The purpose of the Animals on School Premises policy is to allow animals in the classroom while providing for the health and safety of school staff, students and animals. The policy identifies five (5) categories of animals and the procedures to be followed in order to bring animals on school premises. It specifies conditions under which animals must be removed from school premises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>PROCEDURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Animals Used in Educational Presentations</strong></td>
<td>• Staff member completes Appendix D:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(single event)</strong></td>
<td>1. Identify instructional purpose or social/emotional objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provide statement of animal health &amp; temperament or verify that the animal is part of a presentation conducted by an experienced animal handler who engages in demonstrations in a school setting on a regular basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Obtain principal’s signature of approval to proceed to next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Notify parents of upcoming presentation (Parent consent <strong>not</strong> required; Appendix E given to parents upon enrollment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Provide modifications for students who have animal fears or allergies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Obtain principal’s final approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cold Blooded Animals Not Handled by Children</strong></td>
<td>• Staff member completes Appendix D:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(for 1 semester, renewable)</strong></td>
<td>1. Identify instructional purpose or social/emotional objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provide statement of animal health &amp; temperament or verify that animal is provided by a certified program or agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Obtain principal’s signature of approval to proceed to next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Notify parents of proposed presence of animal (Parent consent <strong>not</strong> required; Appendix E given to parents upon enrollment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Provide modifications for students who have animal fears or allergies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Obtain principal’s final signature of approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff member follows procedures for cleaning and disinfecting sinks, cages and surfaces (Appendix C)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classroom Animals
(for 1 semester, renewable)

- Staff member completes Appendix D:
  1. Identify instructional purpose or social/emotional objective
  2. Provide statement of animal health & temperament or verify that animal is provided by a certified program or agency
  3. Obtain principal’s signature of approval to proceed to next steps
  4. Send letter to parent and obtain parent consent (Appendix F)
  5. Provide modifications for students who have animal fears or allergies
  6. Obtain principal’s final approval

- Staff member follows procedures for cleaning and disinfecting sinks, cages, and surfaces (Appendix C)
- Staff member provides instruction for students on proper care and handling of animal (Appendix A)

Animals Excluded from School or Classroom Use

- Poisonous, venomous animals
- Family pets unless all policy requirements are met

Animals Exempt from Compliance With Policy

- Trained & certified service animals supporting individuals with disabilities
- Animals used in K-8 Science Curriculum
- Invertebrates used in Grades 9-12 Science Curriculum

CONDITIONS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF AN ANIMAL FROM SCHOOL PREMISES:

**Injury:** Any animal that causes injury to staff or students must be immediately isolated and removed from the school premises until the situation is resolved. An Injury Report must be completed and the appropriate medical care must be administered.

**Health Issue:** If a student or staff member has an allergic reaction or other health problem because of the presence of an animal, the animal must be immediately removed from the classroom/workspace of the affected individual and removed from school premises until the situation is resolved.

**Aggression:** Any animal that behaves aggressively must be immediately isolated and removed from the school premises.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES:
Animals may not be transported to and/or from school on school buses or via any other transportation provided by the school district.

Staff members may appeal the decision of the principal by contacting the appropriate Assistant Superintendent in writing within ten (10) days of the denial.

Training animals while in pay status as an employee of the district is prohibited per Board Policy 9000 and Board Policy 8381.
Appendices A-F are used when school staff request approval to bring an animal on the premises of any MMSD school.

- Appendix A: Best Practices for Introducing a Classroom Animal
- Appendix B: Responsible Use of Live Animals and Dissection in the Science Classroom
- Appendix C: Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting Sinks and Other Hard Surfaces after Contact with a Reptile
- Appendix D: Staff Request for Animal(s) on School Premises
- Appendix E: Parent/Guardian Information Letter (given at time of enrollment)
- Appendix F: Parent/Guardian Information and Consent Form
Best Practice for Introducing a Classroom Animal

1. The teacher should become acquainted and comfortable with the needs, characteristics and temperament of the animal(s) before introducing it to the students. The teacher should share this information with the students.

