

TOPEKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	REGULATION NUMBER: 2840-02
SUBJECT: USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS BY STUDENTS OR STAFF AT SCHOOL	DATE OF ISSUE: 08/17/15 <hr/> REVISIONS: <hr/> PREPARING OFFICE: TEACHING/LEARNING/ADMINISTRATION

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the use of service animals by students or staff at school.

II. DEFINITION OF SERVICE ANIMAL

A. A “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, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

B. Exclusions

1. Service animals do not include wild animals, reptiles, rabbits, farm animals, ferrets, amphibians and rodents.
2. Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, therapy, companionship or therapeutic benefits or to promote emotional well-being are not service animals.

III. PROCEDURES/REQUIREMENTS

Use of service animals by staff or students with a disability is subject to the following procedures and requirements:

A. Student Requests:

Parents or a student’s IEP or Section 504 team must submit a request for the use of service animals to the Director of Special Education or the School Coordinator for Section 504. Such requests should identify and describe the need for the service animal as it relates to the student’s disability, document the training and function and describe the manner in which the service animal will meet the student’s particular need(s). The Director of Special Education of Coordinator for Section 504 Services shall initiate a meeting of the Student’s IEP Team or 504 Team to determine whether the use of a service animal at school is appropriate.

B. Staff Requests:

Staff members must submit a request for the use of service animals to the General Director of Human Resources. Such requests must identify and describe the need for the service animal as it relates to the staff member's disability and describe the manner in which the service animal will meet the individual's particular need(s).

- 1. Requests for the use of service animals on School District property must, whenever possible, be made no less than two (2) weeks prior to the proposed use of the service animal.**
- 2. As part of the School District's consideration of a request for the use of a service animal, the School District may require certain documentation, including, but not limited to:**
 - a. Documentation of the need for the service animal;**
 - b. Documentation that the service animal is properly trained and licensed;**
 - c. Certification of proper vaccinations verified by a veterinarian; and**
 - d. Documentation that the handler for the service animal is properly trained.**
- 3. The use of a service animal on School District property may be subject to a plan which introduces the service animal to the school environment, any appropriate training for staff and students regarding interaction with the service animal, and other activities or conditions deemed necessary by the School District. The School District's approval of the use of a service animal on School District property is subject to periodic review, revision or revocation by the School District Administration.**
- 4. Generally, service animals must have a harness, leash or other tether and must wear proper identification. It is the responsibility of the staff person who uses a service animal pursuant to this procedure to be the certified handler, providing proper handling of the service animal. Any cost incurred to handle the service animal will be the responsibility of the staff person who uses the service animal.**
- 5. The School District retains discretion to exclude or remove a service animal from its property if:**
 - a. The animal is out of control and/or the animal's handler does not effectively control the animal's behavior;**
 - b. The animal is not housebroken or the animal's presence or behavior fundamentally interferes in the functions of the School District; or**

- c. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications.**