



Administrative Procedures Memorandum Protocol For The Use Service and Guide Dogs In School Facilities

1. Purpose

The use of specially trained service and guide dogs is one strategy used to accommodate the special needs of some students. This procedure provides direction to school administrators regarding the admittance and implementation of service and guide dogs in the school environment. Service and guide dogs (including but not limited to guide dogs, service dogs and hearing dogs) are matched and trained to work with an individual student to mitigate the effects of their disability.

2. Background

2.1 Provincial accessibility legislation and the *Human Rights Code* provide authority for assistance dogs to accompany their handlers in all public places including schools and buses. Service and guide dogs and their handlers receive specialized training to work together and consequently the dogs should present minimal risk to or impact on other people. See link for a list of internationally accepted standards.

<http://www.assistedogsinternational.org/Standards/>

2.2 The principal must check to determine if service or guide dog has been trained and placed by an accredited assistance dog school. (**See Appendix A: Background Information**).

3. Procedures for the Implementation of Service and Guide Dogs in the School Environment

3.1 Parents/guardians or students inform the principal that they or their child and a service or guide dog are trained to work together and have graduated from an accredited training school. To initiate the process of having the dog assist the student in school, the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) if necessary, must inform the principle in writing (**FORM 1: Service and Guide Dog Involvement With a Student**), and receive a copy of **Information for Parents/Guardians on Service or Guide Dogs in the School (APPENDIX B)**.

3.2 Parents/guardians or students must provide a copy of the Team ID card or certification letter issued by the accredited assistance dog school.

3.3 The principal will consult with the Superintendent of Education and the Principal of Special Education prior to planning the implementation process.

3.4 The principal will schedule a case conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student, a representative from the accredited service or guide dog provider, the classroom teacher(s), the Special Education Resource Teacher, special education consultant, and the educational assistant(s) who work with the student. The purpose of the case conference is to review the responsibilities of the school, parents and service provider and may include a discussion of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) (description of the student's needs, any IPRC recommendations, and the required accommodations including the type of service the dog will provide. Service and Guide Dogs are considered an assistive devise).

3.5 Discussions will also include other relevant information such as safety considerations, (e.g. severe allergies, staff or students with asthma, fear of dogs etc.) the potential impact of the involvement of the dog on the school community, dog care requirements, handling routines and responsibilities, guidelines for staff and students, other student issues, transportation to school, the role of and communication with the parents/guardians, and the resources available to the school. Cultural sensitivities to animals may also need to be considered. A **Management Plan for the Care of the Service or Guide Dog (FORM 2)** will be completed.



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3.6 The School Council advises the principal on matters pertaining to the school community. An information session for the Council and other interested community members will be held to inform them, and to receive feedback or relevant information. The principal will invite the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student needing the dog to participate in the information session.

3.7 All school staff members, teaching and non-teaching, must be informed early in the process. Their input and information will assist the principal in the implementation process. Arrangements must be made to inform the relevant employee services that a service or guide dog will be in the school.

3.8 Careful consideration of all the factors will facilitate the transition of the dog into the school environment. Attention to consistency, routines, communication, staff in-service, school assemblies, and community notification are required.

3.9 An appropriate fire and emergency exit plan should be developed. Personnel from the local fire/police departments may be available to assist with the plan and should be notified that a service dog is on the premises.

3.10 A letter communicating the implementation of a service or guide dog in the school will be addressed to the parents of each student. A school assembly presented by a designate of the service dog provider is recommended to ensure practical understanding of the dog in the school community.

3.11 **FORM 3- Administrative Checklist for Implementation of Service or Guide Dogs into a School Environment** is provided.



Form 1: NOTIFICATION OF SERVICE OR GUIDE DOG INVOLVEMENT WITH A STUDENT

Name of student: _____ D.O.B. _____

Address: _____

Name(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s): _____

Telephone(s):HM: _____ CELL: _____

a) Type of Service or Guide Dog:

b) Name and contact information of the accredited service or guide dog school that provided the dog and training?

c) I/We understand that it is our responsibility to

- transport or walk the dog to and from school, or facilitate the use of bus transportation
- provide the required equipment and dog care items,
- work co-operatively with the school staff to make this process a success,
- assist the principal to communicate relevant information to the school community,
- provide the principal with required documentation in a timely fashion, and
- inform the principal of all relevant information that may affect our child, the other students, and/or staff

d) I/we give permission for this information to be shared with the school community.

Signature of student or parent(s)/guardian(s)

Date

Signature of Principal

Date



Form 2: Management Plan for the Care of the Service or Guide Dog

Student Name : _____ D.O.B.: _____

Student #: _____ School year: _____

Name of dog: _____

School: _____

Note: Where possible and feasible, these responsibilities should be handled by the student in the same manner as at home.

Water needs: (e.g. provision of water bowl, procedures for use, cleaning etc.)

