


Book	POLICY MANUAL
Section	400 STUDENTS
Title	Animals in the Classroom and on School Premises
Code	453.9
Status	Active
Adopted	February 23, 2009
Last Revised	July 8, 2024
Last Reviewed	July 8, 2024

The presence of animals in the schools provides many opportunities for addressing academic standards and supporting the social/emotional growth of students. The term "in schools" will include in classrooms, on district premises, or at school-sponsored events. Live animals are part of our natural environment and can provide opportunities to learn about the diversity, habitat, humane care, animal growth and development, reproduction and behavior.

The presence of animals in schools may also pose a safety or health risk for some children when they are exposed to some allergens that activate allergy and/or asthma symptoms. Other students may be afraid of animals and feel emotionally unsafe in their presence. The purpose of this policy is to allow animals in the classroom while providing health and safety of school staff, students, and animals. Animals will be removed from the classroom and/or school when this cannot be achieved.

Prior approval must be received from the Director of Student Services or Superintendent before any animals are brought into the school. Animals in the school shall be planned and approved in accordance with the established procedures. Approval of an animal in the classroom, on school premises, or at a school sponsored activity may be denied or revoked by the District. 

#### Definitions

"Animal": Includes any living creature that is not a human being.

"Service animal": as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A service animal is the personal property of the student or parents/guardian. The District does not assume responsibility for training, daily care, or healthcare of service animals. The District does not assume responsibility for personal injury or property damage arising out of or relating to the presence or use of service animals on District property or at District-sponsored events.

"Emotional Support Animal": Emotional support animals provide comfort to individuals but are not trained to perform a specific job or tasks. This definition does not include psychiatric service animals who are properly trained and certified as a "service animal". An emotional support animal is not granted the same access to school buildings and classrooms as service animals. The District is not required to grant requests to bring an emotional support animal to classes or on school grounds.

Animals that are specifically trained to assist individuals with disabilities may be permitted on district property and at district events. An Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team or 504 team will make the determination as to whether the service animal is a reasonable accommodation in the school setting and necessary in order to implement the IEP or 504

and/or address the individualized and learning needs of the student within the school setting. The need for the service animal will be documented in the student's IEP or 504 plan. The principal will be informed and part of planning for an animal to be present at school. Notification will be sent to families if their child(ren) will be impacted.

The District may deny modifications or accommodations and disallow or limit an individual from using their service animal if such use would fundamentally alter the nature of applicable District services, programs, or activities, or where such use would pose a direct threat (i.e., significant risk) to health and safety and no reasonable modification or accommodation has been identified that would sufficiently mitigate the threat.

The District will review requests for service animal trainers to be accompanied by a service animal they are training at school events, functions, and activities that are open to the general public (school plays and musical performances, school sporting events, etc.). A service animal in training will be required to be tethered and to wear an identifying cape or vest. The District does not permit District employees or District students who are service animal trainers to be accompanied by the service animals they are training on school premises during their work hours or during the regular school day, as applicable. The District reserves the right to request that any non-disabled service animal trainer provide evidence of credentials that have been issued by an agency or organization for training service animals that are sufficient to indicate that the animal in question is being trained to be a service animal.

Requests regarding the presence of service animals on District premises should be made to the Director of Student Services or the Superintendent.