

Protocols for Therapy Dogs That Work at Johnson High School

Staff Handlers

- Prior discussion with and approval of school principal regarding incorporating animals in educational interactions;
- Staff member has expertise in incorporating animals in an “interaction” (educationally);
- Knowledgeable about the animal with whom he/she works;
- Licensed and/or recognized by a separate education or human service professional discipline;
- Staff member complies with the legal and ethical requirements of his or her profession as well as local, state, and federal laws relating to this work.

Specific Qualifications

1. Staff maintains credentialing through a professional or volunteer organization (such as TDI/Pet Partners).
2. Staff maintains screening and training for their animal partner with whom they work.
3. Comply with all laws which apply to the conduct and presence of animals in a school setting.
4. Practice animal assisted interventions only within the scope of one’s professional training, licensure and responsibilities.

Staff Handler Agreement

The Staff Handler agrees to:

1. Staff Handler **MUST** be present when animals are handled by students.
2. Insure that his/her animal is properly identified as a certified Therapy Dog through TDI or Pet Partners.
3. Monitor his/her animal’s behavior and health during the animal’s participation and bring to the School Principal any concerns or questions.
4. Insure that animals will be located away from supply and return air vents at school to avoid circulating potentially harmful allergens throughout the room or building. Animals should not be allowed to roam around either the classroom or school building.

5. Insure that animals will be kept out of lunch room and lunch common areas during mealtimes.
6. Remove the animal participating if it exhibits health or behavioral issues that deem that animal no longer appropriate in a school setting as determined by a third-party consultant.
7. Maintain all appropriate licenses for his/her animal.
8. Maintain current veterinary records and vaccinations for his/her animal.

Animal Partner

For the purposes of the program at Johnson, the animals involved in the program are specifically selected, trained, and in excellent health in order to participate effectively and safely.

Specific Qualifications for Dogs:

1. Certified as a Therapy Dog through TDI or Pet Partners.
2. Has been living with the Staff Handler for at least 6 months.
3. Receives annual vaccinations, rabies, and other appropriate screening tests (i.e., fecal screen).
4. Animals must be in good health and have appropriate up-to-date immunizations and examinations by a veterinarian.
5. Is licensed according to the Staff Handlers local jurisdiction.
6. Actively solicits interactions with people.