

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW LONDON

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE 383 - ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

School District of New London Policy 383 defines animals in school. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students are allowed to bring a service animal to school. Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or tasks for the individual with disabilities.

When a student/family identifies as requesting a service animal, the following steps are taken:

1. Principal, Director of Pupil Services, and School Nurse (if available) meet with the family.
2. Family provides documentation from a physician that there is a disability and need for a service animal.
3. Family provides veterinarian record to demonstrate the animal meets local vaccination requirements.
4. Family provides documentation that the service animal meets local licensing requirements.
5. Family identifies what work/task the animal is trained to perform related to the student's disability and describes what this looks like (families may train their own service animal).

Service animals are allowed unless one of the following exceptions applies:

1. The animal requested is a student emotional support or comfort animal.
2. The animal recognizes an individual is in distress--the animal MUST perform actual work or task--not be just a calming source for the individual.
3. The service animal is out of control and the animal's handler is not able to effectively control it.
4. The service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others than cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications.
5. The service animal is not housebroken.

6. The animal is not yet trained as a service animal.

If a service animal is removed or excluded, the student shall still be provided access to school facilities, programs and/or services in a manner and to the extent consistent with applicable law.

Removal or exclusion decisions and other similar limitations on the presence or a service animal on School District of New London premises will be made by the applicable building principal in conjunction with the Director of Pupil Services.

When a service animal accompanies a student to school:

1. The service animal has access to all areas of the school where the student or members of the public are allowed.
2. The service animal must wear a harness, leash or other tether (if one cannot be used, the service animal must be under the handler's control through voice commands, signals or another method).
3. The student can be required to pay for damage caused by the service animal.
4. The district is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. These responsibilities fall directly to the handler.

Examples of communication messages:

1. *Parent Communication--all students*

- *Starting the week of _____, we will have a service dog attending school with a student. This service animal meets the requirements of being a service animal, is licensed, and has all appropriate vaccinations.*
- *If your child has significant allergies or fear of dogs, please contact us.*
- *This animal is "at work" while at school. Please talk with your child that this animal is working and it is not appropriate to approach the animal without the handler's consent. We are asking that our students stay "hands off" with service animals. This eliminates the spread of allergens (dander, etc.) and promotes the "at work" philosophy of a service animal.*

2. *Parent Communication--grade level specific*

- *Starting the week of _____, a student in one or more of your child's classes will have a service dog with them at school. This service animal meets the requirements of being a service animal, is licensed, and has all appropriate vaccinations.*
- *If your child has significant allergies or fear of dogs, please contact us.*
- *This animal is "at work" while at school. Please talk with your child that this animal is working and it is not appropriate to approach the animal without the*

handler's consent. We are asking that our students stay "hands off" with service animals. This eliminates the spread of allergens (dander, etc.) and promotes the "at work" philosophy of a service animal.

Other scenarios:

- Field trip determinations are made by the building administration after the animal has been at school and under the successful handling of the student

ADOPTION DATE: November 26, 2018

REVISION DATE(S):

REVIEW DATE(S):

CROSS-REFERENCE: Policy 383 Animals in School

LEGAL REFERENCE: