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Animals at Schools

Animals are not allowed in school district buildings or on school district property without the written permission of the superintendent or his or her designee except as provided in this policy or as otherwise required by law.

I. Use of Animals for Instructional Purposes

Animals that support a district program or curriculum or that are used for instructional purposes are allowed in school district buildings or on school district property with the written permission of the superintendent or building principal.

II. Service Animals

The school district does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. An individual with a disability is permitted to be accompanied by his/her service animal on school property when required by law, subject to the conditions of this policy.

Service Animal. A "service animal" is a dog that has been 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. Work or tasks ***do not*** include the crime deterrent effects of an animal´s presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability or necessary to mitigate a disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. ***See also***, Miniature Horses below.

School District Inquiries. School officials ***may*** ask the owner or handler of an animal whether the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to do ***unless*** the answers to these inquiries are readily apparent. School officials ***may not*** ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability and may not require documentary proof of certification or licensing as a service animal.

Procedural Requirements. The following requirements must be satisfied ***before*** a service animal will be allowed in school buildings or on school grounds:

Request. A person who wants to be accompanied by his/her service animal must submit a written request form to a principal or superintendent. The request form is attached to this policy. These requests must be renewed each school year or whenever a different service animal will be used. When a request to be accompanied by a service animal is submitted by, or on behalf of, a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or a Section 504 Plan, then the request shall be promptly referred to the student's respective IEP Team and/or 504 Team for its consideration and/or input.

Health and Vaccination. The owner or handler must have proof of current licensure from the local licensing authority including proof of the service animal's current vaccinations and immunizations required by law.

Service animals will not be allowed in school buildings or other school property until the school has approved the request.

Control. A service animal must be under the control of its handler at all times. The service animal must have a harness, backpack, vest identifying the dog as a trained service dog, leash, or other tether. If the handler is unable to use a harness, backpack, vest, leash, or other tether, because of a disability or the use of a harness, backpack, vest, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, the use of these items is not required. However, the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control.

Exclusion or Removal from School. A service animal may be excluded from school property and buildings if a school administrator determines that:

(1) A handler does not have control of the service animal;
(2) The service animal is not housebroken;
(3) The service animal presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school; or
(4) The animal's presence fundamentally alters the nature of the service, program, or activity.

The handler or the student's parent or guardian shall be required to remove the service animal from school premises immediately upon such a determination. If the service animal is removed, the individual with a disability shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without the service animal.

Allergic Reactions. If any student or school employee assigned to a classroom or mode of transportation in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the service animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by an administrator. The school will arrange a meeting between school personnel, the individual with the disability, and the parents or guardian(s) of the person with the disability if that person is a student to develop an alternate plan.

Supervision and Care of Service Animals. The owner or handler of a service animal is solely responsible for the supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising, and clean up while the animal is in a school building or on school property. The student's parent or guardian is responsible for providing for the supervision and the care of the animal in the event that his or her student is not able to do so. The school district is not responsible for providing any care, supervision, or assistance for a service animal.

Extra Charges. The owner or handler of a service animal will not be required to pay an admission fee or a charge for the animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.

Damage to School Property and Injuries. The owner or handler of a service animal is solely responsible and liable for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the animal.

Miniature Horses. Requests to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by considering the following factors:

(1) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
(2) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
(3) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
(4) Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

All additional requirements outlined in this policy, which apply to service animals, shall apply to miniature horses.

Service Animal in Training. This policy shall also be applicable to service animals in training that are accompanied by a bona fide trainer.

Denial of Access and Grievance. If a school official denies a request for access of a service animal, the disabled individual or parent or guardian can file a written grievance with the school's Section 504 Coordinator.

III. THERAPY ANIMALS

The school district supports the use of therapy animals by teachers or other qualified school personnel ("Owner") for the benefit of its students subject to the conditions of this policy.

Therapy Animal. A "therapy animal" is an animal that has been individually trained and certified to work with its Owner to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship to school district students. Therapy animals are not "service animals" as that term is used in the American with Disabilities Act. The animal must be well behaved and have a temperament that is suitable for interaction with students and others in a public school. Therapy animals are personal property of the Owner and are not owned by the school district.

