

## **7th/8th Grade Small Animal Science Syllabus**

Tanner McQuien – Lake Dallas Middle School

Semester 1, Fall 2025

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### **Dear Parents and Guardians,**

Welcome to Small Animal Science at Lake Dallas Middle School! This syllabus outlines the course plan for your child's class this semester, including key topics, expectations, and how you can support their success. As required by Texas law (Senate Bill 12), this document serves as the instructional plan and is available for your review. I look forward to exploring the fascinating world of animal care and science with your child!

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### **Contact Information**

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**Conference Time:** 11:02-11:47 A.M. , Monday–Friday

**Best Way to Reach Me:** Email or Parent Square — I will respond within 24 hours on school days.

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## **Course Overview (Instructional Plan)**

This semester, your child will study the basics of small animal science, including anatomy, health care, responsible ownership, and careers in the animal industry. Students will participate in hands-on activities, simulations, and projects designed to build both agricultural knowledge and workplace skills.

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### **Unit 1: Introduction to Small Animal Science**

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Define “small animal science” and identify its role in agriculture.
- Understand animal domestication and common uses for small animals.
- Explore FFA opportunities and career pathways in animal science.

## **Unit 2: Animal Safety & Handling**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Demonstrate safe handling techniques for small animals.
- Identify common safety hazards in animal care.
- Understand the importance of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).

## **Unit 3: Animal Behavior & Communication**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Recognize normal vs. abnormal behaviors in small animals.
- Understand animal body language and vocalizations.
- Discuss the impact of environment and enrichment on animal behavior.

## **Unit 4: Anatomy & Physiology**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify basic anatomy of small mammals, birds, and reptiles.
- Understand the function of major body systems.
- Compare anatomy between different small animal species.

## **Unit 5: Nutrition & Feeding**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify nutritional needs for common small animals.
- Understand feed labels and balanced diets.
- Create a feeding plan for a selected species.

## **Unit 6: Animal Health & Disease Prevention**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Recognize signs of a healthy vs. unhealthy animal.
- Identify common diseases and parasites in small animals.
- Understand basic first aid and when to seek veterinary care.

## **Unit 7: Breeds & Species Identification**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify common breeds of dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and poultry.
- Discuss breed-specific characteristics and care requirements.
- Understand responsible breeding practices.

## **Unit 8: Housing & Environmental Needs**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Design appropriate housing for various species.
- Understand temperature, humidity, and lighting requirements.
- Discuss sanitation and cleaning procedures.

## **Unit 9: Careers in Animal Science**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Explore careers in veterinary medicine, grooming, training, and animal research.
- Identify education and certifications required for each career.
- Understand workplace skills important in the animal industry.

## **Unit 10: Capstone Project – Small Animal Care Plan**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Select a species and design a comprehensive care plan.
- Include housing, feeding, health care, and enrichment needs.
- Present project findings to the class.