

InstructionAnimals on School Property

The Board of Education for the Plattsmouth Community Schools recognizes that animals can be an effective teaching aid and can help support the District's instructional program. Animals in the classroom provide students with opportunities to learn about diversity, habitat, humane care, animal growth and development, reproduction, and behavior. Instruction related to the care and treatment of animals teaches students a sense of responsibility and promotes the humane treatment of living creatures.

Educators may bring an animal to school or arrange for students to bring an animal to school for instructional purposes upon written permission from the principal or designee and subject to administrative regulation and other reasonable health, safety, and sanitation precautions. Educators shall be responsible for ensuring that animals are strictly controlled and for ensuring that all such precautions are observed so as to protect both the students and the animal. When any animal is brought into the classroom, a building administrator shall verify whether students have any known allergies, asthma, or other health condition that may be affected by the animal's presence. Educators should include student training on how to handle animals and emphasize proper hygiene and hand-washing recommendations. All students that handle animals should be instructed to wash their hands immediately after handling them.

Animals should not be allowed to roam free around the classroom or school. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, the educator must make arrangements for their care and safety. No animals will be housed in schools during the summer break or other extended periods of time when school is not in session.

Any time an animal bites or scratches a person; the educator must notify the building administrator, parents, and the school nurse. It is the responsibility of the building administrator to determine if additional measures need to be taken.

Non-domestic animals may not be brought to school. Exceptions may be made for exhibits and presentations by recognized agencies that have programs specifically designed for schools or children in a public setting or upon written permission from the principal or designee and subject to administrative regulation and other reasonable health, safety, and sanitation precautions.

The use of dead animals, organs, or tissues for dissection units is permitted as defined in the curriculum. All animals or animal parts being used for dissection must be purchased from a reputable biological dealer. No dead animals or animal parts may be brought on school property unless preserved through a professional taxidermist.

Animals may not be transported on school transportation, with the exception of a service animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. For more information regarding service animals, please refer to Board policy 1260 Service Animals.

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 animal at school. The District assumes no liability for the safety of animals voluntarily brought to school.

Owners walking animals on school property must follow all local ordinances regarding leashing and sanitation. All animals will be maintained on a leash and the owner will carry the appropriate materials to clean up waste. In accordance with local ordinances, animals must have license and vaccination tags affixed to them while on school property. With the exception of approved service animals, no animals will be allowed at extra-curricular activities, on any of the District's playing fields, or within playground areas.

The administration has the authority to exclude persons and their animals from school property when it is determined that there are associated health and/or safety concerns.

Adopted: June 8, 2009

Reviewed: November 9, 2009, November 8, 2010, August 8, 2011, Nov. 14, 2011, Nov. 12, 2012, Nov. 11, 2013, Nov. 10, 2014, Nov. 9, 2015, Nov. 14, 2016, Nov. 13, 2017, Nov. 12, 2018, Jan. 13, 2020, Dec. 14, 2020, Jan. 10, 2022, Dec. 12, 2022, Jan. 15, 2024