

West Bend-Mallard Therapy Dog

West Bend-Mallard will be implementing a therapy dog program beginning the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Research has shown that therapy dogs in schools can help build strong social emotional skills in students. A therapy dog presence has also been shown to reduce anxiety, help students work through anger management concerns, reduce bullying tendencies, and address other personal and social issues that all of our developing students deal with. There are specific goals of the therapy dog program:

- Increase empathy and compassion in all students
- Help students connect with something in the school setting and reduce anxiety
- Improve academic performance, while increasing confidence and self-esteem

The West Bend-Mallard therapy dog, Millie, is from the most hypoallergenic line of Goldendoodles, and will be brushed and bathed as needed and professionally groomed on a regular schedule as needed. WBM also requires regular veterinarian checks for registered Therapy Dogs along with regular evaluations to maintain certification.

Please complete the form below acknowledging your preference as to whether you wish your child to have contact with the West Bend-Mallard Therapy Dog.

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Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

I understand that my child may have incidental or student-initiated contact with the school therapy dog. I understand that the Therapy Dog may be in my child's room and may be part of the counseling process. I understand that this permission form will remain "active" during the years my child attends West Bend-Mallard. If I should change my mind regarding my child's interaction and participation with the Therapy Dog, I understand I must provide this in writing to the school office.

_____ Yes, my child may have incidental and/or initiated contact with the West Bend-Mallard Therapy Dog during the years my child is enrolled at West Bend-Mallard.

_____ No, my child may **NOT** have contact with the West Bend-Mallard Therapy Dog.

- _____ Due to Allergies
- _____ Fear of Dogs
- _____ Other

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have questions please contact Paul Peppmeier, Principal, at ppeppmeier@west-bend.k12.ia.us.