



Bella

Name: Bella

Handler: Judi Pappas, Assistant Principal of Talala Elementary

Title: Facility Therapy Dog/District Therapy Dog

Breed: Goldendoodle

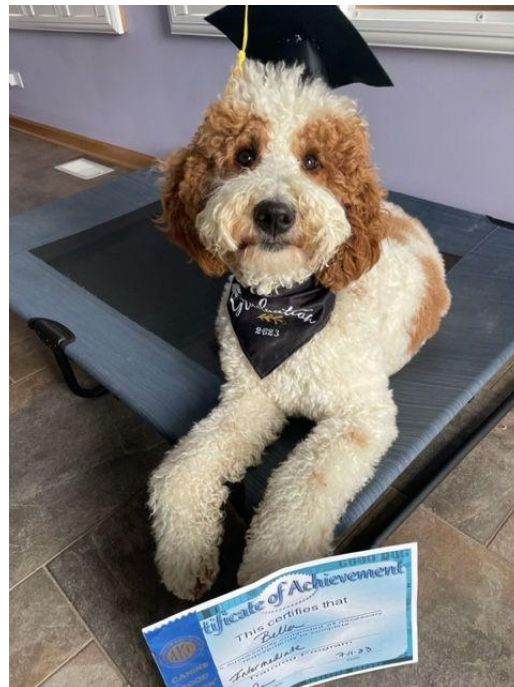
Birthdate: March 24, 2022

Color: Parti (Copper and White)

Favorite food: Freeze-Dried Treats (Chicken, Salmon, Beef, Lamb, and Duck)

Activities: Bella goes everywhere with her handler. She loves learning new skills and meeting new friends. Her favorite activity is to play "fetch". Bella loves to go for walks, but she absolutely adores being surrounded by children. and flopping on her back for belly rubs.

Training: Bella began her training at 8 weeks old, at Monee Education Center. In the Summer of 2022, Bella earned her "Puppy Obedience Certification". During the Summer of 2023, Bella completed her "Canine Good Citizen Certification", as well as her "Service Dog Certification". We are hoping to continue her education during the Summer of 2024 with the goal of Bella completing her "Therapy Dog Certification".



Experience: Bella embarked on her career at the age of 8 weeks old at Monee Education Center (MEC). She has been the Facility Therapy Dog at Talala Elementary since the 2022-2023 school year. The end-of-the-year survey indicated that 98% of the students and staff felt that Bella made a positive impact on the school climate. Bella accompanies her handler everywhere, in every situation and environment. She has visited schools in other districts, grocery stores, indoor and outdoor sporting events, doctor's offices, car dealerships, and has also brought comfort and smiles to students and staff in crisis situations at CM 201-U. Bella interacts with students and staff at Talala Elementary on a daily basis throughout the school day, and she loves everyone she comes in contact with!

Allergies: Although no dog can be 100% Hypoallergenic, Bella is a multi-generational Goldendoodle, meaning her mother and father, as well as her grandmother and grandfather, are all as Hypoallergenic as a dog could possibly be. She is highly unlikely to cause an allergic reaction. She also does not shed.

What does Bella do at Talala? Bella is at the front door or in the gym to greet students as they enter the building in the morning, and she returns to those areas at the end of the day as our students are leaving. She will sometimes be outside at the car lines as well. She travels the building with

Ms. Pappas throughout the day, interacting with students and staff. She serves as an incentive for our PBIS Paw Post Rewards; students are able to use their positive behavior points to buy "An Adventure with Bella" during our Paw Post monthly school store. Bella is available to comfort students and staff if someone is having a bad day, or if someone just needs a moment to regroup.

At the beginning of the school year, Bella and Ms. Pappas visit each classroom, to talk to our students about Bella. An important part of the 'Healing Paws Therapy Dog Program' is to teach students to have respect and appreciation for living things, and to ensure students learn how to approach any dog they might encounter.

Why Dogs at School? Evidence shows that dogs can:

- Enhance a child's psychological development and social skills
- Increase a child's self-esteem
- Lower blood pressure and heart rate
- Lower stress hormones such as cortisol, and increase mood regulators such as oxytocin
- Therapy dogs can encourage nurturing
- Increases sensitivity and awareness of the feelings and needs of others, both animals and humans
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Gives students an opportunity to engage
- Promote prosocial behavior

So look for our youngest staff member, because she will be looking for you

(For head scratches and belly rubs)! She will brighten your day because dogs wag their tails with their hearts!





Crete-Monee School District 201-U

690 W. Exchange Street, Crete, IL 60417

Phone (708) 367-8300

[**Facebook Page**](#)

[**Twitter Feed**](#)