

1. What is Mutts with a Mission?

Mutts With A Mission is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that trains service dogs for disabled veterans, first responders and law enforcement as well as facility dogs for other organizations at no cost to the recipients. Mutts With A Mission is accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and was founded in 2008 by Brooke Corson after she witnessed the positive impact dogs provided to troops returning from overseas deployments. For more information or to support the organization, please visit <https://www.muttswithamission.org/>.

2. Why is this program important to NSA, the students, faculty and staff?

The mental health of our students, faculty and staff continues to be a priority. We believe that having a highly trained facility dog on our campus will further promote overall well-being among our students, faculty and staff and will also help to facilitate conversations about mental health and wellness with our school counselors. According to the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI), “People are happier and healthier in the presence of animals. Scientifically-documented benefits of the human-animal bond include decreased blood pressure, reduced anxiety and enhanced feelings of well-being.”

3. What is a facility dog?

Facility dogs are expertly trained dogs who partner with a facilitator and work in a health care or educational setting to help more than one person at a time. Unlike therapy dogs, who typically spend only a few hours working, facility dogs “work” full-time at the organization.

4. How will Jett be utilized throughout the school day?

Jett will spend time in each division with our counselors throughout the school day. All counselors and select staff members will be trained to handle Jett, ensuring Jett is always with trained personnel while on NSA’s campuses.

5. Will Jett attend schoolwide events and extracurricular activities?

We anticipate Jett’s presence will be in high demand, and she will have a busy schedule. Jett will be at some extracurricular activities as her schedule permits!

6. My student is allergic to dogs. How will this be handled?

The health and safety of our students, faculty and staff is always our highest priority. We are aware that some students have allergies to pet dander, and we are prepared to make accommodations for these students as well as our faculty and staff. If you have a concern about your student interacting with Jett, please contact your student’s division head or our school nurses.

7. My student is afraid of dogs. How will this be handled?

Again, student safety is our number one priority. Students will not be required to interact with Jett. After watching their peers interact with Jett and as a result of her calm demeanor and specialized training, students who are afraid of dogs may begin to view her differently over time. If they express an interest in interacting with Jett, our school counselors can facilitate an introduction in a non-threatening manner.

8. Has NSA ever partnered with therapy dogs before?

For over 15 years, the Lower School has participated in a program called PAWS for Reading, where our students read to certified therapy dogs to promote a love of reading and to build confidence in reluctant readers.

9. Will Jett visit both campuses?

As Jett gets used to her surroundings at the Main Campus, she may also visit the Harbour View Campus. When our Harbour View students travel to the Main Campus for special events, they will also have the opportunity to interact with Jett.

10. What happens to Jett at the end of each workday?

When Jett is not working, she lives with Karen Schompert, director of communications and public relations, and her family, Ethan '29, Ryan '32 and Mike '95.

11. Are students and faculty members allowed to “pet” Jett as she passes by on campus?

Jett will be excited to see all of our Saints throughout the day, but she may be on her way to an important meeting. Please consult with the faculty or staff member who is with Jett prior to petting her.