

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

- 1.0 Live animals in the classroom will be directly related to the objectives of the instructional program. Use of animals in the classroom is permitted, subject to the following guidelines.
  - 1.1 Permission must be obtained from the building administrator before animals are brought to school by anyone. If students need to bring domesticated animals (pets) to school for educational purposes, they must consult with their teacher(s) who, in turn, will request permission from the building administrator. Animals will not be transported in school vehicles.
  - 1.2 Only pets with proof of current rabies vaccination (if applicable) will be allowed in school.
  - 1.3 No wild animals will be allowed in school unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animal and properly licensed by state or federal agencies as appropriate (i.e., zookeepers, veterinarians, biologists). Students will not be permitted to handle wild animals.
  - 1.4 All animals brought to school must be restrained by the owner/handler. The teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals in school.
  - 1.5 If a student is bitten/injured by an animal on school premises, the building administrator, school nurse, and parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible. If a staff member or visitor is bitten/injured, the building administrator must be notified. The building administrator must notify appropriate public health authorities of each incident.
  - 1.6 If a stray or wild animal appears on school grounds, children will not be allowed in the area until the animal has left the premises or is removed by the local animal control officer, game warden, or other appropriate official.
  - 1.7 Animals kept in classrooms must be housed in appropriate containers and cared for in a safe and humane manner. Only the teacher or students designated by the teacher are to handle these animals. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, arrangements must be made for their adequate care at all times.
  - 1.8 No animal may be used as part of a scientific experiment or for any other purpose in which the normal health of the animal is interfered with or where pain or distress is caused. No person may practice vivisection or exhibit a vivisected animal in the schools. Dissection of dead animals shall be confined to the classroom and to the presence of students engaged in the study of dissection and shall not be for the purpose of exhibition.

2.0 The Board recognizes that service animals may be used to assist individuals with disabilities. This policy does not apply to service animals that have been or are being specifically trained for the purpose of assisting a person with a disability. The building administrator or designee will be responsible for developing a plan to incorporate the use of a service animal into the educational program for a student with a disability or to accommodate a school employee with a disability.

Legal Reference: 7 MRSA § 3971  
22 MRSA §§ 801-825

Cross Reference: IMGA

Adopted: September 4, 2008