

Statement of Policy

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools may approve the use of Service Dogs in schools.

Rationale

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is committed to the delivery of high quality education programs, supports and services that allow students with diverse needs to maximize their learning and achievement. The division recognizes the diverse needs of some students may require unique accommodation(s). These accommodations may include the use of Service Dogs where necessitated by the student's learning profile and/or by medical restriction(s) such as blindness or low vision, deafness or hearing impairment, as well as seizure disorder or autism spectrum disorder.

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is also committed to ensuring that we operate within legal and legislated mandates, concerning meeting the needs of all of our students. This includes the Education Act, 1995 and The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code.

Authority

- The Education Act, Sections 178
- The Education Regulations 54

Definitions

Service Dog – a dog that has received specialized training and therefore is accredited to assist a person with a recognized disability. (Assistance Dogs International is the recognized and approved entity for training of Service Dogs)

Procedures/Guidelines

1. Determining Appropriateness of a Service Dog Accommodation
 - a. Prior to applying to have a Service Dog as an accommodation at school, the parents/legal guardians must meet with the school principal and learning assistance teacher to discuss the following:
 - The student's needs, medical restriction, and/or learning profile;
 - How existing accommodations or supports could address the student's needs during school hours; and
 - Whether the Service Dog would address the student's needs more effectively than other available accommodations.
 - b. When it is determined by the school teams and parents how a Service Dog may

be required as an accommodation at school, we require parents to submit the following to the principal:

- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Application for a Service Dog
 - Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools' medical form indicating the restrictions for the student
 - Proof of the Service Dog's accreditation from Assistance Dogs International
- c. After receiving from the parents the completed application for, the Medical Certificate completed by the physician, and the proof of the Service Dog's accreditation, the principal will, with the support of the Superintendent:
- Adjudicate the application and supporting medical documentation;
 - Determine how the specific medical restriction is best addressed by the introduction of a Service Dog as an accommodation at the school;
 - Determine if the introduction of the Service Dog into the school will affect the medical restrictions of other students in the school;
 - Communicate the plan and next steps to the parents.
- d. When the presence of a Service Dog is approved by the principal and the Superintendent then the following shall apply:
- If other students/staff with medical restrictions will be affected by the presence of the Service Dog:
 - The principal shall determine how the accommodations of all students/staff can best be achieved.
 - The parent/legal guardian requesting the presence of a Service Dog must:
 - Accept all liability that might be incurred as a result of the behaviour of the Service Dog while present in the school and indemnify the school division in writing;
 - Provide appropriate insurance coverage (third party liability coverage of not less than \$2, 000, 000) naming and stating the Division's interest therein, for any damage caused by the Service Dog or any damages or injuries caused to the Service Dog and shall provide proof of such coverage annually, this insurance covered must be submitted to the Superintendent;
 - Support in the training of school personnel regarding the use and care of the Service dog in the school;
 - Participate in an annual review of the presence of the Service Dog at the school;
 - Provide information in writing from the service agency who trained the Service Dog indicating details around the personal care and physical needs of the Service Dog, including:
 - safe and most environmental sound place for the dog to relieve itself;
 - considerations for seasonal changes and inclement weather.
 - Provide up-to-date proof of vaccinations, and licensing of the Service Dog annually;

- Assist in the process for the Service Dog to visit the school to familiarize it with the school site;
- Allow school division staff and volunteers to meet the Service Dog to ensure appropriate care of the Service Dog and the safety of students and staff.
- The school principal will:
 - Consult with the appropriate Superintendent prior to setting a meeting to discuss the use of a Service Dog;
 - Determine who will accompany and handle the Service Dog outside;
 - Ensure the personal care and physical needs of the Service Dog are met;
 - Consider logistical arrangements in classrooms and hallways;
 - Inform all staff and the community regarding the presence of a Service Dog;
 - Ensure that the Manager of Transportation is contacted regarding any transportation requirements where applicable;
 - Revise emergency procedures as required to include the Service Dog (i.e. notification to the Fire Department regarding the existence of the Service Dog);
 - Post signs on each entry door of the school to advise visitors of the presence of a working Service Dog and the procedures and rules pertaining to the Service Dog;
 - Retain the application, insurance and related documentation in the student's cumulative folder;
 - Initiate the annual reviews and receipt of necessary documentation.

2. Considerations and Limitations

- The school division may impose reasonable conditions or restrictions relating to:
 - Transportation of the Service Dog to and from school;
 - Restricting the presence of the Service Dog to specific areas of the school;
 - May restrict the entrance and exit of the Service Dog to specific entrance ways;
 - Exclusion from access to specific areas where required by other laws (i.e. food preparation areas).
- The right to be accompanied by a Service Dog does not apply if the individual
- is not in control of the behaviour of the Service Dog and no other appropriate trained handler is available.
- The agreement to accommodate a Service Dog is reviewed annually and may be modified as required following the same procedure set out in the procedures.
- If the student moves to a different school, the request for Service Dog must be resubmitted and initiated in advance, at the new site with the principal.

- The agreement to accommodate a Service Dog may be terminated by the division if the dog does not have up to date documentation, licensing or vaccinations.

3. Communication

- Letters will be distributed as follows to inform:
 - The school community of the arrival of the Service Dog, its purpose and rules regarding the conduct around the Service Dog;
 - The families of students to elicit information concerning allergies or phobias considerations from the students' families;
 - The families of any students who will be sharing transportation where the Service Dog will be present, where applicable.

Documents/Forms

- Service Dog Application Form
- Medical Certificate

References

- Policy of Service Animals, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

Date Approved

October 9, 2018