

# **SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

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*Section*                      SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

*Management  
Guideline*                      ACCESSIBILITY

*Applicable Policy*              ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

719

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Superior Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) welcomes 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 persons with disabilities. SGDSB establishes procedures to meet the requirements for accessibility on a graduated basis to address the four areas, customer service, information and communication, employment and in the design of public spaces that it constructs or redevelops.

## **USE OF A SUPPORT PERSON BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of SGDSB. 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 access 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 the 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. Support persons do not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

### **1.0 Responsibility**

- 1.1 Supervisory officers, principals and managers will ensure that staff receive training in interacting with persons with disabilities who are accessing SGDSB services accompanied by a support person.

### **2.0 Access to SGDSB Premises**

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on SGDSB and/or school premises with their support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
- 2.2 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 SGDSB office where the public does not have access.

### **3.0 Confidentiality**

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian.
- 3.3 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- 3.4 A copy of the signed consent form will be retained in the school/SGDSB office.
- 3.5 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

### **4.0 Where the SGDSB may require the presence of a Support Person**

- 5.1 SGDSB 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.

(Note: This would be a highly rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfil the SGDSB's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.

It is further noted that people with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health and safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health and safety before SGDSB can require one – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means. Any considerations on protecting health or safety should be based on specific factors and not on assumptions. Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean they're not capable of meeting health or safety requirements.)



Superior-Greenstone District School Board

**Accessibility – Confidentiality Consent Form  
Use of Support Person**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ consent to the sharing of confidential information by  
(parent/guardian)  
\_\_\_\_\_ related to my child/ward \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of principal/teacher/other staff member) (child's/ward's name)  
in the presence of my support person \_\_\_\_\_  
(support person's name)

My support person	_____	Consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.
	(support person's name)	

Affirmation of consent:

Parent/Guardian Signature	_____	Date	_____
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Printed name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between:

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(school staff) (parent/guardian)

for whom I am a support person.

Support Person Signature	_____	Date	_____
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Printed name of Support Person \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Witness - Principal	_____	Date	_____
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Printed name of Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## **USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

An assistive device is any device used by persons with disabilities to help with daily living. Assistive devices include a range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

#### **1.0 Responsibility**

- 1.1 Supervisory officers, principals and managers will ensure that staff are trained to support the general public including parents/guardians who may use assistive devices while accessing SGDSB services.
- 1.2 Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices.
- 1.3 Students and staff have separate and specific procedures related to their personal use of assistance devices.

#### **2.0 Communication Regarding Use of Assistive Devices**

##### *Assistive Devices Carried by Persons with Disabilities*

- 2.1 The SGDSB website will indicate that all SGDSB facilities provide services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities and offer services that include the use of assistive devices.
- 2.2 Each SGDSB facility that is open to the public will post information in the front office/reception area that welcomes the use of assistive devices and encourages users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

##### *Assistive Devices/Services – Made Available by the SGDSB\**

- 2.3 The SGDSB website will indicate the availability of assistive devices provided by the SGDSB to assist in provision of services to people with disabilities. These would be – temporary ramps to buildings, etc.
- 2.4 Each SGDSB facility that is open to the public will, as applicable, post information in the front office/reception area that indicates the availability of assistive devices and encourage potential users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

\*Note – these could include:

**Assistive devices:** TTY service, telephones with large numbers, amplifiers, lifts

**Services:** Sign language interpretation, oral interpretation, real-time captioning

**Alternative service methods:** Assistance of a staff person to complete a transaction, e.g., school registration

## ***NOTIFICATION OF DISRUPTION OF SERVICE***

When services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice will be posted at the site.

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE***

#### ***1.0 Responsibility***

- 1.1 Supervisory officers, principals and managers will ensure that the users of SGDSB and school services are notified when there is a disruption in services that may have an impact on access to services by persons with disabilities.

#### ***2.0 How Must the Notice of Disruption of Services be Provided?***

- 2.1 Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place in the school or at SGDSB facilities as appropriate.

#### ***3.0 What Must be Included in Notice of Disruption of Services?***

- 3.1 The notice of disruption of service must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

## **USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

A service animal is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a regulated medical professional such as a physician, psychologist or nurse. Service animals are working animals.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

#### **1.0 Responsibility**

- 1.1 Supervisory officers, principals and managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

#### **2.0 Access to SGDSB Premises**

- 2.1 Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal will be welcomed on SGDSB and/or school premises with his or her service animal and will be accompanied by the service animal while on the premises. The user/owner of the service animal will maintain control over the service animal. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
- 2.2 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 SGDSB office where the public does not have access.
- 2.3 This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service animal. Access to classrooms for service animals used by students and staff is covered under separate procedures.

#### **3.0 Exclusion of Service Animal**

- 3.1 A service animal can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the *Food Safety and Quality Act*. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g., school cafeteria or lunchroom).
- 3.2 Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service animal, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. It is the SGDSB's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g., creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.
- 3.3 A service animal can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario Dog Owners' *Liability Act* which places restrictions on pit bulls.

#### **4.0 Alternative Measures if Service Animal must be excluded**

- 4.1 In the rare instance where a service animal must be excluded, SGDSB must make every effort to put alternative arrangements in place to provide the services

required by the person with a disability. This could involve leaving the animal in a secure area where it is permitted by law and discussing with the person how best to serve them, e.g., a person with a vision disability might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide them.

