

## USE OF A TRAINED SERVICE ANIMAL IN A SCHOOL

Beautiful Plains School Division recognizes that a service animal, when well trained and supported, not only demonstrates its tasks but can also support increased safety, independence, social bonding and self-control for individuals with a disability.

Beautiful Plains School Division supports the use of a trained service animal in schools as long as the appropriate planning and preparation has taken place prior to the implementation of the program.

### **Guidelines:**

A trained service animal means any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a medically diagnosed disability, specific to that disability.

A letter must be sent home to the students in any of the classes where the animal will be present in case of allergies or extreme phobias.

No individual student's rights and needs take precedence over any other individual student's rights and needs. In providing for Appropriate Educational Programming for students who require trained service animals, other students' legal rights to an education are given equal consideration.

### **Procedures:**

Once the school principal has been notified of the anticipated integration of a service animal into the school, the following procedures must be followed.

### **Parent/Legal guardian responsibilities:**

It is expected that parents/legal guardian will advise the division as soon as possible that a service animal is required.

1. Upon becoming aware of the child's need for a service animal, the parents/legal guardians shall provide a letter to the school principal from the child's medical doctor recommending the use of a trained service animal that has received training specific to the child's medically diagnosed disability prior to the commencement of the process of appropriate educational programming.
2. A letter shall also be provided from the parents/guardians detailing the benefits they feel their child will have by having their service animal with them at school
3. Parents/Legal guardians will supply annual updates on the health of the service animal, detailing vaccinations, examinations, illnesses and proof of licensing where required.
4. Parents/Legal guardians are responsible for the training and care of the service animal.

**Principal responsibilities:**

1. The school principal is responsible for working with the parents/legal guardians to arrange a timeline for the introduction of the service animal to the school.
2. The principal shall ensure that the students, school staff, school community and the Student Services Coordinator are informed of the anticipated presence of the trained service animal in the school.
3. The principal shall ensure a sign is placed on the doors of the school building alerting visitors and/or emergency personnel to the animals' presence.
4. The principal shall ensure that all necessary training is made available to all appropriate personnel (this may include teachers, educational assistants, bus drivers, custodians and more).
5. The principal will submit a mutually agreed to implementation plan to the Student Services Coordinator as soon as possible prior to the implementation of the service animal into the school.

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