

# **HENDRICK HUDSON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **Hendrick Hudson High School**

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### **Therapy Dog Requirements & Protocols**

#### **Purpose of Therapy Dog Protocol:**

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- To ensure proper training and use of therapy dog teams
- To ensure the safety of students and staff
- To ensure the best treatment of the dogs providing service.

#### **Definitions:**

- **Professional Therapy dog:**  
A dog selected and trained to provide physical or therapeutic functions, under the direction and control of an identified handler who works with the dog as a team. Professional therapy dogs, with their handlers, perform such functions in educational settings, in community based group settings, and at vocational activities. A Professional Therapy dog is not an Assistance dog, which is used with students/persons with visual/hearing difficulties or otherwise classified as a service dog.
- **Dog handler:**  
A person who is a staff member within the district who has worked closely as a member of the dog team with Guiding Eyes for Dogs and is a part of the ABC program team.
- **Therapy Dog Team:**  
A dog handler and therapy dog; both of which have been trained and tested as a team.

#### **Key Features:**

- Designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, and/or thinking and intellectual skills.
- Promote appropriate and meaningful social interactions with peers and community.
- The program is goal specific, i.e. improvement in verbal skills, attention span, etc.

#### **Requirements:**

- **Paperwork:**  
A copy of all required paperwork will be kept on file in the building(s) where the therapy dog team works.

A copy of the paperwork will also be kept on file in the district office. The paperwork will go as follows:

- A. Therapy dog –**  
proof of training completion – at the start of the program
  
- B. Dog Handler –**  
documentation of dog living and proof of participation in training with Guiding Eyes – at the start of program
  
- C. Veterinarian paperwork:**  
proof of current rabies vaccine, current distemper/parvovirus vaccine, leptospirosis vaccination, annual fecal testing, annual heartworm testing, external parasite screening, annual physical health assessment, and other vaccinations and parasite control as directed by a veterinarian. - Yearly
  
- D. Photo of Therapy dog team (dog/handler) – yearly**
  
- E. Written agreement from dog handler indicating should the employee be unable to fulfill responsibilities, another handler will be identified and assume responsibility for the animal.**

**Equipment:**

- Crate of appropriate size where the dog will take breaks, rest, and retreat.
- Water bowl
- Short leash – less than 4 ft. Retractable leashes, choke chains, pinch, prong, spiked, electronic collars are not allowed.
- Baggies/gloves – waste management.

**General Policy**

- The Principal may withdraw use of therapy dog at that site. If withdrawing use, a written statement indicating why must be submitted and kept on file.
- The Principal will be a part of the therapy team and identify appropriate relief area(s) on school grounds.
- Can have the therapy dog removed from the grounds if the dog becomes dangerous, out of control, or distracting. Please note at this point the dog will be evaluated for further use or withdraw the therapy dog team.
- The dog handler must be aware of the dog and its level of stress and understand they are a team and must take full responsibility for the dog.
- The therapy dog must be accompanied by an identified member of the Therapy team at all times.
- The dog handler is with whom the dog resides with outside of school hours/activities.
- The dog handler is responsible for cleaning up after the dog.
- The dog handler must adhere to school district policy and established Therapy Dog Ethics.

**Therapy Dog Team**

- Only teachers, counselors, or certified/licensed staff will be allowed as part of a therapy dog team.

**Bite Policy:**

- If a therapy dog bites a person or another animal, the dog on that team will not be allowed back to any Hendrick Hudson School District facility. The principal or site administrator will document the incident and provide written withdrawal from the team to put on file. IF there is a second dog that bites with the same handler that staff member will no longer be permitted on the Dog Therapy Team.

**Therapy Dog:**

- Must complete selection process and training with Guiding Eyes for Dogs.
- Needs to reside with the dog handler outside of school hours/activities.
- Zero bite policy.
- Always needs to be on a leash and under the control of the handler, unless specific task calls for the dog to be off leash, but control is maintained.
- Must wear rabies tags.
- Must wear identification as therapy dog.
- Dogs must be cleaned and well groomed.
- Injured or sick dogs will not be brought