

## **TMCSEA Facility Dog Policy & Procedures**

**POLICY:** Animal assisted activities provide the opportunities for motivation, education, recreation and/or vocation to enhance the quality of life. TMCSEA employs the use of a facility dog as an intervention in which an animal meeting specific criteria is an integral part of the educational process.

The facility dog and handler will be assigned to Schramm Educational Center, and use of the facility dog will be primarily for the benefit of the students of Schramm Educational Center. However, other member districts may request use of the facility dog for limited purposes, such as for student emotional support in the event of a crisis event affecting the school. All requests by member districts for use of the facility dog are subject to the facility dog's availability, and must be approved by the Director.

### **PROCEDURE:**

- I. Uses for facility dog at TMCSEA.
  - A. Promote functioning in physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning of children.
  - B. As a diversion to anxiety in children.
  - C. To reinforce and assist in the educational progress of students at Schramm Educational Center.
  - D. To facilitate and increase functional and social communication skills for the students at Schramm Educational Center.
  - E. As an incentive or support in a behavior modification program or strategy.
  - F. To help increase overall staff and student morale and to serve as a positive connection to school.
  - G. Member districts may request use of the facility dog with an established handler using the district referral process for limited purposes. These requests are subject to the facility dog and handler's availability and must be approved by the Director.
- II. Animal to be used at TMCSEA.
  - A. The assigned facility dog for TMCSEA will reside with the designated trained handler/owner.
  - B. Facility dog has had the following:
    1. Extensive temperament testing.
    2. One year formal obedience and service dog work.
    3. Has passed multiple public access tests.
    4. Is certified by Paws Giving Independence (PGI) or other qualified organizations to work in the building/facility the dog is assigned.
    5. Has worked with large groups of children.
    6. Has worked with children with disabilities.
    7. Has updated vaccination history, provided on a yearly basis.
    8. Has been awarded the Good Citizen Award by the American Kennel Club.
- III. Staff requirements for the use of a facility dog.
  - A. Training.
    1. All staff of TMCSEA/Schramm Educational Center must have training in the use of the facility dog, including the use of commands, signs of stress, introducing the dog into the classroom, giving treats, equipment use, when to remove the dog from a situation, watering, and bathroom protocols.
    2. Staff interested in utilizing the facility dog for instruction must complete an additional training checklist consisting of; time spent with the dog, use of the dog with an established handler and demonstrates the ability to independently manage the dog with trainer observing, until deemed competent by an established handler.

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3. An established handler, having been trained by Paws Giving Independence (PGI), will be on-site at all times when the facility dog is on the premises. \*Established handlers will have a minimum of 10 direct contact training hours with the facility dog prior to handling the dog on the premises. The established handler/owner will complete a minimum of 25 direct contact training hours with the facility dog prior to handling the dog on the premises. Both established handlers and handler/owner will also receive ongoing training and consultation provided by PGI during ongoing training classes on-site in Peoria at PGI's training facility.

### **B. Use of facility dog by staff.**

1. Parent/guardian must sign a consent form/waiver before a student is permitted to have contact with the facility dog. If the dog is to be used in a classroom, all students present in the classroom must have consent forms/waivers on file.
2. Staff to check the facility dog's Google Calendar for availability and schedule the use of the dog.
3. Staff utilizing the facility dog will be knowledgeable of student's medical restrictions and allergies.

## **IV. Infection Control procedures.**

- A. Avoid the use of a facility dog with students who have an open wound.
- B. Children and staff are to be trained on appropriate and sanitary procedures when using the dog, such as washing hands before and after interacting with the dog. All usual infection control procedures should be followed.
- C. There will be rooms established within Schramm Educational Center that will remain "dog free" and will be marked as such. This will allow children, staff, and visitors who have allergies or other aversions spaces that the dog has not occupied.
- D. Maintenance staff to ensure dog populated areas vacuumed/cleaned each night.
- E. The facility dog will be kept clean with proper grooming, regular treatment to prevent fleas and ticks, required vaccinations and nail trimming.
- F. There will be a clearly marked "potty area" outside the building. The trained staff member who is currently in possession of the dog (or person designated by the established handler) is responsible for cleaning and disposing of dog waste in the clearly marked container. Clean up materials will be made available.
- G. If the dog has an accident inside the building the maintenance staff will clean the area with a vinegar-based deodorizing agent.

## **V. General Information**

- A. Notice will be posted on doors entering Schramm Educational Center regarding facility presence of a facility dog on the premises.
- B. Information regarding our facility dog (including rules, uses, procedures, dog-free areas, certifications, vaccinations records, etc.) will be made available upon request.
- C. In the event of an emergency, the handler and/or the staff member in possession of the dog is responsible for following school emergency procedures.
- D. The established handler/owner may submit receipts via TMCSEA's reimbursement process. The following expenditures are allowable for reimbursement: flea/tick prevention, grooming, annual wellness visit, required vaccinations, and additional training requested by TMCSEA to meet Good Citizen Award status. Other non-routine expenses and/or emergent medical bills may be reimbursed up to \$300/year at the discretion of the Director.

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### VI. COVID-19 precautions

- A. When interacting with the facility dog staff and students will follow the established TMCSEA/Schramm Educational Center Phase 4 Transition Plan.
- B. Facility dog visits require some level of contact between student, staff and handler. When possible, keep the facility dog at least 6 feet away from people not participating in the visit.<sup>1</sup>
- C. The quarantine rooms within Schramm Educational Center are “dog free” zones and will be marked as such.
- D. The facility dog is not allowed to lick or give ‘kisses’.<sup>1</sup>
- E. The facility dog will wear a waterproof collar, vest and leash. Clean and disinfect<sup>3</sup> the facility dogs toys, collars, leashes, harnesses, therapy vests, and other supplies (ie food and water bowl) frequently.<sup>1</sup>
- F. If the facility dog is sick it should not come to work. Pets with COVID-19 may have some of the following symptoms: fever, coughing, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, lethargy (unusual laziness or sluggish), sneezing, runny nose, eye discharge, vomiting, diarrhea.<sup>2</sup>
- G. If the facility dog is in close contact with a student or staff member who is suspected to be infected with COVID-19, they will follow IDPH COVID-19 Interim Exclusion Guidance for schools.
- H. Do not wipe or bathe facility dog with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or any other products not approved for animal use.<sup>1</sup>
- I. Do not put face coverings on the facility dog.<sup>1</sup>
- J. The assigned handler is the only person that should handle items that go into the facility dog's mouth (ie dog toys and treats).<sup>1</sup>
- K. Any individual who touches the facility dog should wash or sanitize their hands before and after contact. The assigned handler will provide hand sanitizer to individuals who wish to pet the facility dog on occasions when there is limited access to soap/water.<sup>1</sup>
- L. Staff and students with symptoms of COVID-19 should not touch, be close to, or interact with the facility dog.
- M. Do not use items that multiple people would handle.<sup>1</sup>
- N. Minimize walking in the hallway with the facility dog during heavy traffic times, which includes bus duty.

<sup>1</sup> CDC [Guidance for Handlers of Service and Therapy Animals](#)

<sup>2</sup> CDC [What to Do if Your Pet Tests Positive for the Virus that Causes COVID-19](#)

<sup>3</sup> CDC [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#)

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