2. The animal should be provided with an enclosure of adequate size to permit exercise and with some shelter for privacy.

3. Students should be taught that the animal needs its own space, just as they do, and that their hands must stay out of the cage. If the animal is to be handled, it should be outside its cage, either in another container or in a designated area.

4. Introducing an animal to a classroom is an opportunity to teach responsibility and empathy.

5. Before an animal is made available for handling, students should quietly observe the animal’s behavior. Gradually introduce handling of the animal.
NSTA Position Statement

Responsible Use of Live Animals and Dissection in the Science Classroom

Introduction

NSTA supports the decision of science teachers and their school or school district to integrate live animals and dissection in the K-12 classroom. Student interaction with organisms is one of the most effective methods of achieving many of the goals outlined in the National Science Education Standards (NSES). To this end, NSTA encourages educators and school officials to make informed decisions about the integration of animals in the science curriculum. NSTA opposes regulations or legislation that would eliminate an educator's decision-making role regarding dissection or would deny students the opportunity to learn through actual animal dissection.

NSTA encourages districts to ensure that animals are properly cared for and treated humanely, responsibly, and ethically. Ultimately, decisions to incorporate organisms in the classroom should balance the ethical and responsible care of animals with their educational value.

While this position statement is primarily focused on vertebrate animals, NSTA recognizes the importance of following similar ethical practices for all living organisms.

Including Live Animals in the Classroom

NSTA supports including live animals as part of instruction in the K-12 science classroom because observing and working with animals firsthand can spark students' interest in science as well as a general respect for life while reinforcing key concepts as outlined in the NSES.

NSTA recommends that teachers

- Educate themselves about the safe and responsible use of animals in the classroom. Teachers should seek information from reputable sources and familiarize themselves with laws and regulations in their state.
- Become knowledgeable about the acquisition and care of animals appropriate to the species under study so that both students and the animals stay safe and healthy during all activities.
- Follow local, state, and national laws, policies, and regulations when live organisms, particularly native species, are included in the classroom.
- Integrate live animals into the science program based on sound curriculum and pedagogical decisions.
- Develop activities that promote observation and comparison skills that instill in students an appreciation for the value of life and the importance of caring for animals responsibly.
- Instruct students on safety precautions for handling live organisms and establish a plan for
addressing such issues as allergies and fear of animals.

- Develop and implement a plan for future care or disposition of animals at the conclusion of the study as well as during school breaks and summer vacations.
- Espouse the importance of not conducting experimental procedures on animals if such procedures are likely to cause pain, induce nutritional deficiencies, or expose animals to parasites, hazardous/toxic chemicals, or radiation.
- Shelter animals when the classroom is being cleaned with chemical cleaners, sprayed with pesticides, and during other times when potentially harmful chemicals are being used.
- Refrain from releasing animals into a non-indigenous environment.

Dissection

NSTA supports each teacher’s decision to use animal dissection activities that help students

1. develop skills of observation and comparison,
2. discover the shared and unique structures and processes of specific organisms, and
3. develop a greater appreciation for the complexity of life.

It is essential that teachers establish specific and clear learning goals that enable them to appropriately plan and supervise the activities. Teachers, especially those at the primary level, should be especially cognizant of students’ ages and maturity levels when deciding whether to use animal dissection.

NSTA encourages teachers to be sensitive to students’ views regarding dissection, and to be aware of students’ beliefs and their right to make an informed decision about their participation. Should a teacher feel that an alternative to dissection would be a better option for a student or group of students, it is important that the teacher select a meaningful alternative.

Finally, NSTA calls for more research to determine the effectiveness of animal dissection activities and alternatives and the extent to which these activities should be integrated into the science curriculum.

