

Curriculum Services

Service Animals in Schools

Guidelines for Use of A Service Animal on School Property or At School Functions

Students: Use of a service animal by a qualified student with a disability will be permitted in school when it is determined that the student's disability requires such use in order to have equal access to the instructional program, school services and/or school activities or when the student's IEP or 504 team determines that the student requires the use of a service animal to receive a free appropriate public education. All other requirements of this Policy apply.

Employees: Use of a service animal by a qualified employee with a disability will be permitted when such use is necessary to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her job or to enjoy benefits of employment comparable to those similarly situated non-disabled employees. All other requirements of this Policy apply.

*Requests by students and employees to be accompanied by a service animal at school should be submitted in writing to their building principal. These requests must be renewed annually.

Parents and Patrons at School or School Events:

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animals while on District property for events or activities that are open to the general public. All requirements of this Policy Apply.

Control: A service animal must be under the control of its handler at all times. A service animal must have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other 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 through voice, signals or other effective means.

Supervision and Care of Service Animals: The owner or handler of a service animal is responsible for the supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising, and clean up. The District is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. The District shall not be responsible for the training, feeding, grooming or care of any service animal permitted to attend school or a school function under this Policy.

Damages: The owner or handler of a service animal is solely responsible for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the animal.

Removal of Service Animals from School Property

District administrators may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from District buildings, property, vehicles or activities if:

1. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
2. The animal is not housebroken;
3. The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
4. The student, employee or handler fails to appropriately care for the animal, including feeding, exercising, taking outside for performance of excretory functions, and cleaning up;
5. The presence of the animal substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational process, school activities or the instruction program; or
6. The presence of the animal would require a fundamental alteration to any school program.

If the District excludes a service animal based on the factors detailed herein or any other legal basis, the District will provide the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

Emotional Support/Professional Therapy Dogs

An animal that is used to provide comfort, emotional support, or other therapeutic service does not meet the definition of a Service Animal which is permitted for use by students, employees, and patrons of the District consistent with this Policy. However, the District may employ the use of such dogs to work with staff to provide certain types of support for its students at the discretion of District administration and counselors for their intended purpose.
