

Living Sky School Division No. 202

Administrative Procedure (AP) Manual



Procedure Name: Service Dogs in Schools			
Procedure Type:	School Operations	Implementation Date:	APR 13, 2016
Procedure Number:	4.46	Last Approval Date:	OCT 11, 2023
AP Owner:	Superintendent of Learning	Last Reviewed:	JUL 27, 2026
Legal Reference(s):	<i>The Education Act, 1995, s. 191</i> <i>Saskatchewan Human Rights Code "Policy on Service Animals"</i>		

Background

Living Sky School Division (LSKYSD) is committed to the delivery of high-quality education programs, supports, and services that allow students with diverse needs to maximize their learning and achievement. LSKYSD recognizes the diverse needs of some students may require the use of service dogs as an accommodation in situations where there is a physical disability, such as blindness or low vision, deafness or hearing impairments as well as seizure disorder or autism.

Scope

This procedure applies to situations where students with intensive needs may require a service dog as an accommodation. This procedure does not pertain to the introduction of therapy dogs in schools.

Definitions

A **service dog** refers to a dog that has received specialized training and is accredited to assist a person with a recognized disability or medical restriction. To meet the definition of a service dog, an animal shall be trained and certified by Assistance Dogs International (ADI).

Roles & Responsibilities

The **principal** is responsible to ensure that student accommodation is acknowledged and every effort to put the accommodation in place has been tried.

The **parent or legal guardian** is required to ensure that all of the necessary documentation has been submitted to the school when inquiring about a service dog accommodation.

Procedures

General

1. Only dogs trained and certified by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) shall be considered to work as service dogs in schools.
2. The protocol "Service Dogs in Schools" is available to principals as a detailed step-by-step guide to ensure a comprehensive, consistent, and fair process for all applicants.

Process of Application

3. All applications for introducing a service dog as an in-school accommodation shall begin with a meeting between parents or guardians, school administration, and student services to review
 - a. the needs of the student, and



- b. the efficacy of current and alternative accommodations.
- 4. If the principal confirms that a service dog may be considered to enhance accommodations for the student, the school's superintendent of learning shall issue a letter to the parent or guardian requesting medical information attached to a medical certificate.
- 5. Parents shall take necessary steps to ensure the completion of the application package, including coordinating with a medical doctor. Completed applications shall be made to the principal of the school.
- 6. The principal and the school's superintendent of learning shall determine whether the application for a service dog will be accepted.
- 7. The principal shall communicate with the parent or guardian whether the application for a service dog in school was accepted or not.

Preparing for a Service Dog in School

- 8. Prior to a service dog entering the school as part of a student's accommodation plan, the principal shall communicate details of any obligations, limitations, and restrictions required to protect the student, parents or guardians, other students, and staff at the school.

Obligations of the Parent or Guardian if Application is Accepted

- 9. In support of a service dog in school, parents or guardians shall agree to hold obligations and bear costs related to the care of the service dog, training of staff on the service dog, and liability for the service dog's behaviour. These obligations shall be determined based on the dog, the level of accommodation, and the specific context of the classroom and school. In general, these obligations include:
 - a. formal instructions on the personal care of the dog;
 - b. permission, training, and familiarization of staff on safe handling and work with the dog, including any formal work in bonding;
 - c. accept all liability that might be incurred as a result of the behavior of the service dog while present at school and indemnify the school division in writing;
 - d. provide proof of current third-party liability insurance of not less than \$2,000,000 naming the division as an additional insured arising out of the named insured for any damages caused by the service dog;
 - e. provide proof of up-to-date vaccinations and licensing of the service dog.
- 10. In addition, parents or guardians shall participate in regular meetings with school staff prior to the start of the accommodation and throughout the time of the accommodation to support ongoing success for the student and ongoing considerations for others.

Considerations and Limitations on Service Dog in School

- 11. LSKYSD may impose reasonable conditions, limits, or restrictions on the use of a service dog with relation to transportation, access to areas of the school, and participation in particular activities. These conditions, limits, or restrictions shall be based on
 - a. statutes and regulations,
 - b. the documented accommodations of other students and staff, and
 - c. operational requirements that would extend beyond undue hardship to the division.



12. The agreement to accommodate a service dog shall be reviewed annually and may be modified as required following the same process as set out in this administrative procedure.
13. If the student moves to a different school, the request for a service dog shall be resubmitted and initiated in advance, at the new school with the new principal.
14. The approval of the service dog as an accommodation may be terminated by the division if the dog does not have up to date documentation, licensing, or vaccinations.
15. The right to be accompanied by a service dog shall not apply if the individual is not in control of the behavior of the service dog and no other appropriate and trained handler is available.

Appendices

- 4.46A Service Dog Parent Information Letter Template (*internal document*)
- 4.46B Service Dog Application Form
- 4.46C Medical Certificate Request Letter Template (*internal document*)
- 4.46D Medical Certificate Form (*internal document*)
- Service Dogs in Schools Protocol (*internal document*)