



Byron Public Schools
Independent School District #531
Byron, Minnesota

535.1 ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

Consistent with School District Policy 614, the following administrative guidelines are established regarding the presence and use of animals in schools and classrooms.

I. ACTIONS PRIOR TO THE ANIMAL'S ARRIVAL

A. Any teacher who plans to have live animals in the classroom for curriculum-related projects and activities must first do the following:

1. Obtain prior permission from the school building principal or site Administrator where the animal will be temporarily or permanently housed.
2. Provide advanced notification to parents of affected students and other staff members.

Note: If a number of teachers in a building plan to utilize animals in the classroom, notification may be accomplished by means of a general notice (e.g. as part of a back-to-school building newsletter). The notification may list activities that may occur from time to time throughout the year (e.g. an outside speaker who brings in an animal or a student who brings in a family pet for "show and tell").

3. Notify the principal of any accommodation(s) requested to respond to expressed health or other concerns relating to a particular student or staff member, and work with the building principal and the parent/guardian or staff member to reach an acceptable accommodation.
4. Prescribe and carefully instruct pupils regarding applicable health and safety precautions. Pupil instruction should include the following:
 - i. Students should not be allowed to touch animals in the classroom without specific permission and direction of the handler and/or classroom teacher.
 - ii. Animals should not be handled excessively and are not to be subjected to any harmful, painful, or frightening experiences.



Byron Public Schools
Independent School District #531
Byron, Minnesota

- iii. Thorough hand washing is required after handling animals, particularly those that carry salmonella such as turtles, baby ducks, and baby chicks.
- 5. Make provisions for the housing and care of the animal.
 - i. Owners of animals are responsible for feeding, watering, and cage cleaning. These functions may be delegated to a specified person who accepts responsibility. Cleaning and disposal of cage contents shall be done frequently and with gloves.
- B. Any employee or student (or parent or guardian of the student) with a disability who plans to have a service animal accompany him or her to work, school, or a school-sponsored activity, must first do the following:
 - 1. Submit a written request to obtain permission for a service dog to accompany an individual with a disability to work, school or a school-sponsored activity. The written request must be delivered to the school building's principal or site administrator at least ten (10) business days prior to bringing the animal to work, school or the school activity.
 - i. At the time of the request, applicants must also provide the School District assurance that the animal has received all required immunizations, has been treated for and is free of fleas and ticks, is in good health, is housebroken, and is under the control of its handler.
 - ii. Only those service animals which are "required" by an individual with a disability, pursuant to a 504 plan, IEP, or accommodation plan will be permitted to accompany the individual to work, school, and/or school sponsored activities.
 - iii. In determining whether the animal qualifies as a service animal, the School District may not inquire into the nature or extent of the individual's disability. Nor may it require documentation or proof that the animal has been certified, trained or licensed as a service animal.
 - iv. If such information is not readily apparent, the School District *may* inquire:
 - a. if the animal is required because of a disability; and



Byron Public Schools
Independent School District #531
Byron, Minnesota

- b. into the work or tasks the animal has been individually trained to perform for the handler.

II. REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Each handler is responsible for ensuring that the service animal is harnessed, leashed or tethered so the handler can maintain control of the animal unless
 - a) the handler is unable to use the harness, leash or tether because of the disability; or
 - b) the use of such a harness, leash or tether would interfere with the service animal's safe and/or effective performance of work or tasks.
- 1. Under the two exceptions, described above, where the service animal cannot be effectively harnessed, leashed or tethered, the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control through voice control, signals, or other effective means.
- B. All service animals must be kept clean and groomed to avoid shedding and dander.
- C. All service animals must be treated for and kept free of fleas and ticks.
- D. A handler who is accompanied by a service animal is solely responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal including, but not limited to, feeding, watering, cleaning, and toileting. Neither the School District nor its staff will assume such responsibilities.
- E. Each handler shall be liable for any and all damage caused by the service animal.
 - 1. Nonetheless, at the time it grants the request for the service animal, the School District must contact its insurer to inform it of the presence of the service animal on school premises and at school-sponsored activities.
- F. Individuals with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal may not be charged extra fees, isolated from individuals without service animals, or treated less favorably than individuals without service animals.
- G. If a student or employee notifies the School District that he or she is allergic to a service animal that is accompanying a partner or trainer, the School District will consider the available options and attempt to accommodate both individuals. Generally, allergies and fear of animals are not valid reasons for prohibiting the presence of a service animal.



Byron Public Schools
Independent School District #531
Byron, Minnesota

III. CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH PERMISSION TO USE SERVICE ANIMALS MAY BE RESCINDED:

- A. The School District may require a partner or trainer to remove a service animal from School District property, a vehicle that is operated by or on behalf of the School District, or a school sponsored event or activity if:
 - 1. the service animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
 - 2. the service animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
 - 3. the animal is not housebroken; and/or
 - 4. the animal's presence would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.
- B. If the service animal misbehaves or responds reasonably to a provocation or injury, the School District must give the handler a reasonable opportunity to gain control of the animal. If the individual with a disability asserts that the animal was provoked or injured, or if the School District otherwise has reason to suspect as much, the School District will seek to determine whether provocation or injury occurred and what steps to take to prevent further provocation or injury.
- C. In the event that a service animal needs to be removed, the partner or trainer may choose to remain on School District property, in the vehicle operated by or on behalf of the School District, or at the school-sponsored event or activity (as applicable), unless the partner or trainer has violated a law or school regulation that would warrant the removal of the partner or trainer.

V. ANIMALS NOT ALLOWED IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

The animals listed in Sections A-E below are not allowed in schools or classrooms. An employee who discovers such an animal in the school or classroom shall take steps to remove the animal, including notification of the building administrator and/or custodian, as deemed necessary.

- A. Stray animals.
- B. Aggressive animals.



Byron Public Schools
Independent School District #531
Byron, Minnesota

- C. Poisonous animals including certain spiders, snakes, and venomous insects.
- D. Cats, due to the frequency of allergic reactions.
- E. If presence of an animal causes a verified health concern for which a satisfactory accommodation cannot be reached, the animal will not be allowed to remain in the school or classroom. An exception may be made if the animal serves as an aid to a student or employee with disabilities.

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