

Kimberly School District Policy

Instruction 2380

Trained School Dogs

Kimberly School District supports the use of trained dogs in the schools for the benefit of its students subject to the conditions of this policy. Examples of activities that students may engage in with a trained school dog include petting and/or hugging the dog, speaking to the dog, giving the dog simple commands that the dog is trained to respond to, and reading to the dog. Trained school dogs may also be used as an aide to therapy with the school counselor, in meetings with parents and/or academic teams, as well as in activities that provide positive behavior interventions and supports. Activities are not limited to those listed above and the building administrator will approve any and all activities in which trained school dogs participate in. Buildings are not required to have trained school dogs and building administrators reserve the right to determine whether dogs are an appropriate addition to their building.

Having appropriately trained school dogs at KSD is a goal-driven intervention which is directed and/or delivered by a building administrator or designee and is meant to improve physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive function of students in the schools. It is the intent of this policy to encourage handlers to collaborate on training in order to use consistent commands/language when possible and to have consistent behavioral expectations. There will be no more than 4 trained school dogs per school building. Dog and handler teams will be determined based on school goals aligned with student needs.

KSD trained school dogs will be individually trained and will have proof of successful completion of the AKC Canine Good Citizenship Evaluation to begin working in the schools: This certification must be completed within one month following the dog's first birthday. Dogs over the age of 1 year must complete this certification before approval for schoolwork.

Once AKC CGC is acquired by dog and handler, work can begin in the school. Once dog has reached minimum age requirement for therapy training, dog and handler team must enroll in program to maintain their working status in the school. Therapy dog training and certification may be completed through local or national organizations that specialize in therapy dog training. Therapy dog certification must be obtained within one year of starting work in the school. Any requested extensions may be approved by administration and are not to exceed one additional year. The term puppy will apply to any dog under the age of 1. Puppies will be allowed in the school for social and training purposes. Puppy will only attend school part-time until training pathway or evaluation has been completed.

*Trained school dogs are not the same as “emotional support animals” or “service animals” as referred to in policy 2375. The term “Trained School Dogs” will be utilized to refer to any approved dog working in KSD.

The handler will be a KSD administrator/counselor/or other designated school district employee who has been trained, evaluated, and registered with the trained school dog to provide animal assisted activities and animal assisted interactions within the schools. The handler shall assume full responsibility for the trained school dog’s care, behavior, and suitability for interacting with students and others in the schools while the trained school dog is on school property. Because KSD recognizes the importance and value of the trained school dogs program, school district funds may be available for health and training/certification needs. All other financial responsibility will lie with the dog’s handler.

The following information will be kept current and on file at the school building office:

- Proof from a licensed veterinarian that the trained school dog is in good health and has been immunized against diseases common to dogs. Such vaccinations will be kept current and up to date at all times.
- Documentation of training and certifications
- A KSD approved plan for each individual trained school dog. This will have details pertaining to individual dog and handler teams and will include elements such as schedules, activities/interventions, care, toileting plans, etc.

Trained School Dog Standards and Procedures:

Training: If the handler is training a puppy for the potential use of being a trained school dog, handler and building administrator will determine the amount of appropriate time the puppy is in the school.

Health and Vaccinations: The handler shall submit proof from a licensed veterinarian that the trained school dog is in good health and has been immunized against diseases common to dogs. Dogs must be spayed or neutered before being approved as a trained school dog.

Identification: The handler and trained school dog shall wear appropriate identification such as a tag, collar, bandana, or service-type vest.

Designated Areas: The trained school dog will be assigned to designated areas appropriate to the dogs training. Dogs must be on a 4’ to 6’ leash in hallways and other common areas. Dogs should be on leash at all times unless in the counselor’s office, administrator’s office, or other areas pre-determined by an approved KSD Trained School Dog plan.

Health and Safety: The handler shall ensure that the trained school dog does not pose a health and safety risk to any student, employee, or other person at the school and that the trained

school dog is brought to KSD only when properly groomed, bathed, free of illness or injury and of the temperament appropriate for working with children and others in the school.

Supervision and Care: The handler shall be responsible for the supervision and humane care of the trained school dog, including any feeding, exercising, and cleaning up after the trained school dog while it is in the school building or on school property. The handler shall not leave the trained school dog unsupervised or alone on school property at any time.

Allergies and Aversions: The handler shall remove the trained school dog to a separate area, as designated by the school administrator, in such instances where any student or school employee who suffers dog allergies or aversions is present. Parents may “Opt out” of having their child interact with trained school dogs. While every attempt will be made to honor the need or choice of separation between students and trained school dogs, there may be moments (ex: during transitions) where close proximity is likely.

Exclusions or removal from school property for dogs:

A trained school dog may be excluded from school property if an administrator determines that (1) The handler does not have control of the trained dog at any time, (2) The trained school dog presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school, including other trained school dogs on the school premises, or (3) the trained school dog’s presence otherwise interferes with the educational program. The handler shall immediately remove the dog from school property when instructed to do so by a school or district administrator.

Exclusions for handlers:

A trained school dog handler may be excluded from program participation if an administrator determines that (1) A handler has acted in a way that is intentionally harmful to the dog’s health and safety, (2) if the handler’s implementation of the program interferes with the handler’s contractual duties, (3) if the handler’s implementation of the program is not meeting the identified needs or aligning with the goals of the trained school dog program, or (4) any intentional violation of this policy or the individual trained school dog’s plan.