

Title: **Animals in the Schools**

Category: **Education**

Number: **1010**

Circulating until November 5, 2018

I. Rationale:

Research supports that having animals and pets in the classroom can have strong benefits for children. Animals can reduce stress and anxiety, improve social interaction, and increase motivation and learning.

II. Guidelines:

A. The principal shall approve all animals that are brought into schools for instructional purposes.

B. Animals shall be housed in suitable, sanitary self-contained enclosures appropriate to the size of the animals (as per S.P.C.A. guidelines). Teachers who bring animals into their classrooms will be responsible for ensuring enclosures are kept in a sanitary condition.

C. Animals shall not be allowed to roam freely in the school. Due to the nature of their work, therapy dogs may be unleashed while in certain settings, but will be kept under control at all times. Dogs used for therapeutic purposes will require proper certification indicating a training program has been successfully completed. Dogs must be completely housebroken and up to date on vaccinations before being brought to school.

D. Animals shall not be left in schools during holiday periods. The staff member who brought the animal(s) to the school will be responsible for the proper care of the animals.

E. Prior to introducing any animals into the classroom, teachers shall be certain that:

1. Students and school personnel are not allergic to their presence. If a student or staff member suffers from an allergy that is aggravated by the presence of animals, the animal must be removed;
2. The animals are free from any disease or parasites;
3. The animal will present no physical danger to students;
4. Students will be instructed in the proper care and handling of the animal.

F. Staff shall not bring their own household pets into district schools except for instructional purposes and student support.

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G. Staff must be sensitive aware that students and/or staff may have fears associated with certain animals and will ensure that introduction of animals is done carefully and with thoughtful collaborative preparation.

Received:

References:

