

POLICY IMG

Board of Education Las Cruces Public Schools

Related Entries: IMG-RA, Las Cruces Public Schools *Procedures for Service Animals for Students*

Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent for Instruction, Chief Human Resources Officer, Assistant Superintendent for Special Student Services

Animals in Schools

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the use of all animals, including service animals by Las Cruces Public Schools students, employees, and visitors to school district properties.

II. BACKGROUND

The Board of Education recognizes that observation and controlled access to living organisms gives students unique perspectives of life processes that are not provided by other modes of instruction.

The Board also acknowledges its responsibility to permit individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by service animals in its facilities, school buildings, in classrooms, or at school functions, as required by the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. “*Service animal*” means any dog, or trained miniature horse, that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.
- B. A “*service dog in training*” is a dog that does not currently meet the definition of “service animal” but is undergoing a process of instruction designed to lead to its employment as a service dog. A service dog in training is owned by an accredited organization that trains dogs for future employment as service dogs, and that organization is responsible for any damages or injuries caused by its dog.

IV. POSITION

- A. Studying animals in the classroom enables students to develop skills of observation and comparison, a sense of stewardship, and an appreciation for the unity, interrelationships, and complexity of life. This study, however, requires appropriate, humane care of the animal.
- B. Teachers are expected to be knowledgeable about the proper care of animals under study and the safety of their students. The use of animals in

the classroom shall be consistent with LCPS Regulations and guidelines of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT).

- C. Individuals with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of district properties, as relevant, where members of the public, students, and employees are allowed to go as long as the parent has complied with district requirements outlined in the *Las Cruces Public Schools Procedures for Service Animals for Students*.
- D. The Office of Human Resource Development is the resource for district employees who may require service animals and is responsible for assisting employees and schools, as necessary, with making arrangements for service animals required by employees.
- E. The Office of Special Student Services is the resource for parents of students who may require service animals and is responsible for assisting parents, students, and schools with making arrangements for service animals required by students.
- F. Employees using service animals and parents of students with disabilities using service animals should proactively collaborate with school staff members to make arrangement for the service animal at school as outlined in the *Las Cruces Public Schools Procedures for Service Animals for Students*.
- G. Owners of service animals are liable for any harm or injury caused by the animal to other student, staff, visitors, and/or property as outlined in the *Las Cruces Public Schools Procedures for Service Animals for Students*.
- H. A school administrator may ask an individual with a disability or parents/guardians of a student with a disability to remove a service animal from district property as outlined in the *Las Cruces Public Schools Procedures for Service Animals for Students*.
- I. Service Animals in Training
 - 1. The Las Cruces Public Schools permits service dogs in training on school property, under conditions specified below. The training cannot disrupt or interfere with the school's education process. It is not expected that training would normally take place in the classroom during instructional time.
 - 2. No more than one service dog in training is permitted at a particular school at any time, unless the training program is an approved curricular program approved by the building principal.
 - 3. The organization that owns the service dog in training must

provide the following:

- a. Documentation of immunization, proof of liability insurance, and assurances that the dog is housebroken and at least six months old.
 - b. A plan, submitted to the principal, describing how the dog will be managed in the school.
 - c. A harness, vest, or other appropriate equipment identifying the animal as a service dog in training, which the dog must wear at all times while on district property.
- J. The Superintendent shall promulgate a regulation for the enforcement of this policy.

V. REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.



Board of Education, President

3/19/19

Date Approved

History: New Policy, Revised August 2007, Revised January 2019

Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA); Code of Federal Regulations, Title 28, §35.104, §35.130(b)(7), and §35.136