

## **Guidelines for Non-Service Animals in the Classroom or on District Property**

The following guidelines apply to all animals in the classroom or on district property.

1. Definitions for the purpose of this directive
  - a. “Animal(s)” means live vertebrates such as mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and amphibians. Examples: dogs, rats, red racer snakes, cats.
  - b. “Wild animal” means an animal not commonly domesticated and includes birds, reptiles and amphibians. Examples: raccoon, robin.
  - c. “Poisonous animal” means an animal which delivers its poison through bite or scratch in amounts sufficient to cause humans sickness, extreme pain or death. Examples: rattlesnake, brown recluse spider.
  
2. Animal “Visitors” in the Classroom
  - a. All requests to have animal visitors (e.g., student or staff show and tell) in the classroom or on district property during school hours must be submitted to the principal or designee in writing.
  - b. Included in the request should be a description of the activity, type of animal educational purpose/benefit, length of activity and a plan for the care of the animals. Additionally, if applicable, the request should include verification that the animal is properly and currently licensed with the appropriate inoculations. The principal or designee has the discretion to permit or deny the presence of any animal in the school.
  - c. Prior to approving the request, the principal or designee shall determine whether any student has a health condition (such as allergies) that could be exacerbated by exposure to animals. Parents must be notified of the plans to have an animal in the classroom so that accommodations may be made for their student.
  
3. Length of time animals are allowed in classrooms

Animals will be permitted in classrooms only for a specified and appropriate educational purpose for the time necessary to achieve the educational goal. It is recognized that in some situations, the appropriate time may extend throughout the school year.
  
4. Teacher Responsibilities for Animals in Classrooms
  - a. Teachers must assume primary responsibility for the humane and proper treatment of any animals in the classroom. 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.
  - b. Each teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students under his/her direction whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals in the school.

## 5. Owner Responsibility

- a. Owners shall be solely responsible for the care/safety of their animals and for injuries sustained to the animal or to any people due to the presence of the animals at the school.
- b. All animals brought for exhibit must be restrained by their owner/handler.
- c. Owners walking pets on school grounds must follow city or county ordinances regarding leashing and sanitation.
- d. Principals have the authority to exclude persons and their animals during school hours from play fields when he/she determines that there are associated health and or safety concerns.

## 6. Limitations

- a. No domesticated mammals, including dogs, cats, primates, birds or livestock shall be allowed in school buildings or grounds while school is in session unless permitted by the principal and proof of appropriate and/or current rabies vaccination is provided. This limitation applies to faculty, staff and student pets as well as those of the public.
- b. No wild animals including skunks, raccoons, bats, squirrels monkeys, amphibians or birds shall be allowed unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animals (i.e., zoo keepers, veterinarians, etc.)
- c. No poisonous animals are allowed unless brought in cages/containers that prevent contact with student and staff members.
- d. No animals will be allowed free range in the facility or grounds.

## 7. Injuries

Staff members or students who have been bitten or otherwise injured by an animal shall report such incident to the principal and the school nurse immediately. The principal shall notify the parents in the case of student injury. The person most knowledgeable about the incident shall complete an accident report and forward it to risk management.