



St. Louis Language Immersion Schools Inc.

"To position all children for success in local & global economies through holistic, intellectually-inspiring language immersion programs."

ANIMALS AT SLLIS SCHOOLS POLICY

Introduction

The Board recognizes that there are many occasions when animals are present at St. Louis Language Immersion Schools (SLLIS) and reasons for those animals' presence. Animals are sometimes utilized by teachers during classroom presentations and can be often housed in classrooms and other locations on campus. Additionally, employees, students, parents/guardians, vendors, and other members of the public may be accompanied at school by a service animal in accordance with the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act for title II (state and local governmental services) and title III (public accommodations and commercial facilities).

The Board also recognizes that because animals can cause or exacerbate allergic reactions, spread bacterial infections, or cause damage and create a hazard if they escape from confinement, a policy is needed to help ensure student and staff wellness.

This policy shall apply to all animals at SLLIS Schools, including service animals.

Definitions

- A. **Animal** shall be held to include every living creature other than a plant or a human.
- B. **Service animal** as used in this policy means a dog trained and providing services constituting a reasonable accommodation to a person with a disability. The term includes but is not limited to:
 - 1. a hearing animal;
 - 2. a guide animal;
 - 3. an assistance animal;
 - 4. a seizure alert animal;
 - 5. a mobility animal;
 - 6. a psychiatric service animal; or
 - 7. an autism service animal.

Vaccination, Licensing and/or Veterinary Requirements

All animals, including service animals, admitted or housed on at SLLIS Schools or brought to SLLIS Schools on a regular basis must meet every health and inoculation requirement set forth in State law and local regulation or ordinance, including but not limited to a current rabies vaccination.

Animals in Schools and Elsewhere at SLLIS Schools

Animals, other than an animal performing the role of service animal, shall be limited to those necessary to support specific curriculum-related projects and activities. An animal that is poisonous, a bite risk, or is otherwise dangerous to persons are not allowed.

The Heads of School may permit animals other than service animals to be present at a SLLIS school to support curriculum-related projects and activities only under the following conditions:

- A. Only a staff member may seek approval to have an animal in his/her classroom and he/she shall:
 - 1. provide a current satisfactory health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian for the animal;
 - 2. take precautions deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of students and other staff;
 - 3. ensure that the animal is treated humanely, keeping it in a healthy condition and in appropriate housing (e.g., a cage or tank) that is properly cleaned and maintained; and
 - 4. keep the surrounding areas in a clean and sanitary condition at all times.
- B. Other staff members and parents/guardians of students in areas potentially affected by animals have been notified in writing and adjustments have been made to accommodate verified health-related or other concerns.

Except where an animal is serving as a service animal, the presence of an animal shall be disallowed if documented health concerns of a student or staff member cannot be accommodated.

Please note that personal pets may not be brought on SLLIS grounds or into SLLIS schools.

Humane Treatment of Animals

Animals kept on school premises shall be treated humanely and shall not be subjected to cruel treatment or housed in unsanitary or unnecessarily restrictive conditions. For purposes of this provision, "humanely" includes the provision of natural light, adequate food and fresh water, as well as adult/student care and compassion. The term "animal" means a sentient creature capable of assessing and responding to its environment.

Animals shall not be housed at SLLIS Schools over school breaks.

In cases of question or dispute, the President shall make the final determination whether or not an animal is being treated humanely at SLLIS Schools.

Service Animals for Students

A student's need for and use of the service animal must be addressed in the student's individual education plan (IEP) and/or Section 504 Plan.

A service animal shall be the personal property of the student and/or parents/guardians. The Board shall not assume responsibility for training, daily care, or healthcare of a student's service animal. By admitting a service animal at SLLIS Schools, the Board does not assume responsibility for personal injury or property damage arising out of or relating to the presence or use of service animals at SLLIS Schools or at SLLIS-sponsored events.

A service animal that meets the definition set forth in this policy shall be under the control of a student or the service animal's handler.

The Director of Student Support Services will be responsible for reviewing and determining whether the required documentation has been provided for the student's service animal. Services to a student shall not be suspended or withheld pending receipt of the requisite documentation for the service animal until the student or a parent/guardian has been given a reasonable period of time to submit any required documentation.

A service animal shall be permitted to accompany the disabled student anywhere on the school campus where students are permitted.

