

BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 501

2029P

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS OR CLASSROOMS

The following procedures are to be followed when animals are on district property or included in part of the on-going educational program.

Prior Notification and Approval

- The principal shall be notified in advance when an animal is going to be at school or in a classroom so that adequate planning and preparation can take place.
- The principal shall consult with the district's Risk Management Coordinator prior to authorizing animals in the classroom for an extended period of time.
- Parents must be notified prior to any live or dead animal being brought into their child's classroom due to the fact that children who have allergies or asthma may react unfavorably to exposure to fur, feathers, dander, feces, urine, preservatives, and/or animal feed.
- Animals, other than service animals for individuals with a disability, may not be brought onto school grounds without the prior approval of the principal.

General Guidelines

- Animals brought on school campuses must be healthy and clean. Animals must have current vaccinations and be free of internal and external parasites, e.g. fleas, ticks, mites, tapeworms, etc.
- Handling of live animals shall be allowed only under adult supervision. Sturdy, bite-resistant gloves are recommended whenever live animals are handled.
- Keeping and handling live animals shall be in designated areas only. Designated areas shall include impervious, clean surfaces and adequate ventilation. If, in the opinion of the principal, adverse indoor air quality becomes a concern, the animal(s) must leave the school immediately.
- The principal shall report all notifiable conditions, including animal bites, to the local health jurisdictions and to the district's Risk Management Coordinator.
- Animals shall not be transported in a school vehicle.

Types of Animals Appropriate/Inappropriate for School Settings

- Only animals (mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles), bred in captivity may be allowed in schools due to the wide variety of diseases carried by "wild" animals, mammals, fish, and reptiles. This applies to both living and dead animals. Exceptions include instances when wild animals are presented at schools by professionals who have experience handling wildlife, or the animals are displayed in enclosed cages that prevent contact between the animal and children or staff.

Animals in Schools or Classrooms – 2029P

- Parrots, love birds, parakeets, and other “hook-billed” birds are prohibited in public schools.
- Animals in estrus (“heat”) should not be allowed at school.
- Reptiles and amphibians (turtles, snakes, lizards, etc.), can carry salmonella. Whenever any of these animals are handled, it is imperative to instruct children immediately after handling the animal to wash their hands with soap and hot water.

Care of Animals While On School Campuses

Children should not be allowed to handle or clean up any form of animal waste (feces, vomit, urine, blood, etc.). Animal waste should be disposed of where children cannot come in contact with it, such as in a plastic bag, a container with a lid, or via the sewage system for feces. Food handlers should not be involved in the cleanup of animal waste.

The cages of all animals that remain in classrooms shall be lockable and cleaned regularly by staff.

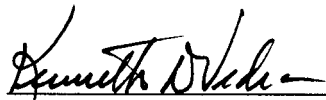
- Animals that are kept in the classroom due to their direct relation to the educational program shall be fed appropriate food on a regular basis and be provided with fresh water at all times to prevent animal illness, disease, or death.
- Heat lamps shall be secured in such a way as to prevent contact with flammable bedding materials. Electrical connections shall meet the standards of the National Electrical Code (NEC). Extension cords may not be used for permanently installed heat lamps.

The principal shall ensure that all classroom animals are properly cared for on weekends, holidays, and breaks. Dead, sick, or diseased animals or filthy (mold, dirt, feces, etc.) cages/aquariums degrade the indoor air quality, are not conducive to a healthy classroom environment, and will not be allowed.

Fish aquariums shall be cleaned regularly. Used water from aquariums shall be disposed of in sinks that are not used for food preparation or for obtaining water for human consumption.

Hand washing facilities shall be readily accessible. Hands shall always be washed with soap and warm water immediately after handling animals, cages, bedding, etc.

Approved: 2-26-09



Kenneth D. Vedra
Superintendent of Schools

February 26, 2009

Date