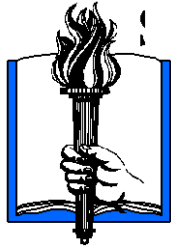


**MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVES**



Descriptor Term: Therapy Animals	Descriptor No: SS11	Effective Date: 9/22
Revised:		

1 MCS is committed to providing access to its programs and services and meeting the needs of the whole
 2 child, and, as such, permits Therapy Animals (“Animals”) as a resource for students and staff. Animals
 3 will be permitted to be in schools provided it is in compliance with this administrative directive
 4 regarding such animals. MCS and its schools reserve the right to revoke the permission granted for the
 5 campus presence of any Animals whose owner fails to follow the requirements set forth in this directive.

6 State and federal laws have no specific provisions for people to be accompanied by Animals in places of
 7 public accommodation that have a no-pet policy. Requests that do not clearly articulate the need for the
 8 therapy animal will be denied.

9 The scope of this policy is only applicable to Therapy Animals. Service Animals are governed by Board
 10 Policy 3.218.

11 **DEFINITIONS**

12 **Emotional Support Animals (ESAs).** ESAs are animals that provide emotional support and alleviate one
 13 or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual’s existing disability. Animals whose sole function
 14 is to provide comfort or emotional support are Emotional Support Animals, not Service Animals.

15 **Service Animal.** A Service Animal is a dog or miniature horse which has been individually trained to
 16 provide a specific service to an individual with a disability. Service Animals include but are not limited to:
 17 guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs for the deaf/hard of hearing, and Service Animals for individuals
 18 with physical disabilities and seizure disorders. Service Animals/service dogs are not considered “pets”
 19 and are explicitly permitted under state and federal civil rights laws. MCS will require documentation for
 20 a service animal consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

21 **Therapy Animal.** A therapy animal is an animal selected to play an integral part of a person’s treatment
 22 process. A therapy animal is professionally trained to play a role in a physical or emotional therapeutic
 23 treatment plan. A therapy animal is not a Service Animal; a therapy animal does not assist a person with
 24 a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times.
 25 Neither dangerous, poisonous, nor illegal animals, nor any animal that poses a direct threat to the
 26 health and/or safety of others will be permitted as Therapy Animals

27 **Pet.** A pet is an animal kept for pleasure and companionship. A pet is not considered an Emotional
28 Support Animal, Therapy Animal, or Service Animal. Individuals are not permitted to keep pets on MCS
29 property or bring pets into MCS buildings without authorization.

30 **Handler/Owner.** The handler/owner is the individual who has an approved Therapy Animal on MCS
31 property under this directive.

32 **Rules and Responsibilities of Owner for Therapy Animals**

33 Once the Therapy Animal has been approved, the Owner must abide by the following rules and
34 responsibilities. Failure to abide by the Owner's rules and responsibilities may lead to sanctions,
35 including removal of the animal from MCS facilities.

36 1. The Owner must complete and submit the Request for Therapy Animal Form and be approved before
37 bringing the requested animal to campus.

38 2. The Owner agrees to abide by all other MCS policies. An exception to the animal policy made under
39 this directive does not constitute an exception to any other MCS policy.

40 3. The animal shall remain in the authorized area and is not permitted in or other areas of the school.

41 6. The Owner must be in full control of the animal at all times (i.e., via a leash, harness, crate, etc.).
42 Animals are not allowed to be walked or transported through facilities without the Owner in
43 accompaniment.

44 7. The Owner is solely responsible for their animal's well-being, care, and cleaning, including but not
45 limited to: feeding, bathing, grooming, daily care, and veterinary services.

46 9. Animal may not be left unattended overnight in the school to be cared for by another person.
47 Animals must be taken with Owner if Owner leaves facility for a prolonged period.

48 10. Animals shall not be left unattended in the school at any time.

49 11. Dogs as Therapy Animals must be "housebroken" and cats as must be litter box trained. Other
50 smaller animals (i.e. gerbils, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc.) must be caged and may not be left to roam
51 freely.

