



Thomas Edison Elementary School

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Shawn Siddall
Principal

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Assistant Principal

Therapy Dogs in the Kenmore Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District Parents and Guardians Information Letter and FAQs

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Edison is excited that Spencer, our Therapy dog, will be returning this year **on Mondays and Fridays, starting September 23rd**, and the Therapy Dog Intervention Program will continue to promote social/emotional well-being for our school community. Research has shown that therapy dogs support psychological growth and increase social skills and self-esteem in children and adolescents. Therapy dogs have been trained to provide emotional support, positively impacting learning, social emotional functioning and communication skills. This letter is intended to provide initial notice of the plan to include a therapy dog in our schools. On behalf of everyone at your child's school, thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation and support of this therapy dog intervention.

1. Who is the dog at my child's school?

Spencer is a labradoodle, who has completed and been registered with Therapy Dogs International (TDI). Spencer's handler is Mrs. Pieczonka, one of our social workers.

2. What does a therapy dog do at school?

Spencer will have many different jobs working with students at Edison. Spencer will also work with their handler to provide assistance for students including, but not limited to: effort, participation, social awareness, confidence, engagement and belief in their power to succeed.

3. I am worried about allergies. Is this concern being considered?

Despite being a hypoallergenic dog, Mrs. Pieczonka coordinates with our school nurse **to be aware of students who have physician identified allergies. If your child has a dog allergy and this information has been reported to Edison's by the pediatrician, please be aware that Spencer will NOT interact with your student in the classroom. These classrooms have been identified; please reach out if additional questions or concerns are present.**

4. My child is afraid of dogs. What should I do?

Please contact Mrs. Pieczonka (social worker) or Mr. Siddall (Principal) if your child has an aversion to dogs. There are several rules that Mrs. Pieczonka and our dog follow at school to ensure that all our students and staff feel safe.

5. Whom do I contact with questions?

Please contact Mr. Siddall or Mrs. Pieczonka if you are interested in learning more about this program and how they may help your child. They can be reached at 716-874-8416.

6. What do I need to do if I do not want my child to work with the therapy dog at school?

If you have any reservations and do not want your child to participate in the Therapy Dog program, please use the below QR code to access the Opt-out form. If you are unable to access the QR code, please contact the individual identified above.

Edison Therapy Dog Opt-out Form



Kenmore-Tonawanda Union Free School District
1500 Colvin Boulevard, Tonawanda NY 14150
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