

SUBJECT: ANIMALS IN THE SCHOOL (INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES)

Observation and experimentation with living organisms and animals gives students unique perspectives of life processes. Animals and animal materials should be used respectfully and for the purpose of meeting course objectives.

The Board of Education, in recognizing the educational uses of animals in the classroom, requires that permission be obtained from the Building Principal before animals are brought into the school or classrooms. It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that there is an appropriate educational purpose if any animal is housed in a classroom. Animals are not to be transported on school buses with the exception of animals certified to assist persons with disabilities.

Study and Care of Live Animals

It shall be the responsibility of the Principal or his/her designee to develop a plan of care for those animals housed in school in the event of an emergency school closing or in the event the animals remain in the classroom on days when school is not in session.

Dissection of Animals

Any student expressing a moral or religious objection to the performance or witnessing of the dissection of an animal, either wholly or in part, shall be provided the opportunity to undertake and complete an alternative project approved by the student's teacher; provided, however, that such objection is substantiated in writing by the student's parent or legal guardian. An alternate activity clearly related to and of comparable rigor will be assigned in lieu of laboratory dissection. Some examples of alternate activities include the use of computer simulations or research. Students who perform alternative projects shall not be penalized.

Effective July 1, 2011, the District will give reasonable notice to all students enrolled in a course that includes the dissection of an animal and students' parent(s)/legal guardian(s) about their rights to seek an alternate project to dissection. Such notice shall be made available upon request at the school and distributed to parents and students enrolled in a course that includes dissection at least once at the beginning of the school year.

Instruction in the Humane Treatment of Animals

Students in elementary school must receive instruction in the humane treatment and protection of animals and the importance of the part they play in the economy of nature as well as the necessity of controlling the proliferation of animals that are subsequently abandoned and caused to suffer extreme cruelty. Such instruction shall be for a period of time as specified by the Board of Regents and may be joined with work in literature, reading, language, nature study, or ethnology.

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Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 United States Code (USC) Section 12101 et. seq.
Education Law Section 809
8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 100.2(c)(8)

Adopted: 5/10/94
Revised:

Instruction

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The Board of Education, in recognizing the educational uses of animals in the classroom, requires that permission be obtained from the building principal before animals are brought to the school or classrooms. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that there is appropriate educational purpose if any animal is housed in a classroom. Animals are not to be transported on school buses.

Animals brought to school must be properly housed, handled, and cared for in glass or screened cages. Only the teacher or those students designated by the teacher are to handle the animals.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee to develop a plan of care for those animals housed in school in the event of an emergency school closing or in the event the animals remain in the classroom on days when school is not in session.

Experiments Involving Animals

All experiments using live animals must have prior approval of the principal and be conducted in accordance with educationally approved guidelines.

The Board of Education recognizes that a student may have a moral, religious and/or philosophical objection to the dissection of animals. A written request from the parent/legal guardian of the student wishing an exemption from dissection activities will be submitted to the teacher, indicating the reasons for the exemption. A committee comprising the principal, guidance counselor and classroom teacher will review the request and may seek an interview with the student and/or parent/legal guardian in order to secure additional information to better act on the request. Students will not be discriminated against because of their decision to refrain from dissection activities.

If the student's request for exemption is granted, an appropriate alternative educational activity, which is closely related to and of equal rigor as the exempted activity, will be assigned in lieu of the classroom dissection; and the student will be responsible for and evaluated on the material covered in the alternate activity. The alternate activity will carry the same credit as the laboratory dissection.

Education Law Section 809