

Policy for Dogs on Bethesda Elementary School Property

We would like to kindly remind our community that the Bethesda Elementary School Playground and Field is not a dog park. Our 600+ students utilize the fields and playgrounds daily during their recess, lunch, and outdoor classroom periods. For the safety of our students, our fields and school grounds are closed to public access when school is in session. When accessing the grounds during non-school hours with your furry friend, please remember that dogs must be kept on leash and their waste picked up and disposed of properly. Kindly please leave the area as you found it and dispose of all trash for the safety and well-being of our students. Our BE students truly appreciate your cooperation in this matter as their field and playground time is an important and fun part of their school day.

Dogs on School Grounds and Recreation Areas (Montgomery County Code, Sec. 5-203(a)(7)) -

An owner must not allow a dog to be on public school grounds on a day when school is in session, or in a public recreation area during an organized activity, unless the dog is controlled by a leash or similar restraining device. This does not apply if the dog is participating in an activity such as obedience or agility training if the owner or sponsor of the activity has permission from the agency controlling the school or recreation area. (\$500 fine)

Animal Defecation (“pooper scooper” law) (Montgomery County Code, Sec. 5-203(a)(2)) -

An owner must not allow an animal to damage or defecate on property outside of the owner’s property. An animal may defecate on public property or the common area of property in which the owner shares an interest if the owner immediately removes and disposes of the feces by a sanitary method approved by the Director. Feces may be picked up in a plastic bag. If this bag is placed inside another plastic bag, it may be put out for disposal in your normal household trash. (\$100 fine)

At Large -

Any dog is at large if it is outside the owner’s premises and not leashed, unless it is a service dog, is in a dog exercise area designated by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission or is participating in an approved activity.

Any other animal (i.e., unaltered cat, livestock animal) is at large if it is outside the owner’s premises and not leashed or immediately responsive to verbal or non-verbal direction.

The common area of a homeowner’s association, condominium or cooperative is not the owner’s premises.

(\$100 fine for first offense; \$500 fine for each subsequent violation)

Lisa Seymour

Principal, Bethesda ES