

**THE PROTESTANT SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE TOWN OF PENETANGUISHENE**

POLICY MANUAL

POLICY TITLE:

SECTION/CODE:

Use of Support Person by the General Public

School Operations D – 16D

APPROVAL DATE:

SUPERSEDES:

NUMBER OF PAGES:

REVIEW DATE:

September 9, 2024

September 14, 2020

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1. RESPONSIBILITY

The Supervisory Officer and Principal will ensure that staff are knowledgeable and prepared in interacting with people with exceptionalities who are accessing Board services accompanied by a support person.

2. DEFINITION/INFORMATION

2.1 A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with an exceptionality who accesses the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from an employee who provides support services to a student or staff person in the system.

2.2 A support person is an individual chosen by a person with the exceptionality 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.

3. ACCESS TO BOARD PREMISES

3.1 Any person with an exceptionality 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.

3.2 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 Board offices where the public does not have access.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

4.1 Where a support person is accompanying a person with an exceptionality, who is the parent/guardian of student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the Supervisory Officer, Principal or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure.

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4.2 Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian.

4.3 The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion. A sample document is attached as APPENDIX A.

4.4 A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school or department office.

4.5 If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

5. SUPPORT PERSONS ACCOMPANYING A PERSON WITH AN EXCEPTIONALITY AT SCHOOL EVENTS FOR WHICH THERE IS AN ADMISSION FEE

Where an individual with an exceptionality who is accompanied by a support person wishes to attend a School or Board organized event for which a fee is charged, the notice of the event will include information as to whether support persons will be charged a fee and specify the amount of the fee.

6. WHERE THE BOARD MAY REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF A SUPPORT PERSON

The Board may require a person with an exceptionality 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 an exceptionality 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 exceptionality, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill the Board's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with an exceptionality or of others on the premises.

Acknowledgment

The Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene acknowledges and appreciates the contribution of the Simcoe County District School Board in the development of this policy.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CONSENT DOCUMENT

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

My support person (name) consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.

Affirmation of consent:

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Parent/Guardian) _____

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between (school staff) and (parent/guardian) for whom I am a support person.

Support Person

Signature _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Support Person) _____

Signature of Witness _____

Principal/Staff Member _____ Date _____

(Printed Name of Staff Person) _____