



## AP 2-801 – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS REQUESTING A SERVICE ANIMAL IN THE SCHOOL

1. The success of the entry of a service animal into a school setting depends on clear communication, a well-informed school community and careful planning. The information you provide will assist the Principal to make the best possible decisions for your child and other students as well as for the staff, volunteers and visitors in the school.
2. The use of a service animal is considered to be an accommodation to help your child learn and to develop the necessary skills to achieve success. The Principal will invite you, the classroom teacher(s), the resource teacher, a representative from the training facility, and the Student Services Administrator to a meeting to review the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and to include the function of the service animal in the goals of the IEP. If your child does not have an IEP one will be developed in consultation with you.
3. The information you provide will help the Principal to consider your request. The Principal will investigate as to whether any student or member of staff has severe medical or psychological reactions to animals that may prevent or restrict the involvement of the service animal at the school.
4. The well-being of the service animal is also very important. Its care, handling and training needs will be addressed and your input is valuable. The Principal needs to know what other resources are available to facilitate school entry and the implementation of a plan. Strategies for becoming familiar with the building and school grounds, introduction to assemblies/ concerts, recess, and informing the staff about interacting with the service animal will need to be included in the planning to be as consistent and fair to the service animal as possible.
5. It is imperative that the service animal be ready for school. If the service animal exhibits any behaviours (i.e. growling, scratching, nipping, biting, etc.) or health issues (i.e. vomiting, diarrhea, open wounds, fleas, ticks, etc.) at school it will be removed until the plan is re-evaluated to ensure the safety of staff, students and visitors.
6. An information session may be held for interested school community parents. Important information shared in this way facilitates understanding and acceptance of new practices at the school. You will be invited to participate in any information sessions.
7. Parents' responsibilities include but are not limited to:
  - . Provide the Principal with all required documentation, reports, certificates and arrangement for staff training,
  - . Transport or walk the service animal to and from school if needed or request school bus transportation if your child is eligible,
  - . Assume financial responsibility for the service animal's training, veterinary care, municipal license and other related costs,
  - . Participate in a school meeting to inform the Principal of all relevant information that may affect your child, other students, staff, and/or visitors to the school,
  - . Assist the Principal to communicate relevant information to the school community,
  - . Work co-operatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success,



- . Provide the required food, equipment and service animal care items,
  - . Inform the Principal of the service animal’s food, water and “bio-breaks” needs,
  - . Advise the Principal on the removal and disposal of animal waste in a safe and environmentally friendly manner.
8. Once the necessary information has been discussed, the Principal will consult with the Student Services Administrator and the Superintendent prior to entry of the service animal into the school.
9. If the request is approved, a series of steps must take place to ensure a smooth transition for the entry of the service animal in a timely manner.
10. The right of entry of the service animal will be monitored regularly and reviewed on an annual basis.
11. A Certificate of Training that states the services for which the service animal is trained must be available. After September, 2013, only training programs that are members of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) or *International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF)* should be considered eligible for use in Manitoba schools.
12. Where the use of a service animal in a school has been approved, the animal may be excluded from access to the premises only where:
- . exclusion is required by a statute;
  - . the service animal is of a breed that is prohibited by law or municipal bylaw e.g., Pit Bull Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers;
  - . there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of the service animal. Consideration should be given to options available prior to exclusion of the animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. The situation should be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk should be considered, e.g. creating distance between the individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.; or
  - . there has been a material change in the circumstances that led to the original approval of the use of the animal in school.