## **5.0 Where it is necessary to confirm an animal is a Service Animal**

- 5.1 Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the school or SGDSB staff member may ask the person using the service animal for a letter from a physician or other regulated medical professional confirming that the animal is needed because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the animal is needed or how it is used.
- 5.2 Where the person using the service animal meets regularly attends at the school or SGDSB facility, the principal or manager may request to keep a copy of the letter on file but only as long as required by the circumstances. Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to bring a letter with them on occasions when they visit the premises. The principal or manager shall preserve the confidentiality of the letter and information contained in the letter, and shall not use or disclose the letter or information except as provided for in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, cM56, or as otherwise required by law.

## **MONITORING AND FEEDBACK ON ACCESSIBILITY**

SGDSB will monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Accessible Customer Service Standard through a process for receiving and responding to feedback. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and will allow people with disabilities to provide feedback using a number of methods.

The SGDSB will create a feedback process that will review the implementation of the Accessibility Policy with the SGDSB's various constituency groups. Examples include, but are not limited to Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), teacher federations\*, employee unions\*, citizens' groups. Methods would include electronic means such as websites.

(\*Note: Consultation relates to membership of these groups as **providers** of Accessible Customer Service.)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

### **1.0 Responsibility**

1.1 The Director of Education and/or designates will implement a process for feedback on Accessible Customer Service that has the following components:

- a) Information on SGDSB and school websites inviting users of SGDSB services to provide feedback on their experience with or concerns about access to services for people with disabilities.
- b) Printed information available through school offices and public offices of the SGDSB to invite people with disabilities to provide feedback on their experience with or concerns about accessibility of services. Consideration should be given to providing information in alternate formats.
- c) Information on how the SGDSB will respond to feedback.

1.2 The Director of Education and/or designates will create a process for reviewing implementation of the policy on Accessibility that includes consultation with various constituency groups including Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Federations, unions, citizens' groups.

### **2.0 Methods for Feedback**

SGDSB is committed to ensuring that its services meet optimum standards of accessibility for people with disabilities using the facilities and services of the SGDSB. Comments on services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way SGDSB provides services to people with disabilities can be offered by email and/or phone calls to the SGDSB Office/or school office.

All feedback will be directed to the Superintendent of Education.

Response to feedback will be provided directly to the individual who offered feedback, by phone and/or e-mail as would be appropriate.

## **TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

SGDSB will provide training on the AODA, the requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, for all staff and volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties on behalf of the SGDSB. Training will be appropriate to their duties and will be provided as soon as practicable.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

#### **1.0 Responsibility**

The Director of Education and/or designates will implement a training plan as follows:

- a) A three-year plan will be created and approved by senior administrators;
- b) Staff and volunteers are asked to take the requisite training;
- c) Participation of training is monitored and any necessary follow up action is taken.

#### **2.0 Methods**

Training on the AODA, related requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to persons with disabilities will be provided to staff and volunteers. It will be made available online and it can be accommodated in accessible format as needed.

Training will be appropriate to the duties of staff and volunteers and will be provided as soon as practicable. Tip sheets (Appendix A) have also been prepared for staff.

## **Tips for Principals/Managers**

The following contain useful information on:

- Interacting with people using Assistive Devices
- Use of TTY

## **Tips for assisting a person with a disability who is using an Assistive Device**

Many users of SGDSB services and facilities who have disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices.

Examples of personal assistive devices include:

- Wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that “speak” when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

**Key Point to Remember:** *One should not touch or handle an assistive device without permission.*

## **Moving Personal Assistive Devices**

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person’s instructions
- confirm that the person is ready to move
- describe what you are going to do before you do it
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create a bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practice consideration and safety – do not leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the user’s reach.

Respect personal space. Do not lean over a person with a disability or lean on their assistive device.

Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic door, accessible washrooms, etc.).

## How To Use TTY And Canada Relay Services

### How to make a call with a TTY and the Relay System

1. Push the ON switch.
2. Push the DISPLAY switch if you wish to use the screen alone or the PRINT switch if you want what is typed both on screen and in print.
3. Place the telephone receiver on the TTY's rubber receptacles. Make sure that the receiver is firmly in place and that the telephone's receiver cord is on the LEFT side of the TTY.
4. Check the telephone indicator light; if it is lit, you have the line.
5. Dial the number, and watch the telephone light; if it is flashing slowly this indicates that the device on the other end is ringing.
6. When the person you are calling answers, you will see a phrase appear on the screen such as: "Hello, Richard Smith here, GA." The "GA" stands for "Go Ahead". Don't forget to use it whenever you have finished speaking, so the other person will know it's his or her turn to speak. The person who receives the call is always the one who starts typing first.
7. When the call is over and you want to advise the other person that you are ready to get off the phone, type "SK". It means "Stop Keying". The other person will respond by typing "SK" if he or she agrees that the call is completed. To be courteous, each person waits until the other one has indicated "SK" before hanging up the phone. Always switch the TTY "OFF" as soon as you have finished the call.

### To make a call using the Relay System

1. Phone the number (1-800-855-0511), and tell the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach.
2. The operator will make the call for you, and you speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say "Hi, how are you doing?" Do not say: "Tell him I said hello." Remember to say "Go Ahead" when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is his or her turn to speak.
3. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak slower so your message can be typed. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies.
4. Operators will not betray confidences. They will not relay profanity, threats or criminal propositions, but will relay marriage proposals, banking and personal financial information and other personal (and even intimate) conversations.