

Article IX.A.1.y. Access and Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

A. Statement of Purpose

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 govern access and participation for individuals with disabilities in the public-school setting. The Board of Education of Granite School District (Board) adopts this policy to ensure compliance with the ADA and Section 504 and to ensure all individuals enjoy the benefits of Granite School District's (District) services, programs, and activities.

B. Statement of Policy

The District shall take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure equitable access to District services, programs, and activities, including making reasonable accommodations for individuals with qualifying disabilities provided the accommodations do not create a fundamental alteration of the services, programs, or activities or impose an undue burden on the District. The District shall provide reasonable accommodations for all school-sponsored services, programs, activities, and other District or school functions including school board meetings, teacher conferences, social and cultural activities, recreational activities, adult education, and summer school.

The Director of Educational Equity is responsible for the administration of this policy and for formulating guidelines and procedures as necessary. The Director of Educational Equity will coordinate with the Director of Human Resources and the Benefits Manager/ADA Coordinator to manage requests made by District employees and with school administrators and department directors/supervisors to ensure compliance with this policy in schools, departments, or offices.

C. Definitions

1. "Auxiliary aids" mean services or devices that enable persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, programs or activities conducted by a governmental agency.
2. "Disability means" a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.
3. "Reasonable accommodations" mean modifications of programs, policies, practices, or procedures enabling qualified individuals with a disability to have an equitable opportunity to benefit from and have access to District or school services, programs, or activities.

Reasonable accommodations do not include fundamentally altering District or school

services, programs, or activities; placing others in danger or creating health or safety risks; or imposing an undue financial or administrative burden on the District or school.

4. “School-sponsored” means services, programs, activities that are approved by administration and are: initiated, managed, or supervised by District personnel; use school facilities, equipment, or other school resources (not part of a rental or other contractual arrangement); and/or supported or subsidized by school or District funds.
5. Service animal means a dog<sup>1</sup> that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

The term service animal does not include an animal (wild or domestic, trained or untrained) accompanying a single individual for emotional support or companionship only.

6. Therapy animal means a dog that is specifically trained and certified to provide comfort to students experiencing anxiety or trauma during counseling sessions or during other stressful circumstances. Therapy animals are owned and handled by a trained handler.

The term therapy animal does not include an animal (wild or domestic, trained or untrained) accompanying a single individual for emotional support or companionship only.

#### D. Providing Reasonable Accommodations

1. Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and require the District to provide equitable and appropriate access to school services, programs, and activities for individuals with disabilities. School administrators and District officials shall work collaboratively with individuals with disabilities to determine what reasonable accommodations are available at no cost to the requester to achieve equitable access to school services, programs, or activities.
  - a. Schools shall make reasonable communication accommodations for individuals with disabilities by making auxiliary aids available to students, parents, and patrons including but not limited to: interpreters; readers or note takers; audio enhancement devices; computer aided communication devices;

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with 28 CFR § 35.136, individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by a miniature horse rather than a dog unless allowing this accommodation would require the District to fundamentally alter its services, programs, or activities or it is otherwise determined by the District to be unreasonable. The District shall consider: a. the type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features; b. whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse; c. whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and d. whether the miniature horse’s presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation of schools and related business.

telecommunication devices (TDDs) or closed captioning; written materials; additional lighting; preferential seating; and audio recordings.

