



S.F. No. 256 – Service Animals in an Educational Setting (as proposed to be amended by the A-2 delete-all amendment)

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Section 1. 125A.081 Service Animal Support.

Subdivision 1. Student access to service animals. Prohibits a school district from denying a student access to their service animal. Gives the student the right to make autonomous decisions regarding supported access to their service animal in an educational setting.

Subd. 2. Definitions. Defines “service animal” as a dog or miniature horse that has been trained to assist or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

Subd. 3. Service animals; policies and procedures. (a) Requires a district to ensure that its policies and procedures permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability according to federal regulations.

(b) Requires the school to include staff support for the service animal on a written support plan, if the student with a disability needs support utilizing their service animal due to their disability.

(c) Requires a student to be able to access a service animal activated by learned cues.

Subd. 4. Service animal under handler’s control. Requires a service animal to be under handler's control. Requires use of a harness, leash, or other tether unless either the handler is unable to use one because of a disability or the harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the animal’s performance of work. If a harness, leash, or other tether isn’t used, the service animal must be under the handler’s control by voice control, signals, or other effective means. Requires the consent of the student or their parent for the district to untether a service animal from the student with a disability.

Subd. 5. Care or supervision. Prohibits a district from being responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.

Subd. 6. Handler. Adds a presumption that the handler of the service animal is the individual with a disability. Requires the district to permit a student with a disability to serve as the handler of their



own service animal and prevents the district from requiring the student to provide a third-party handler.

Subd. 7. **Modifications to policies, practices, and procedures.** By January 1, 2026, requires a district to modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.