

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS

It is the intent of RSU #3 to provide a healthy learning environment for all students. The District recognizes that animals have been part of the learning experience for students for many years and that they have beneficial and therapeutic effects for some students. However, for students with asthma and allergies, animals can trigger respiratory or allergic reactions that can be severe. Also, animals can subject students to scratches, bites, infections and infestations.

In an effort to provide a safe environment for all students, the following principles apply.

1. The District must control and limit where necessary student exposure to animal allergens. Keeping animals in classrooms as pets is discouraged.
2. The building principal's permission is required to allow animals in school buildings. Principals will not allow animals requiring vaccination into school without proof of current rabies vaccination.
3. Animals in school need to be kept in environments that limit risks to students, e.g., away from ventilation systems, in cages or restrained, and away from students with known allergies or asthma, and away from upholstered furniture, carpets and stuffed objects.
4. The presence of animals in school requires attention to cleanliness; e.g., clean cages, clean carpets and upholstery, and the washing of hands after handling.
5. Dogs and other pets are not allowed on school playing fields when students are present. The owner of any animal on school grounds is responsible to control the animal and maintain cleanliness.
6. Any injury or bite from an animal on school premises is to be reported immediately to the school principal, the school nurse or health aide, and parent, if appropriate. Staff or visitors should report any injury to the principal.
7. No live vertebrate, except eggs, may be used in school as part of a scientific experiment or for any other purpose in which the animal is experimentally medicated or drugged in a manner to cause painful reactions or to reduce painful or lethal pathological conditions, or in which the animal is injured through any other type of treatment, experiment or procedure, including, but not limited to anesthetization or electric shock or where the normal health of the animal is interfered with or where pain or distress is caused.
8. No person may in the presence of a student in school practice vivisection or exhibit a vivisected animal. Dissection of dead animals or any portions of dead animals in school 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. Animals used for dissection must be obtained from appropriate sources.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *7 MRS 3971*

Cross Reference: IMG A: Service Animals

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Second Reading December 9, 2019