

ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The Governing Board recognizes that animals can be an effective teaching aid. In addition, instruction related to the care and treatment of animals teaches students a sense of responsibility and promotes the humane treatment of living creatures.

Animals may be brought to school for educational purposes only (e.g., pet show and tell, agricultural farm day, educational assembly) subject to rules and precautions specified in administrative regulations related to health, safety, and sanitation. Teachers shall ensure that these rules and precautions are observed so as to protect the students, staff, and animals.

The Board expects all animals brought to school to be:

1. In good physical condition.
2. Vaccinated against transmittable diseases.
3. In clean, safe, and suitable cages or containers or otherwise appropriately controlled.

Students bringing animals to school must first obtain consent of the principal and the parent/guardian.

Animals shall not be brought to school on school buses. This shall not apply to seeing-eye dogs or service dogs needed by students.

Students shall not bring poisonous or wild animals to school.

Animals brought to school by students shall generally be taken home that same day.

Animals brought to school by classroom teachers, or by students in support of a planned school lesson, may, with the consent of the principal or designee, remain at school for the number of days needed to achieve the educational goals as long as the following conditions are met:

1. The teachers shall provide for a plan for the proper care, sanitation, feeding and handling of the animal.
2. The animal is appropriately and safely housed in a cage or aquarium.
3. The teacher shall be responsible for the animal's care in the event of any school closure and may allow students to take animals home with written parental permission.

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4. The teacher shall be familiar with any potential dangers caused by the animal, including air quality dangers, and shall give special consideration to any students who have allergies to certain animals.
5. The animal is not illegal in the state of California.

No part of this policy shall prohibit the appropriate use or access of legally approved/designated service animals. With prior consent of the superintendent or designee, working animals shall be permitted limited access as appropriate.

The district assumes no liability for the safety of animals voluntarily brought to school.

Legal Reference

EDUCATION CODE

44806	Instruction in kindness to pets and humane treatment of living creatures
51202	Instruction in personal and public health and safety
51540	Safe and humane treatment of animals at school

GOVERNMENT CODE

810-996.6	California Tort Claims Act
815	Liability for injuries generally; immunity of public entity
835	Conditions of liability

MANAGEMENT RESOURCES:

Humane Society of the United States
Catalogue of Publications, 1996
Guidelines for the Study of Animals in Elementary and Secondary School
Biology, HE 1079

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