



September 11, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are pleased to announce that we are offering Animal-Assisted Activities and Therapy to our students. Our program will include three components: Reading to Dogs, Individual Animal Therapy, and brief Classroom visits. We are aware that some students have allergies and we have worked with our school nurse to take measures to minimize risks and exposure. Also, we realize that some students do not feel comfortable around dogs. Again, we will minimize their exposure to our animal.

Working with animals has been shown to benefit students in many ways including:

- Improve motivation.
- Improve academic skills such as reading fluency.
- Help build trust and provide a sense of security.
- Animals offer unconditional acceptance.
- Promote character traits that include; caring, cooperation, compassion, empathy, gratitude, humanity, nurturance, patience, perseverance, respect, responsibility, self-control, self-esteem, and service.

Although working with animals comes with many benefits, it also comes with inherent risks. When working with animals we cannot be 100% sure that their behavior will always be predictable. Our gentle Great Dane dog, Baby, will be in our school building to work with students. She will be carefully monitored by her handler, Regina Friebis, on leash while she is on school property, and students will never be left alone with our therapy support animal. Mrs. Regina Friebis is our very own 5th grade teacher! Mrs. Friebis and Baby have received advanced obedience training and have been training to work with kids for 2 years with hundreds of hours logged with Absolute Control Dog Training. Baby is a certified Canine Good Citizen and Canine Good Citizen Urban through the American Kennel Club. Baby is also a member of Alliance of Therapy Dogs Organization.

We are excited about providing students with the opportunity to work with Baby during the school day, however please be aware that Mrs. Friebis is a full time 5th grade teacher and is willing to give up some of her prep time to take Baby to classes. We cannot guarantee how many visits will be made, but we will work hard to get to as many students as possible! **If you are interested in having your child work with Baby, please complete and return the permission form below by Friday, September 22nd.** If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at rfriebis@rcscherryhill.com and principal@rcscherryhill.com

Thank you,

I _____, **give** permission for my child, _____,
Parent/Guardian Name Child Name

to participate in Animal-Assisted Activities/Therapy at Resurrection Catholic School.

I _____, **do not give** permission for my child, _____,
Parent/Guardian Name Child Name

to participate in Animal-Assisted Activities/Therapy at Resurrection Catholic School.

_____/_____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date