

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS

Background

Northwest School Division believes that students require an understanding of animal life and life processes and recognizes the value of active learning processes in developing these concepts. The Division also recognizes the importance of students developing the concepts of dignity of life and respect for all living things and consequently requires that all animal life used in the classroom be treated in a humane and purposeful manner.

Procedures

1. The teacher shall provide a written proposal for the use and maintenance of live animals in the classroom that addresses:
 - a. the appropriateness to curriculum;
 - b. the effect of the animals upon the students from a health and psychological viewpoint. The teacher must be aware of potential health hazards, student allergies and phobias and make appropriate adjustments to the presence, use, housing, handling, and routines the animals will go through with the children;
 - c. the provision of proper animal husbandry as follows:
 - i. proper housing and space;
 - ii. proper lighting and temperature;
 - iii. adequate ventilation;
 - iv. adequate water and food with proper nutritional requirements;
 - v. provision for sanitation;
 - vi. scheduling during holidays and weekends;
 - vii. provision for proper humane disposal of animals.
2. Approval by the Principal is required prior to the use of live animals in the classroom.
3. Handling of animals should be restricted to those individuals knowledgeable in proper handling technique.
4. The teacher must provide adequate supervision of students and animals to prevent harm to either.
5. The teacher shall ensure that no wild animals be brought into the classroom.
6. The teacher must monitor the animals' general health and behavior and provide needed medical services or humane disposal as needed.

7. The teacher shall ensure that the animal receives proper care and housing after its school use or administer proper euthanasia as outlined by Canadian Council on Animal Care.

General Precautions

1. Avoid keeping animals such as turtles and birds as they are prone to parasite infections.
2. Do not let animals roam freely in the school.
3. All animal waste and cage bedding material must be placed in a sealed plastic bag for disposal. (Caretakers are not responsible for the cleanup of animals in classrooms).
4. If a scratch or bite breaks the surface of the skin, immediately clean the affected area and report the incident to the Principal.
5. Wash hands thoroughly after handling animals.
6. Cats and dogs are not to be kept in schools but may be welcomed as occasional supervised visitors only after approval of the Principal.

Reference: The School Division Administration Regulations 45, 49

Approved: January 24, 2025