52 12. Animals must be taken out of the building by way of the shortest and most direct path and must be
53 maintained under standard restraints such as a carrier and/or collar/leash when outdoors, in public
54 areas, or in transit.

55 13. Fecal matter deposited on school grounds or within the facilities needs to be removed immediately
56 and disposed of properly. The Owner is to arrange for immediate removal of fecal matter or other
57 animal waste if unable to perform the task personally.

58 14. The Owner must comply with all applicable laws regarding the keeping of an animal and is responsible
59 for making sure the animal does not disrupt the school building. Animals must be current at all times
60 on Tennessee state-required vaccinations. All applicable Animals must be spayed or neutered.

61 15. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are transferred the school through the Animal, the affected areas will be
62 treated using approved fumigation methods by an MCS-approved pest control service. The Owner
63 will be billed for the expense of any necessary pest control treatment.

64 16. Building Administrators/Designees may remove or require the removal of any animal that poses a
65 threat to the health or safety of others on campus, disrupts the educational environment of the
66 building, or if the Owner does not comply with the Owner's Rules and Responsibilities for Therapy
67 Animals.

68 17. The Owner will be financially responsible for expenses incurred above a standard cleaning or for
69 repairs to the premises, including losses, liability, claims, and harm to others caused by the animal
70 and shall indemnify and hold MCS and its schools harmless for any such damages or expenses.

71 18. The Owner will hold the MCS and the school blameless in the event the animal goes missing. MCS
72 staff is not responsible for the retrieval of the animal in the event that the animal escapes or
73 becomes lost.

74 MCS may require any individual to promptly remove any therapy animal that does not abide by the
75 above requirements and expectations, or that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. In
76 such an event, the individual, but not the animal, will remain welcome on campus. High-level violations,
77 such as an animal injuring another person or animal or behaving in a threatening manner will result in
78 the immediate removal of the animal.

79 **Request Process**

80 1. Owner must submit the attached form and registration to the building administrator for
81 approval at least 10 business days prior to bringing the animal on school premises.

82 2. The administrator shall approve or deny the request. If the request is approved, the
83 administrator shall forward the form to the Director of Schools/Designee for approval.

84 a. If the request is denied, the requestor may appeal to the Director of Schools.

85 b. Administrator/Designee shall have the right to limit the time and scope of the therapy
86 animal's presence on school property.

87 3. If the therapy animal is approved, the administrator/designee shall ensure that parents are
88 notified and given the option to opt their student out of the service.

89 4. A new form must be submitted for each occurrence not included on an existing approved form.

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REQUEST FOR THERAPY ANIMAL

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Dates(s)</i>	_____ of the 20____ - 20____ school year
<i>Reason</i>	Please attach a written explanation for requesting this service. In this explanation, describe the service the animal provides and the need for the service within the school.
<i>Documentation</i>	<p>Please remember to include the following items in your request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of registration as a therapy animal and therapy animal handler. • Proof from a licensed veterinarian that the therapy animal is in good health and immunized against diseases common to the animal. • Copy of insurance policy that provides liability coverage for the work of the handler and therapy animal while both are on school district property • Completed Animal Registration Form
<i>Agreement</i>	<p>By signing and dating below, you certify:</p> <p>You have read and understand the Therapy Animal Administrative Directive of Murfreesboro City Schools and agree to follow its guidelines, including paying fees for damages, cleaning, etc. as outlined in the directive.</p> <p>Name Date</p>

Murfreesboro City Schools

Animal Registration Form for Therapy Animal

****Owner must complete all information***

Owner's Name: _____

Phone #: (_____) _____ - _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Animal's Name: _____

Type of Animal:

Type: _____ Color: _____ Breed: _____

Weight: _____ Size: _____

Are vaccinations up to date? _____

Is the animal housebroken? _____

Emergency Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone #: (_____) _____ - _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Relation to user/owner: _____

Completion of this registration form is to guide decision making and does not guarantee your request to bring a support animal in the school building.