- b. The District shall maintain a website compliant with current ADA standards and make every effort to disseminate information in an accessible manner to students, parents, and patrons with disabilities.
2. Subject to available resources and subject to requirements of federal and state laws, the District shall also seek to provide access to facilities by reducing physical barriers, allowing the use of assistive services or devices, acquiring and/or modifying useful technologies, providing appropriate physical assistance as necessary, maintaining appropriate handicapped parking, and employing alternate forms or enhanced access to transportation.
3. The District shall update and maintain a website accessible to all individuals, including individuals with disabilities. The website shall contain content and functionality compatible with standards approved by the Office of Civil Rights, a division of the Department of Education and Utah State Board of Education rules unless the District can demonstrate a fundamental alteration or undue burden. In any event, the District will provide information in an alternate format if requested from the District's Communications office.
4. Requests for reasonable accommodations by individuals with disabilities shall, to the extent possible, be made in writing directly to school administrators and/or to David Gomez, Director of Educational Equity at Granite School District, 2500 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84115. Mr. Gomez may be reached at 385.646.4205.
  - a. In some instances, reasonable accommodations can be offered without prior planning. School and District officials shall make every effort to accommodate needs as they arise.
  - b. Because some requests for reasonable accommodations require planning (and may include competing needs), students, parents, guardians, and patrons are encouraged to make written requests for reasonable accommodations, particularly auxiliary aids and interpreters, well in advance of the date of a scheduled function or event. Such requests shall include:
    - i. the individual's name, school, and a description of the services, programs, or activities for which the auxiliary aid is being requested;
    - ii. an affirmation that the reasonable accommodation is required because of disability; and
    - iii. where applicable, a description of the individual's preferred accommodation.
5. Primary consideration shall be given to the reasonable accommodation choices of the individual making the request unless other equally effective means of accommodating an individual's needs are more readily available or if the request is deemed unreasonable.

6. Enhanced requirements for employees and students with disabilities are governed by other federal and state laws and are addressed in separate District policies.
  - a. Employees with qualifying disabilities shall make requests for reasonable work-related accommodations to supervisors and the District Benefits Office at 385-646-4179.
  - b. Reasonable accommodations for students are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973. Students with disabilities shall receive evaluations, special education services, related services, and reasonable accommodations consistent with federal and state laws and Administrative Memorandum No. 62, Students with Disabilities.

#### E. Service Animals

Individuals with disabilities, including students, employees, and visitors, shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in District facilities and vehicles, on District grounds, and at District functions. Pets and other animals, except as allowed for pre-approved educational purposes, are restricted from District property

1. A service animal must be trained to perform work or tasks<sup>2</sup> directly related to the individual's disability, including, but not limited to:
  - a. assisting an individual who is blind or has low vision with navigation or other tasks;
  - b. alerting an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds;
  - c. providing non-violent protection or rescue work;
  - d. pulling a wheelchair;
  - e. assisting an individual during a seizure;
  - f. alerting an individual to the presence of an allergen;
  - g. retrieving an item for the individual;
  - h. providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to an individual with a mobility disability; and/or
  - i. helping an individual with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.
2. In response to a request for use of a service animal, District personnel shall ask two questions:
  - a. Is the service animal required because of a disability?

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<sup>2</sup> The term “perform work or tasks” in this context means that the service animal is trained to respond to the needs of an individual with a disability in order to mitigate the disability. The service animal must be able to recognize and respond to a need or episode of the disabled individual. For example, if a service animal senses that an individual is about to have a psychiatric episode and responds by nudging, barking, or removing the individual to a safe location until the episode subsides, then the animal has performed a task or done work on behalf of the individual with the disability, as opposed to merely sensing an event.

b. What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

Based on the response to the preceding questions, an administrator shall determine whether the animal meets the definition of a service animal and shall determine whether to permit entry with the service animal. Administrators shall refrain from asking further questions in making the determination.

3. Anyone desiring to be accompanied by a service animal may be asked to provide service animal identification that includes proof of licensure and mandatory vaccinations. Those using a service animal are asked to provide the building administrator advanced notice of the fact that the individual will be accompanied by a service animal.
4. Notwithstanding the requirements in preceding paragraphs, an animal that does not meet the definition of a service animal may be permitted as a reasonable accommodation under a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Section 504 Plan, a health care plan, or an ADA accommodation plan, according to applicable District policies and procedures (*see* Administrative Memorandum No. 62, Students with Disabilities).
5. Service-animals-in-training may accompany a student or employee with a qualifying disability wherever the student or employee is generally permitted on District property if the service-animal-in-training is being trained for use by that student or employee to accommodate the student's or employee's disability subject to the other requirements of this policy. All other service-animals-in-training are restricted from District property in all areas not generally open to the public.
6. A service animal shall always remain under the control of its handler while on District property. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether unless the handler is unable to use a harness, leash, or other tether because of a disability or the use of a harness, leash, or tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means). The owner or the handler of a service animal may be liable for damage to property or injuries to persons caused by the service animal. Owners and handlers of service animals are assumed to have read this policy and understand this assumption of risk when they bring service animals onto school property.
7. Service animals must be housebroken. The service animal handler shall always be responsible for the care of the service animal including but not limited to feeding, exercise, clean-up, and restraint. The District or school is not responsible for providing a staff member to provide care or supervision to the animal. In the case of a young child or a student with disabilities who is unable to care for or supervise his/her service animal, the parents/guardians are responsible for care and supervision of the animal. Any handler who accompanies the child and service animal shall comply with all District policies and

