

BLOOMSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PROPERTY

TITLE: SERVICE ANIMALS IN
SCHOOLS

ADOPTED: 18 April 2011

REVISED:

718. SERVICE ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS	
<p>1. Purpose</p>	<p>The Board adopts this policy to ensure that individuals with disabilities are permitted to participate in and benefit from district programs, activities and services, and to ensure that the district does not discriminate on the basis of disability.</p>
<p>2. Definition 28 CFR Sec. 36.104</p>	<p>Service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.</p>
<p>3. Authority 29 U.S.C. Sec. 794 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq 43 P.S. Sec. 953</p>	<p>The Board shall permit individuals with disabilities to use service animals in district buildings; on district property; and on vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district, upon request and submission of required documentation. Pets that are not service animals as defined in this policy are not permitted on school property or in school buildings.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>Admission Of Service Animals To Schools</u></p> <p>A student or an employee with a disability may submit a request to bring a service animal to school for educational or employment purposes. However, there is no automatic right to be accompanied by a service animal in the school setting.</p>
<p>Pol. 113</p>	<p>Parents/Guardians of students with disabilities who believe the student needs to bring a service animal to school in order to receive a free and appropriate public education, shall notify the building principal or the Section 504 or IEP team. The appropriate team shall evaluate the request to use the service animal in school, gather necessary information and determine whether the student requires the service animal during the school day or at school activities. Any service animal accompanying a student with a disability to school or school activities shall be handled and cared for in a manner detailed in the student's IEP or Section 504 Service Agreement.</p>

Trained service animals shall be permitted in district buildings and on district property and vehicles for noneducational reasons under the following circumstances:

1. Totally or partially blind individuals may be accompanied by a trained guide animal.
2. Deaf or hearing impaired individuals may be accompanied by a trained hearing animal.
3. Mobility impaired or other disabled individuals may be accompanied by a trained service animal.
4. Individuals conducting training of a service animal may be accompanied for the purpose of school business by a service animal in training, but training shall not normally occur in the classroom during instructional time.

Before a service animal shall be allowed in a district building, or on district property or vehicles, the owner or handler of the animal shall submit to the building principal a written request and the following documentation from a certified professional:

1. Diagnosis of the specific disability.
2. Verification of the need for a service animal.
3. Description of the function(s) the service animal is expected to perform in relation to the individual's disability.
4. Current license.
5. Current veterinary health certificate.
6. Proof of current vaccinations and immunizations of the service animal.

Admission Of Service Animals To Public Events

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animals while on district property for events that are open to the general public. This right of access does not extend to the schools generally or to other activities that are not open to the general public.

School administrators may inquire of the owner or handler of an animal whether the animal is a trained service animal and the specific tasks that the animal has been trained to perform, but shall not ask questions about an individual's disability.

<p>5. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The district shall not require an owner or handler of a service animal to pay an extra charge for the animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.</p> <p>The owner or handler of a service animal shall be solely responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising, clean up and stain removal.2. Leashing and properly restraining the animal at all times.3. Damages to district buildings, property and vehicles caused by the animal.4. Injuries to students, employees, volunteers and visitors caused by the animal.5. Annual submission of documentation of vaccinations and immunizations. <p>The building principal shall receive and forward to the Supervisor of Special Education and the Superintendent each completed request by an individual with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal. The Supervisor of Special Education shall respond to the request.</p> <p>The following standards shall be applied by the Principal and Supervisor of Special Education to 1) determine whether other services can be provided to meet the needs of the student and 2) evaluate a request for access of a trained service animal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The service animal must be a “trained service animal”.2. The service animal must have a health certificate that evidences the animal is currently in good health, free from parasites, and has received all recommended vaccinations.3. Guide animals for totally or partially blind persons and hearing animals for deaf or hearing impaired or otherwise disabled persons must wear a harness, backpack, or vest identifying the animal as a trained service animal.4. If a service dog is utilized, the primary handler must be certified for “public access”. Any purported service dog that is being brought into a school setting must have sufficient training to be certifiable for public access. Assistance Dogs International (ADI), Inc. uses a standardized Public Access Test that results in the dog and its handler being awarded a certificate. Having “Public Access” certification is an important, objective measure of the dog’s ability to behave appropriately in public and the handler’s ability to handle the dog in public.
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If such a certificate cannot be produced by the handler, then either the dog must pass the ADI Public Access Test or the handler must produce credible proof that the dog has met the ADI's "Minimum Standards for Training Service Dogs."

5. Even if the service dog is certified for public access, it will be denied access to school property if at any time the ADI's "Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs In Public" are not maintained.
6. With reasonable accommodation, the service animal must not disrupt the education of any other student.
7. The service animal must not pose a health or safety threat to any other student, personnel or other persons.
8. Interactive discussions shall occur to discuss how the tasks performed by the service animal meet the educational, safety, or access needs of the student in the school setting, and how the use of the service animal is reasonably related to the disability, and what reasonable accommodations are required.
9. The IEP team shall determine necessary revisions to the IEP related to the service animal.

District administrators may exclude a service animal from district buildings, property and vehicles under the following circumstances:

1. Presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.
2. Owner or handler is unable to control the animal.
3. Presence of the animal significantly disrupts or interferes with the educational process.
4. Presence of the animal would require a fundamental alteration to the program.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and disseminate administrative regulations to implement Board policy and accommodate individuals with disabilities requesting use of a service animal in district buildings and on district property and vehicles.

The Supervisor of Special Education shall ensure that all individuals involved in a situation where a service animal will regularly accompany an owner or handler in district buildings or on district property or vehicles are informed of the Board policy and administrative regulations governing this issue. Involved individuals can include administrators, appropriate employees, student and parent/guardian.

In addition, the Supervisor of Special Education will develop guidelines to address the following:

1. A rest place for the animal (such as a crate in a quiet place).
2. Rest times for the animal (gym, lunch and recess are especially difficult school periods for a service animal to successfully endure).
3. Emergency evacuation plan.
4. Fire drill plan/participation.
5. Pre-treating the school facility on a regular basis to reduce animal-borne allergens.
6. An alternate accommodation/plan in the event the animal's primary handler (if not the child) or the animal is not able to accompany the disabled child to school due to illness, injury or death.
7. Training for any aides who may handle the animal, other than the primary handler, a school-wide educational program to educate others on how to behave appropriately around the service animal.

References:

Pennsylvania Human Relations Act – 43 P.S. Sec. 953

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act – 29 U.S.C. Sec. 794

Americans With Disabilities Act – 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability, Title 28, Code of Federal Regulations – 28 CFR Part 35, Part 36

Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Regulations, Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations – 29 CFR Part 1630

Board Policy – 000, 103, 103.1, 104, 113, 707, 904