

### **ANIMALS IN SCHOOL**

District procedures must be followed to have live animals as part of the science curriculum and for educational enrichment programs relating to the study of biological science or as classroom pets.

Animals in the school buildings should always be part of a well-documented curriculum that details how the animal will be integrated into the classroom setting.

1. The teacher or caretaker must:
  - a. Receive permission from the building principal or person in charge, before any animal is brought into a school building. (Request for Approval Form for Animals in the Classroom)
  - b. Written notification will be given to parents in regards to any animal that stays in the classroom throughout the school year. Included in this notification would be the type of animals and a comment section for parents of those students who have allergies or compromised immunity. Any concerns will be referred to the principal for appropriate intervention.
  - c. Notify building staff members of the animal's presence who will be near or handling the animal. Staff members must also be allowed to verify that they do not have any known allergies to the animal.
  - d. Only bring an animal known to be in good health and appropriately immunized.
  - e. Building principals shall give final approval to the presence of animals used in the day-to-day operations of classrooms where the animals are normally used in the course of study, or in classrooms where they are normally displayed for educational purposes. All mammals approved by the principal must be appropriately vaccinated.
  - f. If an individual is bitten or scratched by an animal and the skin is broken, the affected area should be cleaned thoroughly with soap and water and then the incident must be reported to the legal guardian, principal and school nurse. The District's student accident report or staff accident report must be completed.
  - g. Make provisions for the care and maintenance of the animal during the period of time when school is not in session.
  - h. Animal(s) must be humanely and properly housed in cages, aquariums, etc., specific for the species. Animals cages, aquariums, etc., and the surrounding areas must be meticulously maintained and completely cleaned at least weekly. Animal waste and materials from animal cages, aquariums, etc., will be removed and disposed of in an appropriate manner. Children should not be allowed to handle or clean up any form of animal waste. Waste materials from animals should be bagged separately, sealed and disposed of.
  - i. Hand washing by staff and students is required after handling animals and always before eating. Animals are not allowed in the vicinity of sinks where students and staff wash their hands; in any area where food is prepared, stored, served; or in areas used for the cleaning and storage of food, utensils, or dishes.
  - j. Children should be discouraged from kissing or having an animal close to their faces.
  - k. Animal(s) will not be at large in classrooms or in the building.
  - l. No reptiles or amphibians will be permitted in grades EC through 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. In grades 7-12, reptiles and amphibians will be permitted, but must be maintained in a science laboratory, or by a person who is very knowledgeable about the reptiles and amphibians husbandry and appropriate procedures are put in place for handling the animal and clean up after animal activities.

- m. Students may bring pets in for show and tell, unit study, etc. for a limited time. Teacher permission must be granted and the owner/parent/guardian must remain with the animal(s) and provide supervision during its entire stay in the classroom. Animals should be in appropriate cage or leashed
- n. Animals are not to be transported on school buses except dogs that are specifically trained to assist students with disabilities.
- o. Dogs that are specifically certified to assist students with disabilities will be permitted on district property and at district events. For students, the need for a service dog will be documented in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). This plan will also include any necessary precautions.
- p. Animals trained to assist persons who are physically impaired shall have access to district property and district-provided transportation when being used for that purpose.
- q. Animals under the control of public safety official may have access to district property for education and public relations purposes. Use of these animals by law enforcement official is under the jurisdiction of state and federal law and is not covered by this policy.
- r. Live organisms brought into the classroom by non-district personnel for demonstration purposes are the sole responsibility of the presenter and must be removed at the end of the presentation.
- s. The use of dead organs and tissues for dissection units is permitted as defined in the curriculum. All animals or animal parts being used for dissection must be purchased from a reputable biological dealer. No dead animals or animal parts may be brought into schools unless preserved through a professional taxidermist.

Exceptions may be made for exhibits and presentations by recognized agencies that have programs specifically designed for schools or children in a public setting.