Therapy Animal Standards and Procedures. The following requirements must be satisfied ***before*** a therapy animal will be allowed in school buildings or on school grounds:

> **Request.** An Owner who wants to bring a therapy animal to school must submit a written request form to a principal or superintendent. The request form is attached to this policy. The request must be renewed each school year or whenever a different therapy animal will be used. When a request to bring a therapy animal to school is submitted by, or on behalf of, a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or a Section 504 Plan, then the request shall be promptly referred to the student's respective IEP Team and/or 504 Team for its consideration and/or input.
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> **Training and Certification.** The Owner must submit training and certification information requested by the Superintendent or his or her designee. Any certification required by the school district must remain current at all times.
>
> **Health and Vaccination.** The therapy animal must be clean, well groomed, in good health, house broken, and immunized against diseases common to such animals. The Owner must submit proof of current required licensure from the local licensing authority and proof of

the therapy animal's current vaccinations and immunizations from a licensed veterinarian, if applicable.

Control. A therapy animal must be under the control of the Owner at all times.

Identification. The therapy animal must have appropriate identification identifying it as a therapy animal.

No Disruption. The therapy animal must not disrupt the educational process by any of its behaviors.

Health and Safety. The therapy animal must not pose a health and safety risk to any student, employee, or other person at school.

Supervision and Care of Therapy Animals. The Owner is solely responsible for the supervision and care of the therapy animal, including any feeding, exercising, and clean up while the animal is in a school building or on school property. The school district is not responsible for providing any care, supervision, or assistance for a therapy animal.

Authorized Area(s). The Owner shall only allow the therapy animal to be in areas in school buildings or on school property that are authorized by school district administrators.

Insurance. The Owner must submit a copy of an insurance policy that provides liability coverage for the therapy animal while on school property.

Exclusion or Removal from School. A therapy animal may be excluded from school property and buildings if a school administrator determines that:

(1) A handler does not have control of the therapy animal;
(2) The therapy animal is not housebroken;
(3) The therapy animal presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school; or
(4) The animal's presence otherwise interferes with the educational process.

The Owner shall be required to remove the therapy animal from school premises immediately upon such a determination.

Allergic Reactions. If any student or school employee assigned to a classroom in which a therapy animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction

to the therapy animal, the Owner of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by an administrator.

Damages to School Property and Injuries. The Owner of a therapy animal is solely responsible and liable for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the therapy animal.

Other Therapy Animals. Therapy animals (1) owned by students, patrons, or other non-school employees or (2) owned by school employees for their own benefit will not be allowed on school grounds or school property except as otherwise required by law.

Adopted on: 6/15/2020
Revised on: _____
Reviewed on: _____

SERVICE ANIMAL REQUEST FORM

_____ _____
Date School Building

Name of Assisted Person: _____

Assisted person is □ Staff □ Student □ Other

Name of Animal Owner (if different than above): _____

Name of Animal Handler (if different than above): _____

Name of Animal: _____ Type of Animal: □ Dog □ Miniature Horse

If it is not readily apparent that the animal qualifies as a "service animal," please answer the following questions:

Is use of the animal required because of a disability? □ Yes □ No

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

I have read and understand the school district's Animals Policy. I will abide by the terms of that Policy. I understand that if the service animal is out of control, not housebroken, presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school, or fundamentally alters the nature of the service, program, or activity that cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications, the school district may exclude or remove my service animal from its property.

I agree to be responsible for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the animal. I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the school district from and against any and all claims, actions, suits, judgments and demands brought by any party arising on account of, or in connection with, any activity of or damage caused by my service animal.

_____ _____
Owner Signature Date

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____ _____
Assisted Person's Signature Date

_____ _____
Handler Signature Date

Please attach the following documentation:

- ☐ **Proof of current licensure**
- ☐ **Proof of current vaccinations and immunizations from a licensed veterinarian (as required by state and local law)**

APPROVAL

_____ _____

School Official Signature Date

Title: _____

Note: This form is valid until the end of the current school year. It must be renewed prior to the start of each subsequent school year or whenever a different service animal will be used.