

Animals in the Classroom or on District Property

Animals may be housed in classrooms or on district property for specified and appropriate educational purposes. The following guidelines apply to the presence and use of animals (vertebrates and invertebrates) in the classroom or on district property:

1. Animals serving the disabled would be an exception to this regulation;
2. Prior to any exposure to furred or feathered animals in school, the teacher should be aware of any student conditions, such as allergies, that could be exacerbated by exposure to the animals. Appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be accorded to protect the health of such individuals;
3. The teacher must be familiar with the appropriate care, feeding and handling of the animals. It is the responsibility of the teacher to create a plan of care for classroom-housed animals, including care on weekends and during emergency closure. The plan should include the future care or appropriate disposition of the animals;
4. Each teacher is responsible for the proper control of animals brought to the classroom for instructional purposes, including the effective protection of students. This includes keeping the animals in appropriate cages or containers for the protection of the animals and individuals;
5. Teachers are responsible for the clean and sanitary maintenance of animal housing and the prompt removal of animal wastes from other areas of the school or school grounds;

Students may be involved in the care and handling of the animals, but must receive instruction on necessary safety precautions. Students may not be required to clean animal housing or remove wastes;

6. No wild mammals shall be allowed unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animals (e.g., zookeepers, docents, veterinarians, etc.);
7. All animals brought for exhibit must be restrained/controlled by the owner/handler;
8. No poisonous animals are allowed unless brought in cages/containers that prevent contact with students and staff;
9. Animals are to be housed in classrooms only for specified and appropriate educational purposes for the time necessary to achieve the educational goal;

10. Teachers sponsoring or supervising the use of animals in instructional activities will adhere to local, state, and national laws, policies, and regulations regarding the animals;
11. No animals will be allowed free range in facilities or on school property;
12. Where the application of these guidelines is in question, the building administrator has the authority to determine the appropriateness of the presence of an animal in the school or on school property.