

INSTRUCTION

2580

Use of Animals in Educational Programs

Animals may be brought into the school setting for educational purposes only in accordance with the policies of The Village Charter School and the procedures established by the School Administrator and/or designee with regard to the presence of animals.

This policy does not apply to service animals. Students', guests', and/or employees' use of service animals is handled in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and School Policy. Likewise police and SRO K-9 use is handled in accordance with applicable school search policies and regulations.

To protect students and staff, the following applies to animals brought into the school facilities for educational purposes. The Village Charter School's School Administrator and/or designee may place additional guidelines or restrictions upon the presence of specific animals in the school setting. Further, the presence of any animal, whether regularly or periodically housed in a classroom or brought into the school for an isolated or singular visit, requires timely pre-approval from the School Administrator or designee.

Animals Regularly or Periodically Housed in Classrooms

1. No animal shall be housed in any school classroom without pre-approval of the School Administrator or designee.
 - A. A classroom teacher seeking to house an animal in the classroom shall submit such request in writing explaining the educational purpose of having an animal(s) in the classroom setting. A separate form must be provided for each animal to be housed in a classroom. All information sought on such form must be completed fully and accurately, to the best of the employee's knowledge.
 - B. The teacher signing this request application is responsible for assuming primary responsibility for the animal and shall be designated as the animal's supervising teacher.
2. Prior to exposing any student to a live animal in the classroom, the supervising teacher shall provide written notification to all parents, including a copy of Form 2580F Student Permission Form for Exposure to Animals to obtain parental/guardian consent.
 - A. Copies of all such completed Student Permission Forms shall be maintained in the classroom by the supervising teacher with a copy provided to and maintained by the building administration.

- B. The supervising teacher shall consult with any parent/guardian with regard to students who are immunocompromised or have allergies, asthma, or other health concerns relating to contact or proximity to animals.
- 3. The supervising teacher who has been granted permission to house (an) animal(s) in the classroom shall provide formal classroom instruction to students regarding sanitation in the handling of animals and shall require all individuals handling animals to subsequently wash his or her hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- 4. Any student handling any animal must be directly supervised by the supervising teacher.
 - A. Only the supervising teacher or students designated by the supervising teacher, with proper permission as detailed herein, may handle a classroom animal.
 - B. Handling of any animals should be age appropriate, considering the disease-related risks of certain animals (i.e. hamsters, guinea pigs, and gerbils – Salmonella bacteria and Lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus; reptiles and amphibians - Salmonella bacteria; farm animals – E. coli, Salmonella, Campylobacter and Cryptosporidium).
 - C. Should any student or employee be injured, including but not limited to animal bites or scratches, associated with the handling of a classroom animal, the supervising teacher is responsible for immediately reporting such event, in writing, to the School Administrator and assuring the student is directed to the school's office for appropriate medical care.
 - 1. If appropriate, a school accident/injury report will be completed.
 - 2. The school's personnel shall notify the student's parent/guardian.
 - 3. If appropriate, personnel shall notify public health officials.
 - 4. At no time shall any student be exposed to an inherently dangerous animal or any animal which due to size, nature, or aggression could cause injury to a student.
- 5. Animals shall be handled humanely and in a healthy environment. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, the supervising teacher shall be responsible for making arrangements for their care and safety.
- 6. Animals shall be displayed in enclosed cages or tanks or under otherwise appropriate restraints.
 - A. Upon placement in the classroom, the School Administrator or designee shall inspect the enclosure and ensure that it meets standards for safeguarding the health and welfare of students.

- B. Under no circumstances shall any student be allowed to clean any enclosure, cage, tank/aquarium, or other holding enclosure for any classroom animal or touch or otherwise come into contact with the materials that has been removed from any cleaned enclosure, cage, tank, aquarium, or other holding enclosure.
 - C. Under no circumstance shall any student be allowed to touch or come into contact with any animal waste.
- 7. Animals must be clean and free of intestinal parasites, fleas, ticks, and mites.
- 8. Animals shall not be brought in or obtained from the wild. If sought by the School Administrator, the supervising teacher shall provide proof of purchase or proof of transfer of the animal in question.
- 9. Animals maintained in a school classroom shall not have access to or contact with wild animals.
- 10. Classroom animals shall not be permitted to freely roam about any classroom or other area of the school.
- 11. No animal shall be allowed in any area of the school where food or drink is prepared or consumed.
- 12. Absent pre-approval from the School Administrator, food for animals must be stored in air-tight closed containers, preferably hard plastic.
 - A. Feeding of classroom animals shall not occur in the presence of any student.
 - B. The supervising teacher and the School Administrator shall, at the time the animal comes into the school setting, confer as to the manner and method of feeding of such animal.
 - C. The supervising teacher shall agree with the directive of feeding of the animal or the animal shall not be permitted to be present at school.
 - D. No “live-feeding” shall occur in the school setting.
- 13. The supervising teacher shall be responsible for the proper cleaning and disinfection of any area in which the animal is present.
 - A. The supervising teacher, School Administrator, and custodial personnel shall confer, at the time the animal comes into the school setting, regarding any necessary

