

## Accessibility in School and District Events Policy

### Purpose:

Barrington Public Schools believes accessibility and inclusion benefit everyone. The District is committed to planning accessible events and providing reasonable accommodation to support the full participation of all members of our community. As such, when planning school events, event planners shall follow all aspects of the *Accessibility and Inclusion in School and District Events: A Brief Guide* and the district document, [Guidance on Making School and District Events Inclusive and Accessible to Individuals with Disabilities](#).

First Read

Approved 12/07/2023

## Protocol Accessibility and Inclusion in School and District Events: A Brief Guide<sup>1</sup>

**Barrington Public Schools**

**Updated April 2023**

1. Ensure the following accessibility statement is included on event postings. “Barrington Public Schools believes accessibility and inclusion benefit everyone. The District is committed to planning accessible events and providing reasonable accommodations to support the full participation of all members of our community. For accommodations, please contact (event organizer or event accessibility coordinator) at (phone or email).”
2. Communicate with Special Education Teachers, Building and District Administrators, and Special Education Task Forces (each building has one) to anticipate known access challenges. An accessibility coordinator who can gather requests/needs, target accommodations for planned activities, and communicate procedures for an inclusive event to participants, staff, and volunteers may be helpful for larger events.
3. Ensure physical accessibility of the venue and all activities and provide simple, clear signage so all attendees can easily navigate. Consider: smooth walking surfaces, ramps where needed, ADA-compliant aisle width, display/registration tables at accessible heights, seating areas for those who arrive in wheelchairs or with other mobility devices, accessible emergency exits, signs for/access to a working elevator, and well-marked and accessible bathrooms and parking.
4. Ensure sensory accessibility of the venue and all activities. Make efforts to prevent crowded spaces and long waits. Consider lighting, volume, and other sensory input to help prevent overstimulation or anxiety. Allow preferential seating (end of aisle, etc.) for those in need. If appropriate to the event (especially if likely to be loud or crowded), consider offering a “sensory friendly” hour or a designated “calming space” so people can remove themselves safely from the event.
5. Prepare to seek recommendations from the Special Education Administration, Special Education Advisory Committee, building Special Education Task Forces, District DEI

committee, and/or from “Guidance on Making School and District Events Inclusive and Accessible to Individuals with Disabilities” to anticipate known access challenges and seek recommendations for inclusive accommodations for lower incidence disabilities as needed, like accommodations for auditory or visual disabilities or space for service animals.

6. Consult inclusive student organizations (e.g. Best Buddies, Student council, etc.) as a resource for creating inclusive and accessible events. Student groups can also facilitate inclusion at school events.
7. Secure additional staffing (ex. paraprofessionals) for students, when needed, by contacting the Pupil Personnel Office at least four weeks prior to the event. The Pupil Personnel Office will communicate with families regarding this staffing. Understand that some events may require this adult support, which can help support inclusion at an event but is not a measurement of an event’s inclusivity.

*For questions, contact Kristen Matthes, Director of Pupil Personnel, at [matthesk@barringtonschools.org](mailto:matthesk@barringtonschools.org) or 401-247-3145*

<sup>1</sup> For fuller definitions and resources, please see the district document, [Guidance on Making School and District Events Inclusive and Accessible to Individuals with Disabilities](#). The present document compiles highlights of that fuller guide.