

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

Proper care should be taken with invertebrate animals. The term “animals” throughout this policy refers only to vertebrate animals. Animals may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes only, but under conditions which insure the safety of the students and staff, and the well being of the animal. Instructional use of animals includes the raising, care, and observation of live organisms. It also includes carefully supervised dissection and observation of preserved specimens.

Guidelines:

1. Instructors must be familiar with the needs and behaviors of a given species prior to its introduction into the classroom.
2. All animals must be appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled. Any animal exhibiting signs of illness or distress must be tended to by a qualified caretaker. Production animals should only be housed temporarily and for particular instructional purposes.
3. The staff member must make provisions for the care and maintenance of the animal(s) during the days when school is not in session.
4. The staff member must use and instruct the students to use the District’s Blood Borne Pathogen and Communicable Disease Policy.
5. Before any animal shall be brought into the school, prior permission must be received from the supervising teacher and the principal.
6. Only the staff member or students designated by the teacher are to handle the animals.
7. At the beginning of the year, parents/guardians will be notified in writing about animals that may be in the classroom throughout the year. The notification will request information regarding any known allergies, compromised immunity, and phobia.
8. Facilities in which animals are regularly present must be posted at the door.
9. Prior to entering the classroom, all animals must be inspected by staff for any signs of illness, open sores or abnormal behaviors. Staff has the discretion to refuse any animal into the classroom.
10. The staff is responsible for cleaning and caring of the animal habitat or area used.
11. Staff and students must wash their hands after handling animals. Staff will enforce hand washing especially before students eat. Animals are not allowed in the vicinity of sinks where students and staff wash their hands, in any area where food is prepared, stored, and served, or in areas used for cleaning and storage of food, utensils, or dishes.
12. If students or staff has any unusual contact such as being bitten, the contact area should be immediately cleaned thoroughly with soap and water. The supervising adult must report the incident immediately to the school office, which will notify parents/guardians, or other appropriate agencies.
13. All animals are not permitted at school unless they have been veterinarian-certified.
14. Live animals may be released only according to specified guidelines.
15. Animals are not to be transported on school buses.
16. Companion/therapy are permitted in the schools and buses with administrative approval.

Dissection:

Students may dissect dead animal organs and tissues only if purchased from a reputable dealer and preserved in a manner that prevents zoonotic disease transmissions. Any other use of dead animal organs and tissues must have the approval of the principal. Lab study may never include contact with cerebral spinal fluid.