- precautions for cleaning and maintenance in the classroom and/or around the animal or addressing animal waste.
- B. The supervising teacher shall be responsible for the disposal of animal waste, using appropriate plastic bags and disposable gloves and sanitary cleansers.
14. Prior to the animal being brought into the classroom, the supervising teacher is responsible for assuring that no special permits, licenses, or other requirements (i.e. health/medical certification or examinations) are necessary to own and house the animal. If a permit, license, or other requirement does exist associated with the animal, it is solely the supervising teacher's responsibility to comply with such requirements and to provide the School Administrator with a copy of documentation assuring compliance. Any animal not in compliance shall not be brought into the school's setting. Any health care records associated with the animal shall be maintained in the classroom and is the responsibility of the supervising teacher.
15. At the commencement of each school year the School Administrator or designee shall be responsible for cataloging any and all animals that are present in classrooms.
- A. Should a new animal be brought into the school setting, or an existing animal leave the school setting, the supervising teacher is responsible for notifying the School Administrator.
 - B. The School Administrator is responsible for providing a copy of the animal catalog to the School's head administrator, if a different position than School Administrator.
16. No animal shall be transported on any school bus.

Visiting Animals to the Schools

1. As part of an educational program, there may be isolated instances in which an animal is brought into the school's setting. Prior to any such animal coming into the school setting, pre-approval must be obtained from the School Administrator no less than five school days prior to the scheduled event.
2. To seek approval, a written request must be submitted to the School Administrator including the following:
 - A. The date and activity in question;
 - B. Detail as to the relevance of the animal to the educational program;
 - C. The animal(s) requested to be allowed on school property;
 - D. Information as to how the health and safety of students, school personnel, and the animal will be addressed; and

- E. Copies of current health records and/or proof of current vaccination, as applicable (as detailed herein).
- 3. All animals must be housebroken.
- 4. The animal's owner agrees to hold The Village Charter School, its employees, and agents harmless for any injury to the animal, including death, and any injury to any individual, including the handler, school staff, or school student.

Animal Dissection

- 1. Experiments on living animals are prohibited; however, behavior studies that do not impair and animal's health or safety are permissible only after having obtained written pre-approval from the School Administrator.
 - A. In order to obtain School Administrator approval, the classroom teacher must submit a written request providing details as to the behavior study to be conducted, the manner and details of the study, and how the health and welfare of students and the animal will be safeguarded.
 - B. Such request shall be submitted no later than five school days prior to the desired start of the behavior study.
- 3. The dissection of dead animals or parts of dead animals shall be allowed in a classroom only when the dissection exercise contributes to or is part of the approved educational program of the classroom.
 - A. Prior to scheduling any educational dissection, the classroom teacher shall confer with the curriculum director and School Administrator to address the scheduling and approval of the educational activity. Such discussion shall occur no later than 15 days prior to the scheduled classroom activity.
 - B. All dissection of animals and the parts of dissected animals shall be confined to the classroom.
 - C. Students who object to performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals shall be excused from the classroom during such educational activity without penalty, discipline, or negative impact upon the student's grade. Alternate projects will be assigned to any such non-participating student.

Prohibited Animals

1. Regardless of the desired educational purpose, the following live animals are prohibited in any school facility, for any time or purpose:
 - A. Inherently dangerous animals;
 - B. Any venomous or toxin producing animals;
 - C. Aggressive or unpredictable animals;
 - D. Stray animals or animals with no health or vaccination history;
 - E. Mammals at high risk for having or transmitting rabies; and
 - F. Any animal on the Idaho Invasive Species List for which proper state permitting and documentation of ownership has not been obtained prior to classroom housing (i.e. Snapping Turtle, Red Eared Slider, Mediterranean Gecko, Brahminy Blind Snake, Monk Parakeet, and Nutria).
2. The School Administrator may prohibit any animal from being present upon the school's property on a case by case basis.

Health and Vaccination Requirements

1. Prior to bringing certain animals into a school building, current health records and/or proof of current vaccinations is required as follows:
 - A. Cats: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against feline distemper/upper respiratory vaccine (FVRCP), feline leukemia, feline chlamydiosis and rabies. The Village Charter School may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months.
 - B. Dogs: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against canine distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, canine parainfluenza (CPVI), parvovirus, Bordetella, and rabies. The District may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months. The District may also request proof of current licensure of the dog.
 - C. Ferrets: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against rabies. The District may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months.

D. Psittacine Birds (parrots, parakeets, budgies and cockatiels): A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of treatment or negative test results for psittacosis (avian Chlamydiosis).

2. The School Administrator shall make the final determination as to whether or not any animal may be present upon school property. When making such a determination the primary factor of consideration shall first be the health and welfare of students.

Cross References:	2340	Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom
	2345	Speakers in the Classroom and at School Functions
	2375	Service Animals in Schools
	3370	Searches and Seizure

Legal Reference:	I.C. § 33-6001	Parental Rights
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Policy History:

Adopted on: April 16, 2020

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