Bladder/Bowel Needs of Dog (e.g. – frequency, location, disposal etc.)

Other considerations

1. Hot weather _____

2. Winter weather _____

Signature Principal _____ Date _____

Signature Student or Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____



Form 3

Administrative Checklist for Implementation of an Assistance Dog into a School Environment

Task	Date completed
Advise student and/or parent/guardian (if not of legal age) that the _____ School Board has a procedure in place.	
Provide student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) with the form Notification or Service or Guide Dog with a Student (FORM - 1) , and INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN UTILIZING SERVICE OR GUIDE DOGS IN THE SCHOOL (APPENDIX B) .	
Inform Superintendent of Education and Principal of Special Education.	
Convene a case conference with the following in attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents/guardians and/or student • classroom teachers(s) • Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) • special education consultant • representative from the accredited assistance dog training school • educational assistant(s) who work with the student. 	
Review the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or recommendations from the Identification and Review Committee(IPRC).	
Receive copies of the required documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ copy of current, official vaccination certificate for the dog ⌚ copy of Assistance Dog Team ID card or letter from accredited program ⌚ proof of municipal dog license, if applicable 	
Inform school staff that notification of a service or guide dog placement has been received.	
Inform appropriate bus contact that notification of a service or guide dog placement has been received.	
Inform School Council and community at a School Council meeting that notification of a service or guide dog placement has been received.	
Meet with the parent(s)'guardian(s) and/or student to review the implementation plan, including the fire and emergency exit plans, and Management Plan for the Care of the Dog (FORM - 2).	
Develop a communication strategy to inform students, staff, community and relevant employee representatives	
Monitor and review the implementation on a regular basis.	
File relevant documentation and correspondence in the documentation file of student's record.	



APPENDIX A: Background Information

A trained service or guide dog performs specific tasks related to the specific disability of the student. Examples include guide dogs for students with visual impairments, hearing dogs for students with hearing impairments and service dogs for people who have other disabilities and conditions including but not limited to physical impairment, epilepsy and autism.

It is recommended that dogs partnered with individual students in schools be trained by an accredited assistance dog school. The following organizations are members of the Canadian Association of Guide and Assistance Dog Schools (CAGADS) and are accredited by their respective governing body, Assistance Dogs International (www.assistedogsinternational.org) and/or International Guide Dog Federation (www.ifgdsb.org.uk):

BRITISH COLUMBIA GUIDE DOG SERVICES www.bcguidedog.ca
CANADIAN GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND www.guidedogs.ca
C.O.P.E. SERVICE DOGS www.copedogs.org
DOG GUIDES CANADA www.dogguides.com
DOGS WITH WINGS www.dogswithwings.ca
NATIONAL SERVICE DOGS www.nsd.on.ca
PACIFIC ASSISTANCE DOG SOCIETY www.pads.ca

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN UTILIZING SERVICE OR GUIDE DOGS IN THE SCHOOL

1. The success of the implementation of an service or guide dog into a school setting depends on clear communication, a well-informed school community and careful planning. The information you provide will assist the principal to make the best possible decisions for your child and other students as well as for the staff, volunteers and visitors in the school. The information will be filed in your child's Student Record (SR).
2. If your child already has an Individual Education Plan, it will be reviewed at a case conference, or one will be developed in consultation with you. The principal will invite you, your child's teacher, a representative from the assistance dog training school, the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) in the school, and the special education consultant to the case conference to discuss your child's needs, the accommodations that are already in place for your child, as well as the additional assistance provided by the dog.
3. It is important that you reinforce information about the standards in place through the accredited assistance dog school that address the safety of the students and staff.
4. The well-being of the dog is very important. Its care, handling and training needs will be addressed, and your input as a trained handler is valuable. The principal also needs to know what other resources are available to facilitate the transition to school and the implementation of the plan. Strategies for becoming familiar with the building and school grounds, introduction to assemblies/ concerts, recess, and informing the staff about interacting with the dog will need to be included in the planning.



5. A school assembly presented by a designate of service or guide dog school is recommended to ensure practical understanding of an assistance dog in the school community. Important information shared in this way facilitates understanding and acceptance of new practices at the school. You will be asked to participate in the information session/assembly.
6. After all the discussion and planning is in place, the goal will be to implement the plan as soon as possible.
7. Your responsibilities include:
 - transporting or walking the dog to and from school, or facilitating the use of bus transportation,
 - providing the required equipment and dog care items,
 - working co-operatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success,
 - assisting the principal to communicate relevant information to the school community,
 - providing the principal with required documentation in a timely fashion, and
 - informing the principal of all relevant information that may affect the students and staff.
8. Once the necessary information has been discussed, the principal will consult with the Superintendent of Education and the Principal of Special Education prior to the admittance and implementation of the service or guide dog into the school.