

USE OF A CERTIFIED SERVICE ANIMAL IN A SCHOOL

Beautiful Plains School Division recognizes that a certified service animal, when well trained and supported, not only demonstrates its trained 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 certified service animal in schools as long as the appropriate planning and preparation has taken place prior to the implementation of the program.

Guidelines:

A certified service dog means any dog 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 dog must be certified following the standards of training recommended by Assistance Dogs International.

A letter must be sent home to the students in any of the classes where the dog 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 certified service dogs, 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 dog 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 dog is required.

1. Upon becoming aware of the child's need for a service dog, the parents/legal guardians shall provide a letter to the school principal from the child's medical doctor recommending the use of a certified service dog 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 dog with them at school.
3. Parents/Legal guardians will provide a certificate of training from a recognized service dog institution.

4. Parents/Legal guardians will supply annual updates on the health of the service dog, detailing vaccinations, examinations, illnesses and proof of licensing where required.
5. Parents/Legal guardians are responsible for the training and care of the service dog.

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 dog 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 certified service dog 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 dog's 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 dog into the school.

Approved September 6, 2022