

IMG – ANIMALS IN SCHOOL & ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Board recognizes that, under the proper conditions, animals can be an effective teaching aid. In order to protect both children and animals, the following guidelines are adopted for use in all schools in the district.

1. The only animals allowed in a classroom must be for a specific and appropriate educational purpose and will be allowed for the amount of time necessary to achieve the educational goal.
2. The only animal products (e.g., owl feces for dissection) allowed in a classroom must be for a specific and appropriate educational purpose and will be allowed for the amount of time necessary to achieve the educational goal.
3. The bringing of animals into the classroom must not violate town/state/federal ordinances.
4. All animals and their care must meet indoor air quality standards per Policy EBBB Indoor Air Quality.
5. No animal will be at school unless the teacher has permission from the School Principal. At the School Principal's discretion, permission to keep the animal may be denied based on: (1) the purpose for the animal's presence, (2) the ability of the teacher to control the animal, (3) student and/or staff health needs, and/or (4) the past practice in the classroom. The School Principal will also be responsible for enforcing this policy.
6. It will be the responsibility of the teacher to be aware of how each animal affects the health and well being of the individual students and staff members in that particular classroom. Parents should be consulted to determine special considerations needed for children who are immune compromised, have allergies or asthma, or other special needs. Classroom staff and guests should also be consulted as to their potential susceptibility.
7. Selection of classroom animals should be appropriate for the maturity and age level of classroom children. Wild or exotic animals are not permitted in classrooms, unless under the control of a professional.
8. It will be the responsibility of the teacher to insure the appropriate care, feeding, and handling of the animal, the safety of children and staff, and the cleanliness of the classroom, and to protect the classroom and facility from damage.
 - a. All animals must be in good physical condition and vaccinated against transmittable diseases. Dogs, cats, and ferrets require proof of current rabies vaccination. Animals are to be kept clean and free of intestinal parasites, fleas, ticks, mites, and lice. Nails are to be trimmed. Precautions should be taken to minimize transmission of all diseases and injuries (e.g., Salmonella, rabies, ringworm, bites, scratches, etc.)

- b. No animals are to be allowed to run freely in the classrooms, food areas, or activity areas. No animals are permitted to damage or soil school property or school facilities.
- c. All animal eating, housing, sleeping, exercising, entertaining, and medical needs should be appropriate to insure the health and well being of the animal.
- d. Areas should be designated for animal contact. Such areas should be properly cleaned regularly and after animal contact. Food and drink may not be consumed in these areas. The teacher is responsible for keeping such areas clean on a daily or as needed basis.
- e. All fecal material must be cleaned from the cage of any mammal or bird on an as needed basis (at a minimum of once per week), and appropriate sanitizer used. All fecal and bedding matter will be disposed of in an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle. Reptiles, fish, and insects must be cared for in a manner to minimize odor and maintain health. Cleaning should be performed by people older than 5 years and under the supervision of an adult. Persons cleaning cages must wear gloves. Ideally, cleaning should be performed when children are not in the room. Hands must be washed after contact with animals, animal products, or their environment. Hand hygiene should be stressed, using verbal and written educational materials.
- f. No animals are to be left unattended at any time during the school year when school is closed or during the summer vacation. Animals are to be taken home on weekends, holidays, and vacation periods. Fish may be left unattended on weekends and holidays if an extended feeding apparatus is used.
- g. In the event an emergency school closing causes disruption of the routine feeding and care of an animal, it will be the responsibility of the teacher to provide a plan of care for his or her classroom-housed animals. In each school where these animals are housed, there should be a plan whereby a staff member who visits the school daily during the emergency closing is aware of the animals' presence and sees to their care. If no staff member visits the school daily in such circumstances, the teacher is responsible for the daily care of the animal(s).

Animals on School Grounds

1. Students and Staff - Unauthorized animals are not allowed in school buildings or on school grounds. Children and staff will be instructed to keep their personal pets off the school grounds. The appropriate town official will be called and requested to impound all animals taken into custody by school personnel.
2. Service animals – Exceptions are granted for service animals per Board Policy IMG A Service Animals.

3. Community Members – When school is in session, community members’ animals are not allowed in school buildings or on school grounds. The school session includes the regular school day (including staff in-service days), school extracurricular activities, athletic events, and summer sessions.
4. When school is not in session any animals on school grounds or in school buildings are to be leashed and under the control of their owner. Solid waste is to be picked up and disposed of using an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle. Animals must also meet all town/state/federal ordinances.
5. Horses are not permitted on school lawns, garden areas, athletic fields, or athletic tracks. Horses are to be under the control of their owner and are restricted to paved areas and trails. Solid waste is to be picked up and disposed of using an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle.
6. The District will notify students, parents, staff members, and community members of this policy using handbooks, newsletters, outdoor signs, and other communication devices.

Statutory/Regulatory/Policy/Handbook Cross References

ESD Policy EBBD (Indoor Air Quality)

ESD Policy IMG A (Service Animals)

National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc., Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings, 2006.

<http://www.nasphv.org/documentsCompendia.html>

Handbook (Personnel & Student)

APPROVED/REVISED: July 21, 2011, May 7, 2015

PREVIOUS POLICY: None