SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

Animals in the School Setting

Definition:

I. Animal: Any living vertebrate creature, domestic or wild.

II. Venomous (poisonous) animal: This includes but is not limited to rattlesnakes, copperheads, water moccasins, coral snakes, Gila monsters, black widow spiders, brown recluse spiders, bees, wasps, hornets, lionfish, stinging jellyfish, and scorpions.

III. Wild mammal: This includes but is not limited to bats, skunks, raccoons, foxes, minks, weasels, ferrets, opossums, stray or unvaccinated dogs or cats, ground squirrels, mice, rats, chipmunks, groundhogs, moles, and shrews.

It is the responsibility of the principal/designee to assure a specific and appropriate educational purpose for any animal housed in the school. School staff shall be responsible for the proper control of animals brought to school for instructional purposes.

Preparation for the use of live animals should include acquisition of knowledge on care appropriate to the species including housing, food, exercise, and handling. A clean, appropriate environment shall be maintained. There shall be adequate ventilation and light, and reasonable temperature. Cages shall be sufficient in size to allow animals to stand or lie in a normal position. A plan shall be provided for the routine care of animals during emergency closings and school breaks. Custodians shall be made aware of any animals in the school. Furred and feathered animals shall not be housed in classrooms where there is a child with a known allergy to such animals. Proper documentation paper and licensing where required shall be readily available.

Under no circumstances are live wild mammals or venomous animals to be brought into school. Exceptions to this include those instances when such animals are presented at schools by professionals who have experience handling such animals. Any exception will require review by the Supervisor of Science prior to any animal being brought to a school facility.
Teachers are discouraged from allowing dogs, cats, and other pets to be brought to school. In cases where this is permitted, utmost precautions are to be followed to assure that no child is bitten or endangered. The principal/designee has the responsibility to assure that the animal is properly immunized including a current rabies vaccination, as appropriate. Parents shall be responsible for transportation to and from school of said permitted animal. There shall be none of the following:

I. Sacrifice of any vertebrate for research purposes.

II. Nutritional/toxicity/deficiency research.

III. Surgical procedures.

IV. Behavioral studies involving stress, “harassment,” or treatment in other than the normal state.

The Principal, the Associate Superintendent for Student and Professional Learning, and the appropriate Level Associate Superintendent are responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and related policy shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.