

Animals may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes. However, they must be appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled. Persons bringing animals into the school should receive prior permission from the supervising teacher.

1. Teachers are to check with the school nurse regarding any known allergies existing among students in the classroom, prior to granting permission. If allergies exist, parents must be contacted for further direction.
2. Teachers must assume primary responsibility for the humane and proper treatment of any animal in the classroom.
3. Only the teacher or students designated by the teacher are to handle the animals.
4. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, the teacher must make arrangements for their care and safety.
5. Teachers with questions regarding proper care, feeding, and handling of animals should contact the science resource teacher or science department head.
6. Animals are not to be transported on school buses.
7. If a staff member or student has been bitten by an animal where skin has been pierced, the incident must be reported immediately to the school office by the supervising adult. Principals are to assume responsibility to notify public health authorities and to impound the animal for observation. Public health authorities will determine the appropriate term of confinement of the animal and method of observation.

The Board of Education recognizes that the study of living things is essential to effective instruction in the life sciences. The primary goals for demonstrations and investigations involving animals are to achieve an interest in and an understanding of the life processes, to demonstrate biological principles, and to teach proper care and handling of animals. Therefore, the Board requires that any such instructional activities, investigations, and projects be well-planned and adequately supervised, and be conducted with a respect for life and an appreciation of the health and safety of both animals and students.

The Board also recognizes that some students have a moral or religious objection to dissection or otherwise harming or destroying animals. In accordance with state law, students shall have the right to opt out of dissection activities, provided that the student performs an alternative project approved by the student's teacher. The objection must be substantiated in writing by the student's parent or guardian.

At the start of the school year, teachers of courses that include animal dissection shall give notice to the students in those classes of their opt-out rights and responsibilities under the law and this policy. Such notice shall be shared with parents of those students, and also be available upon request.