Removing and/or Excluding a Student's Service Animal

In instances when a service animal has demonstrated that it is not under the control of the student or its handler, the Director of Student Support Services will also be responsible for documenting such behavior and for determining if and when the service animal is to be removed and/or excluded from SLLIS Schools.

If a service animal has demonstrated that it is not housebroken, the Head of Schools will be responsible for documenting such behavior as well as informing the Director of Student Support Services. The Director of Diverse Learners makes the ultimate determination if the service animal is to be removed and/or excluded from SLLIS.

The Heads of School shall notify the Director of Student Support Services by e-mail if a service animal has been removed and/or excluded, and shall include documentation for the reasons for the removal or exclusion.

Eligibility of a Student's Service Animal for Transportation

In some cases, as identified on the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan, there may be a need for a student with a disability and their accompanying service animal to be served on SLLIS Schools transportation. There may also be a need for the service animal's handler, if the handler is someone other than the student, to be transported on SLLIS Schools transportation.

Before a service animal is permitted to ride on a school bus leased by SLLIS, the student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, and the handler, if s/he is someone other than the student, shall comply with the following:

- A. The Director of Student Support Services, the respective Head of School, and the Director of Operations shall schedule a meeting so that the student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, and the handler, if s/he is someone other than the student, to meet with the driver and bus assistant. The student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, and the handler, if s/he is someone other than the student, is responsible for providing information to the driver and bus assistant, if any, regarding critical commands needed for daily interaction and emergency/evacuation of the student and service animal.
- B. The Director of Student Support Services shall make arrangements for the student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, and the handler, if s/he is someone other than the student, to provide an orientation for students who will be riding the bus with the service animal regarding the service animal's functions and how other students should interact with the service animal.
- C. The service animal must participate in bus evacuation drills with the student.

The service animal shall board the bus by the steps with the student, not a lift, unless the student uses the lift to enter and exit the bus.

While the bus is in motion, the service animal shall remain positioned on the floor, at the student's feet. A representative of the SLLIS leased bus company will meet with the student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, to determine whether the service animal should be secured on the bus with a tether or harness.

Situations that could result in suspension of transportation privileges for the service animal include:

- A. the student, or handler, does not control the service animal's behavior, and that service animal's behavior results in a threat to the health or safety of others;
- B. the service animal urinates or defecates on the bus.

Prior to the first day of transportation, an eligible student or his/her parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of the types of service animal behaviors that could result in suspension of transportation privileges for the service animal.

If it is necessary to suspend transportation privileges for the service animal, the decision may be appealed to the SLLIS President.

If transportation is suspended for a student's service animal, it remains the responsibility of SLLIS to transport the student. Furthermore, unless the behavior that resulted in the service animal's removal from the bus is also documented during the school day, the service animal may still accompany the student in school.

Service Animals for Employees

SLLIS shall provide a reasonable accommodation for an applicant for employment or qualified employee with a disability. An employee with a disability may request authorization to use a service animal while on duty as a reasonable accommodation of a disability. As required of all animals under this policy, an employee with a disability who will have a service animal as an accommodation will be required to provide a current satisfactory animal health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian for the service animal within a reasonable time period after the service animal first accompanies the employee. Employees shall be encouraged to engage in a continuing interactive dialogue with their supervisor concerning their utilization of a service animal.

Service Animals for Parents/guardians, Vendors, Visitors, and Others

For purposes of this provision, parents/guardians, vendors, vendors' employees and other visitors are collectively referred to as "visitors."

Visitors with disabilities who plan to be accompanied by a service animal to a SLLIS School shall be encouraged to contact the administrator responsible for that facility before their visit. However, no visitor or a visitor's service animal will be turned away because of failure to give advance notice of their visit.

Visitors accompanied by their service animals shall have access to all areas of the SLLIS School where members of the public are permitted. Employees of a specific vendor shall be permitted to have access as necessary to perform their assigned duties unless the service animal's presence constitutes a direct threat to others' health or safety risk.

An individual with a disability who attends a school event will be permitted to be accompanied by a service animal. If the individual with a disability will attend a regularly scheduled series of events with his/her service animal, the individual with disabilities will be required to provide a current satisfactory health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian for the animal, which is required for all animals by this policy.

Approved: Vincent Schoemehl, Chair

Date: October 13, 2016