



South Australian Debating Association Inc

Junior B Grand Final

Topic : *that all schools should have a "well-being" dog*

1. Type of Topic

This is a normative (model) debate.

This means that the affirmative team should propose a "model" (a policy schools having a "wellbeing" dog). This model should clearly outline what changes the affirmative team would make to the status quo, and how these changes will be enacted.

The negative team can either support the status quo or propose a countermodel. This countermodel must be different from the status quo, but also different from the model that the affirmative team is suggesting. The negative team should ensure they clearly identify whether they are supporting the status quo or proposing a countermodel.

2. Background / Context

A "well-being" dog is a specially trained therapy or emotional support dog that is used to improve the mental and emotional well-being of individuals or groups of people. The dogs undergo specialised training to ensure that they are well behaved, gentle and responsive to human emotions and are trained to remain calm in various environments. They are used to create a calming and supportive atmosphere and have been used in settings to provide comfort, support and companionship to people facing emotional or psychological challenges. "Well-being" dogs have been used in various settings that include schools, hospitals and nursing homes. They are different to service dogs that assist and have specific tasks for individuals with disabilities.

3. Specific Questions for consideration

- How would schools introduce a "well-being" dog?
 - Where would these dogs be kept?
 - Who would look after them?
- Who would have access to the "well-being" dog?

- Would it only be students, or could staff members benefit from it?
- Would it be all students, or only some students?
- How would people access the “well-being” dog? Would it be in an easily accessible area?
- What benefits might the “well-being” dog provide to the school?
 - How might people immediately benefit from seeing the “well-being” dog? Can you explain how these benefits come about?
 - What long term benefits might a “well-being” dog have?
 - Consider specifically how the “well-being” dog could affect mental health, grades and overall education, levels of bullying, and social aspects of people’s lives. Would a “well-being” dog make these things better or worse and why?
- What harms might a “well-being” dog have on a school?
 - Are there any particular people or groups of people most likely to be harmed by having a “well-being” dog?
 - Are there any health risks posed by having a “well-being” dog on school grounds?
- Are there any better means of improving students’ wellbeing than having a “well-being” dog?
 - How do these compare to having a “well-being” dog? Is there a particular harm they minimise or a particular benefit they maximise that “well-being” dogs do not?
- Who are the different people affected in a school by having a “well-being” dog (e.g. teachers, students etc.)?
 - How are each of these groups of people affected differently by having the “well-being” dog?
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