

THERAPY DOGS

Bonneville Joint School District No. 93 supports the use of therapy dogs by qualified school personnel (“Owner”) for the benefit of its student’s subject to the conditions of this policy.

Guidelines

Therapy Dog Standards and Procedures. The following requirements must be satisfied before a therapy dog will be allowed in school buildings or on school grounds:

1. **Request.** An Owner who wants to bring a therapy dog to school must submit a written request form to the principal/designee of their work location.
 - a. The request must be renewed each school year or whenever a different therapy dog will be used.
2. **Administrative Approval.** The use of the animal or animals must be approved by the principal/designee of the building(s) in which the Therapy Dog’s handler works. A letter stating this approval should be written and kept on file in the building.
 - a. Policy form 3106F1 Therapy Dog Information for Building must be completed and be on file with the school administrator annually.
3. **Training and Certification.** The Owner must submit the *American Kennel Club’s Canine Good Citizen Certification* or its equivalent as determined by the Superintendent/designee.
 - a. The certification must remain current at all times.
 - b. The following certifications must be shown on the request to the principal/designee of the building.
 - i. Must have basic obedience class [six (6) weeks];
 - ii. Intermediate obedience [six (6) weeks];
 - iii. Advanced obedience [six (6) weeks];
 - iv. Specialty therapy training [twelve (12) weeks];
 - v. Behavioral tested by appropriate behavioral company (yearly);

- vi. Canine Good Citizen Certification;
 - vii. Community Canine Certification; and
 - viii. Therapy Certification.
4. **Health and Vaccination.** The therapy dog must be clean, well groomed, in good health, house broken, and immunized against diseases common to dogs.
- a. The Owner must submit proof of current licensure from the local licensing authority; and
 - b. The Owner must submit proof of the therapy dog's current vaccinations and immunizations from a licensed veterinarian.
5. **Control.** A therapy dog must be under the control of the teacher or school employee through the use of a leash or other tether unless the use of a leash or other tether would interfere with the therapy dog's safe, effective performance of its work or tasks. However, the therapy dog must be under the owner's control at all times.
6. **Identification.** The therapy dog must have appropriate identification identifying it as a therapy dog.
- a. The therapy dog must have harness and E-collar on at all times.
 - b. The therapy dog is required to be on a leash when going from room to room.
7. **Disruption.** The therapy dog must not disrupt the educational process by barking, seeking attention, or any other misbehaviors.
8. **Health and Safety.** The therapy dog must not pose a health and safety risk to any student, employee, or other person at school.
9. **Supervision and Care of Therapy dogs.** The Owner is solely responsible for the supervision and care of the therapy dog, including any feeding, exercising, and clean up while the animal is in a school building or on school property.
- a. Those who handle the therapy dog need to be properly trained.
 - b. No students shall handle the therapy dog.
 - c. The therapy dog shall not leave the building for field trips.

- d. The school district is not responsible for providing any care, supervision, or assistance for a therapy dog.
10. **Authorized Area(s).** The Owner shall only allow the therapy dog to be in areas in school buildings or on school property that are authorized by school district administrators.
 11. **Interactions.** Students should be asked before the therapy dog enters the room, to avoid fears and/or allergies. Before the therapy dog enters room, students should be given instructions on proper interactions
 12. **Proper Introductions:**
 - a. Hand down for smelling first;
 - b. No treats or food;
 - c. Gentle petting; and/or
 - d. Be calm and caring.
 - e. If therapy dog is stubborn, fearful, or not cooperating the dog will be put in "Time out" put back into employee handler's office for a brief break then start over.
 - f. If more than three (3) time-outs happen per day, the therapy dog is subject to being sent home.
 13. **Insurance.** The Owner must submit a copy of an insurance policy that provides liability coverage for the therapy dog while on school property.
 14. **Exclusion or Removal from School.** A therapy dog may be excluded from school property and buildings if a school principal/designee determines that:
 - a. A handler does not have control of the therapy dog;
 - b. The therapy dog is not housebroken;
 - c. The therapy dog presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school; or
 - d. The animal's presence otherwise interferes with the educational process.

- e. The privilege to bring the therapy dog into the school setting may be terminated should the handler or dog behave in a way deemed unprofessional or unsafe.
- f. The Owner shall be required to remove the therapy dog from school premises immediately upon such a determination.

15. **Allergic Reactions.** If any student or school employee assigned to a classroom in which a therapy dog is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the therapy dog, the Owner of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by a principal/designee.

16. **Damages to School Property and Injuries.** The Owner of a therapy dog is solely responsible and liable for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the therapy dog.

DEFINITIONS

Therapy Dog: a dog that has been individually trained and certified to work with its Owner to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship to school district students. Therapy dogs are not “service animals” as that term is used in the American with Disabilities Act. The therapy dog must be well behaved and have a temperament that is suitable for interaction with students and others in a public school. Therapy dogs are personal property of the teacher or employee and are not owned by the school district.

Adopted: 11-13-2019

Reviewed: _____

Revised: _____

Cross Reference: 3105 and 5232 Service Animals on School Property
3287 and 4325 Disruption of School Operations

Legal Reference: Idaho Code §33-512 Governance of schools