



**Policy:** IMG  
**Subject:** Use of Certified Service Dog

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**Policy:**

The Red River Valley School Division Board of Trustees supports and recognizes that, in certain cases, appropriate educational programming may include the services of a certified service dog.

**Protocol:**

A certified service dog means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a medically diagnosed disability, specific to that disability.

A dog must be certified following the standards of training recommended by Assistance Dogs International.

A letter must be sent home to the students in any of the classes where the dog will be present in case of allergies or extreme phobias.

No individual student's rights and needs take precedence over any other individual student's rights and needs. In providing for Appropriate Educational Programming for students who require certified service dogs, other students' legal rights to an education are given equal consideration.

**Procedures:**

Once the school principal has been notified of the anticipated integration of a service dog into the school, the following procedures must be followed.

**Parent/Guardian responsibilities**

It is expected that parents will advise the division as soon as possible that a service dog is required.

1. Upon becoming aware of the child's need for a service dog, the parents/guardians shall provide a letter to the school principal from the child's medical doctor recommending the use of a certified service dog that has received training specific to the child's medically diagnosed disability prior to the commencement of the process of appropriate educational programming.
2. A letter shall also be provided from the parents/guardians detailing the benefits they feel their child will have by having their service dog with them at school.

3. Parents/Guardians will provide a certificate of training from a recognized service dog institution. This institution must follow the training standards as outlined in the protocol of this policy.
4. Parents/Guardians will supply annual updates on the health of the service dog, detailing vaccinations, examinations, illnesses and proof of licensing where required.
5. Parents/Guardians are responsible for the training and care of the service dog.

**Principal responsibilities:**

1. The school principal is responsible for working with the parents to arrange a timeline for the introduction of the service dog to the school.
2. The principal shall ensure that the students, school staff, school community and the Student Services Coordinator are informed of the anticipated presence of the certified service dog in the school.
3. The principal shall ensure a sign is placed on the doors of the school building alerting visitors and/or emergency personnel to the dog's presence.
4. The principal shall ensure that all necessary training is made available to all appropriate personnel (this may include teachers, educational assistants, bus drivers, custodian and more).
5. The principal will submit a mutually agreed to implementation plan to the Student Services Coordinator as soon as possible prior to the implementation of the service dog into the school.