

**From:** Jennifer Nesselroad

**Sent:** June-18-18 4:58 PM

**To:** [parks@burnaby.ca](mailto:parks@burnaby.ca)

**Cc:** Gina Niccoli-Moen <[Gina.Niccoli-Moen@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:Gina.Niccoli-Moen@burnabyschools.ca)>; [socialplanning@burnaby.ca](mailto:socialplanning@burnaby.ca) <[socialplanning@burnaby.ca](mailto:socialplanning@burnaby.ca)>; [advocacy@inclusionbc.org](mailto:advocacy@inclusionbc.org)

**Subject:** Kensington Pool Complex Attn: Kathryn Matts – Commission Secretary

Commission Agenda

Date ..... 2018 Sep 19

Correspondence ..... (a)

Ms. Matts,

I have grave concerns today regarding the discrimination based on disability and family status taking place in the Kensington Outdoor Pool, and the shockingly poor training of staff in the support of individuals with disabilities. My daughter is currently taking swim lessons with her class as part of the curriculum in the Burnaby School District.

As I am sure you are aware, all children are entitled to an equitable and inclusive education, which includes activities such as this. While we worked closely with the teacher and EA to ensure this year would run smoothly, we didn't anticipate the human rights violation she faced today.

Last year, the staff allowed me to wash, dress, and change my disabled, school-aged child's diaper in the private staff washroom as this facility has no family change rooms or accommodations for individuals with disabilities. While the situation wasn't ideal, it afforded her the privacy to be assisted in these daily living activities while maintaining dignity. The alternative is being on display for changing splayed on a bench in an open room in front of 40 of her peers. This is akin to removing all of the privacy stalls around the toilets.

In her first lesson today, I inquired about using the staff washroom as we did last year, and my request was refused. They suggested we use the tiny washroom stall (picture attached) that wouldn't even accommodate the two of us standing up, let alone someone laying down for a change. When

I said it wasn't acceptable and asked if there was any space at all meant to accommodate persons with disabilities, the lifeguard replied, "This facility was built in the 60s, when that wasn't a 'thing'". Too shocked by this response, I did not have the composure to point out that it is currently 2018 and reasonable accommodation is, in fact, now "a thing." It was then suggested that I pull my child out of the short, 30-minute lesson to change her early. Besides that option not providing equitable and inclusive education for my child, it is also not practical as the next group of kids would be in that room changing for their upcoming lesson.

In the end, my child's amazing teacher, who also talked to the lifeguards to no avail, blocked the door to the shower building while I laid my child on the dirty shower floor to change her.

This is absolutely unacceptable in 2018. While I understand that these older facilities were not built to include the disabled, I am aware of modifications made in similar spaces. For example, although not ideal because there are no private showers, the shed offered at C.G. Brown Pool allows me to change and dress my daughter on a table up off of the floor and in private.

If this facility is going to offer lessons to children as part of a public school program, you must make the necessary changes to make the facility accessible and inclusive to ALL students attending. Please offer sensitivity training to staff as well. It's an insult to persons with disabilities and an embarrassment to our city to have received a response as insensitive as we received today.

My daughter will not be attending lessons again until Wednesday this week. I look forward to hearing a proposal of how her needs will be accommodated in this facility.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Nesselroad

**Note**

Correspondence was sent to Ms. Nesselroad with an apology for the service failure. The accessibility issues experienced by Ms. Nesselroad and her daughter were promptly addressed. The issues related to school communication with staff, the dated nature of the pool amenities and communication with Ms. Nesselroad. No response to our communication with Ms. Nesselroad has been received since we contacted her. The school district advised that her daughter did not attend further school lessons for other reasons.