessibility standards for all identified areas upon completion of the capital projects.

School Name	Describe the location and nature of any accessibility issue that is preventing a student, staff member, or other stakeholder from accessing a school program.	Describe the location and nature of any convenience accessibility issues. These are issues which may cause additional travel or other modifications, but they are not preventing a student from accessing or fully participating in a school program.
Back Creek Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to stage. Difficult playground access due to surface.
BCAT	None	None
Bonsack Elementary	None	None
Burlington Elementary	None	Slope and pitch of ramp on right side of building. Playground equipment not ADA compliant.
Cave Spring Elementary	None	None
Cave Spring High	None	None
Cave Spring Middle	None	None
Clearbrook Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to stage. Difficult playground access due to extended travel path.
Fort Lewis Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to flag poles.
Glen Cove Elementary	None	Concerns related to access to temporary construction trailers.
Glenvar Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to stage.
Glenvar High School	None	None
Glenvar Middle School	None	Double doors throughout the building present wheelchair access difficulties.
Green Valley Elementary	None	None
Herman L. Horn Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to stage.
Hidden Valley High	None	The card access system does not release the powered handicapped accessible door. There is no powered accessible door on the 3rd layer of entry doors.
Hidden Valley Middle	None	Handicapped accessibility to softball and football fields are a concern.
Masons Cove Elementary	None	None
Mountain View Elementary	None	None
Mt. Pleasant Elementary	None	No wheelchair access to stage. Playground access for wheelchairs is difficult due to surface.



Northside High	None	Wheelchair access to visitor side of stadium. Handicapped parking for stadium. Wheelchair access to baseball field.
Northside Middle	None	Location of handicapped parking relative to secure entrance.
Oak Grove	None	Handicapped ramp is at one end of the building. Accessing second floor requires significant additional travel.
Penn Forest	None	None
W.E. Cundiff	None	Elevator has been unreliable.
William Byrd High	None	Powered access at door 3 is not working.
William Byrd Middle	None	None