

## **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER CARE: USE OF SUPPORT PERSON BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

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### **PURPOSE**

The Rainy River District School Board will welcome all members of the school and broader community to our facilities by committing our staff and volunteers to providing services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities. Such services incorporate measures that include but are not limited to the use of a support person.

### **RATIONALE**

The Board welcomes all members of the school and broader community with support persons as required.

### **GUIDELINES**

#### **1.0 General Guidelines**

- 1.1 Supervisory officers, principals/designates and supervisors/ managers will ensure that staff receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing Board services accompanied by a support person.
- 1.2 Access to Board premises

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Board and/or school premises with his or her support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.

This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or Board Office where the public does not have access.

#### **2.0 Confidentiality**

- 2.1 Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the superintendent, principal, or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure.
- 2.2 Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian.
- 2.3 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.

- 2.4 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/Board office.
- 2.5 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required. (see Appendix A for sample consent form)
- 2.6 Support persons accompanying a person with a disability at school events for which there is an admission fee will not be charged a fee to attend the event, provided the individual identifies themselves as a support person.
- 2.7 Where the Board may require the presence of a support person:
- The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.
  - Consultation with the person with the disability requiring a support person would occur prior to the above noted requirement. It must be deemed that the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by any other means and that a support person is essential to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others before a support person can be required.

## **DEFINITIONS**

A **support person** is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of the RRDSB. A support person is distinct from an employee who provides support services to a student or staff person in the system – separate and specific procedures apply.

A support person is an individual chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual's health, or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure.

The support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

## **CROSS-REFERENCES**

### **Policies:**

- 2.30 Accessibility Standards

### **Procedures:**

- 2.32 AS for Assistive Devices
- 2.33 AS for Use of Service Animals
- 2.34 AS for Use of Support Person

- 2.35 AS for Monitoring
- 2.36 AS for Employment
- 2.37 AS for Info and Communications

**Other**

- RRDSB Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

**Legal/Ministry of Education**

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*
- *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code*