



LINKS High School
9905 Papineau Ave.
Montreal, Quebec. H2B 1Z9
514-723-2845
www.emsb.qc.ca/links

September 01, 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are pleased to announce that LINKS High School now has a full-time service facility dog on site. Flavie is a golden retriever mix, trained and certified through the **ASISTA foundation**. This means she has gotten specific training to work with students within the school environment. Flavie will be working directly with her handler Ms. Myriam (Student Life Coordinator) who is trained and certified in Animal Assisted Wellness. Flavie will be working in and out of the classroom to support all the LINKS students.

Flavie's main objectives are:

- Support student mental health & reduce anxiety
- Help decrease stress in the classroom
- Promote social skills development
- Increase school participation
- Support students during transitions

We recognize that you may have some questions regarding having Flavie support our students. You can find answers to common questions along with articles for further information on the back of this page.

Please complete the below permission form and return it no later than **September 4, 2026**.

Sincerely,

M. Caldarella

Principal

Permission for participating in Animal Assisted Wellness

- ☐ I ALLOW my child _____ to work with Flavie throughout the 2026-2027 school year.
- ☐ I DO NOT allow my child _____ to work with Flavie throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

Allergies or Fears? Please specify:

Please print Parent/Guardian's name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

____/____/____
Month/Day/Year

Interesting facts about a Facility Service Dog

- Flavie a specifically trained Facility Dog. Chosen (not breed) because of her even and predictable temperament.
- Flavie is always accompanied by a handler and never 'off-leash' in the hallways.
- Flavie continues to receive continuous training at LINKS with an ASISTA trainer.
- Flavie has 24/7 access to veterinary care at the Centre Vétérinaire de Laval as part of our partnership with the ASISTA Foundation. She has been vaccinated and follows a regular veterinary visit schedule.
- She is groomed regularly to minimize hair and dander issues (allergies and intolerances).
- As a bonus, all students will have the opportunity to learn proper dog etiquette. Examples include how to approach a dog, how to ask permission of when they can pet a dog. The dog is the ideal ambassador to teach these life lessons when interacting with domesticated animals.

For more information on the ASISTA foundation and the Service Facility dog program: <https://asista.ca/>

FAQ

My child (or I) is allergic to dogs:

About 5% of the population has some level of intolerance to the dog's fur or dander. If your child is allergic or has this intolerance and the school has **not** been informed, please do so. However, there are clear protocols in place to minimize any potential reaction. The dog is groomed regularly, and the service vest (the dog's uniform) is frequently cleaned (reducing the amount of hair shedding). It should be clear though that no student (or staff member, or parent) will ever be forced to interact with the dog.

My child is afraid of dogs:

This is a trained dog chosen to work with students specifically due to their temperament. Furthermore, no child will ever be forced to interact with the dog if they do not want to. However, if your child wishes to overcome this fear, this is the perfect dog to do so.

As the program matures, some of Flavie's duties may include:

- **Running reading programs with the students:**

<http://theconversation.com/how-dogs-could-make-children-better-readers-74735>

- **Helping reduce stress and anxiety in students:**

<https://theconversation.com/therapy-dogs-can-help-reduce-student-stress-anxiety-and-improve-school-attendance-93073>

- **Numerous scholarly studies have been completed indicating how much and how many benefits are gained by having a Facility Service Dog.**

<https://www.therapydogs.com/therapy-dogs-classrooms-campuses/>