

# Sloopy boosts spirits as Fremont Ross therapy dog

Daniel Carson, Fremont News-Messenger Published 10:34 a.m. ET Jan. 18, 2019

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Sloopy is Fremont Ross High School's therapy dog. Bill Schell, the school's freshman counselor, keeps Sloopy in his office and takes the 4-year-old Goldendoodle with him on walks around the school. *(Photo: Daniel Carson/The News-Messenger)*

FREMONT - Whether offering a paw or putting her arms around a distraught student, a dog named Sloopy does her part to brighten the mood at Fremont Ross High School.

Sloopy, a 4-year-old Goldendoodle, is the school's therapy dog.

She spends most of her day in freshman guidance counselor Bill Schell's office, lending her canine brand of emotional support for students as they talk about their problems.

"She just senses when people need a little attention, a little love. She just gives it out," Schell said Thursday in his office, as Sloopy said hello to a visitor by putting her paw on his hand as a friendly gesture.

Sloopy is Schell's personal pet.

She comes in with the counselor in the morning and goes home with him at the end of the day.

Schell said he saw how well a therapy dog worked with students at Lakota High School and thought Fremont Ross could also benefit from having one.

After training at Fremont's Canine Bliss, Sloopy passed her therapy dog testing and received certification at Amherst's Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs.

Sloopy still needs to work on a couple of things, training-wise, Schell acknowledged.

"If someone were to have a ball, she would forget what she was doing. She would have to have that ball," he said.



**Fremont Ross High School biology teacher Scott Havice pets Sloopy, the school's therapy dog, after feeding her Cheerios in his classroom. (Photo: Daniel Carson/The News-Messenger)**

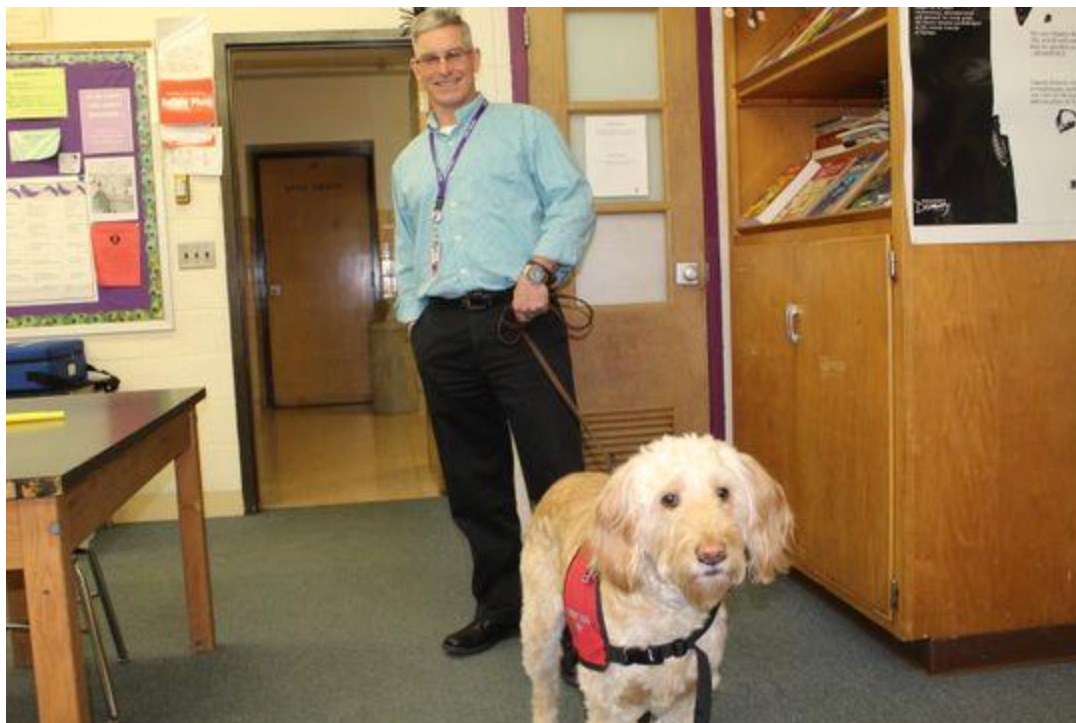
The Goldendoodle started helping at the high school toward the end of the 2017-2018 school year and has continued as Ross' therapy dog this year.

Schell takes Sloopy to classroom presentations four times a year and also takes her on early morning laps around the hallways.

Two of Sloopy's favorite teachers at Ross are Beth Muffler and Scott Havice.

Sloopy darted into Havice's biology classroom Thursday during a time when no students were present.

As part of Sloopy's early morning routine, she visits with Havice and usually gets three or four Cheerios as a treat.



**Bill Schell, Fremont Ross High School's freshman guidance counselor, walks Sloopy, the school's therapy dog Thursday. Sloopy is Schell's personal pet and has served as Fremont Ross' therapy dog since the fourth quarter of the 2017-2018 school year. (Photo: Daniel Carson/The News-Messenger)**

Havice gave Sloopy a few extra Cheerios Thursday as she made a second visit to see him.

The biology teacher said he met Sloopy at the beginning of the school year.

He brings Cheerios in for Sloopy because he has two dogs at home that enjoy a little morning cereal.

Havice said he had a student last week in his study hall who asked for a bathroom pass when he saw Sloopy walk by in the hallway.

"After he came back, he said, 'I didn't have to go to the bathroom. I just wanted to see the dog,'" Havice said.

Muffler said her morning visits with Sloopy are a great way to start her day.

"You see their faces. It brings a smile to all their faces when they see the dog," Muffler said, adding, "She's had an impact no human could have on these kids."

Schell said he is the only person at Ross who is licensed to handle Sloopy as a therapy dog.

He said, for liability reasons, he has Sloopy on his homeowners insurance in case anything unfortunate would happen between the therapy dog and a student.

The counselor said Fremont City Schools Superintendent Jon Detwiler has met Sloopy on several occasions and was one of the biggest advocates, along with Director of Student Services Abby Abernathy and Ross Principal Brian Zeller, in bringing a therapy dog into the high school.

Schell said Detwiler had seen the benefit of a school therapy dog when he served as Lakota's superintendent.

Fremont is one of the last school districts in Sandusky County to have a therapy dog on-site, Schell said.

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