may be required to undergo a criminal background check.

8. The District may deny a request for use of a service animal or have the service animal removed from a District facility or vehicle, District grounds, or District function if:
  - a. the service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it;
  - b. the presence of the service animal will require a fundamental alteration of service, program, or activity; disrupt or interfere with the education process; or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others; or
  - c. the handler fails to submit proof of current licensure and/or vaccinations.
9. Other individuals that are adversely impacted by the presence of a service animal should contact school administration or a department director/supervisor. Such individuals will be asked to provide evidence/documentation of the disability and the need for accommodations. (Certain individuals with animal dander allergies or phobia of dogs may qualify as individuals with disabilities.) School administrators or department directors/supervisors shall facilitate a process to find a resolution to the conflicting needs/accommodations of the disabled individuals involved. The school administration or department director/supervisor may exclude the service animal if it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

#### F. Therapy Animals

In certain circumstances, therapy animals may be permitted on District facilities. Permission for use of therapy animals shall be granted by the building administrator and the Director of Educational Equity. The District retains sole discretion for granting or refusing such permission.

1. Permission shall only be granted based on the following minimum requirements.
  - a. Therapy animals must be trained and certified to perform work or tasks directly related to therapy.
  - b. Therapy animal and/or handler must have their own insurance.
  - c. Therapy animal must respond to cues or commands to benefit students.
  - d. Animal handler or owner accepts responsibility for the care, conduct and supervision of therapy animal.
  - e. Therapy animal must be housebroken.
  - f. Animal handler must be present with the therapy animal and trained for the specific and intended purposes for which the therapy animal is used.
2. Therapy animals shall be restricted from District facilities subject to the same limitations imposed on services animals.

## G. Complaints of Discrimination

A complaint regarding any claim or allegation of discrimination under this policy or under any other circumstance may be filed with the Director of Educational Equity, David Gomez, according to the procedures outlined in Article V.C.1. Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation. Mr. Gomez may be reached at 385.646.4205. The District will attempt to resolve issues working collaboratively at the lowest possible level. Alternatively, complaints may be filed at any time with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Region VIII, US Department of Education, Federal Building, Suite 310, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Denver, Colorado 80204.

## **REFERENCES**

29 U.S.C. 794, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, Americans with Disabilities Act

20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.* Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

28 C.F.R 35.101 *et seq.*, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services

Utah Code §62A-5b-104, Right to be Accompanied by Service Animal or Support Animal  
Memorandum 62, Students with Disabilities

## **FORMS**

- Request to be Accompanied by a Service Animal: available on the Educational Equity website
- Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Complaint Form: available on the Educational Equity website and under Article V.C.1., Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

**District Policy IX.A.1.v. Access and Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

Granite School District shall take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure equitable access to District services, programs, and activities, including making reasonable accommodations for individuals with qualifying disabilities, provided the accommodations do not create a fundamental alteration of the services, programs, or activities or impose an undue burden on the District.

**Please complete this form when requesting accommodations for a student or employee.**

Name of person making the request:

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Name of student/employee needing the accommodation:

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School or work site:

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Check the box of the accommodation being requested:

**Auxiliary aids**

Please describe:

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**Interpreters**

American Sign Language

Other language – Identify the language needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Animal** – Please answer the following two questions:

- a. Is the service animal required because of a disability?      Yes       No
- b. What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

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**Other** (please describe):

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Please return this form to the school administrator or to David Gomez, Director, Educational Equity (385) 646-4205.

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Salt Lake City, UT 84115  
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