Regarding the use of dissection activities in school classrooms, NSTA recommends that science teachers

- Conduct laboratory and dissection activities with consideration and appreciation for the organism.
- Plan laboratory and dissection activities that are appropriate to the maturity level of the students.
- Use prepared specimens purchased from a reputable and reliable scientific supply company. An acceptable alternative source for fresh specimens (i.e., squid, chicken wings) would be an FDA-inspected facility such as a butcher shop, fish market, or supermarket. The use of salvaged specimens does not reflect safe practice.
- Conduct laboratory and dissection activities in a clean and organized work space with care and laboratory precision.
- Conduct dissections in an appropriate physical environment with the proper ventilation, lighting, furniture, and equipment, including hot water and soap for cleanup.
- Use personal safety protective equipment, such as gloves, chemical splash goggles, and aprons, all of which should be available and used by students, teachers, and visitors to the classroom.
- Address such issues as allergies and squeamishness about dealing with animal specimens.
- Ensure that the specimens are handled and disposed of properly.
- Ensure that sharp instruments, such as scissors, scalpels, and other tools, are used safely and appropriately.
• Base laboratory and dissection activities on carefully planned curriculum objectives.
• Be prepared to present an alternative to dissection to students whose views or beliefs make this activity uncomfortable and difficult for them.

- Adopted by the NSTA Board of Directors
  June 2005

References


Additional Resources


This document can be found online at
www.nsta.org/positionstatement&psid=44

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Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting Sinks and Other Hard Surfaces After Contact With a Reptile

Cleaning and disinfecting sinks, tables and counter tops can be done following either of the methods outlined below. The Contact/Rinse method can be completed more quickly because it only requires 30 seconds of contact between the bleach solution and the item being cleaned. In this method, the residual bleach is rinsed off after the 30 second contact time. The Air Dry Method uses a weaker bleach concentration but requires a longer contact time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clean cage</th>
<th>Contact/Rinse Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wash the cage, tank, counter top, table, or sink with hot, soapy water</td>
<td>Mix bleach with cold water. Mix just before using (no more than 24 hrs before)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bleach concentration</th>
<th>Air Dry Method</th>
<th>Contact/Rinse Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 parts per million (ppm)</td>
<td></td>
<td>50-100 ppm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 tsp per 16 oz (pint)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 tsp per 16 oz (pint)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ tsp per 32 oz (qt)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon per 32 oz (qt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp per 128 oz (gallon)</td>
<td></td>
<td>¼ cup per 128 oz (gallon)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apply bleach solution</th>
<th>Air Dry Method</th>
<th>Contact/Rinse Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spray cage, tank, counter top, table, or sink with bleach solution</td>
<td>Let bleach solution air dry for at least 10-15 minutes</td>
<td>Allow 30 seconds contact with bleach solution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Rinse residual bleach solution with cold water | |

Guidelines for Cleaning Cages, Aquariums, and Terrariums

All animal cages should be cleaned with a solution of 50% vinegar and water or other professionally prepared commercial products designed for that purpose.
Staff Request for Animal(s) on School Premises

Appendix D

The purpose of this checklist is to assist staff and principals in following the procedures outlined in BOE policies. Animals may be permitted on school premises when there is an instructional purpose based on Madison Metropolitan School District academic standards and when the presence of the animal will directly support the learning strategies and achievement objectives of the standards. Animals may also be permitted to be on school premises to support social emotional growth for students.

Requestor: ____________________________ Date: ________________

Animal type: ____________________________ Number of Animals: __________

1. Support for Standards/Social Emotional Objectives:
The presence of the animal will support the academic standards and/or the social emotional growth of students. It will directly support the learning strategies and achievement objectives of the classroom.

List standards or specific social/emotional objectives:

2. Statement of animal health and temperament
Provide to Principal prior to animal’s arrival at school and prior to distribution of parent notification letter.

___ Signed statement of health and temperament attached; or
___ Animal provided by certified program or agency

3. Principal Permission
Determine if written parent/guardian consent is required. Submit a draft of parent letter.

Obtain principal permission to proceed

___ Written consent is not required.
___ Written consent from parent/guardian is required.
___ I have reviewed this plan along with draft letters and give my consent to proceed.

4. Parent/Guardian Consent
Send all parents written communication about the presence of animals in your classroom. Obtain written consent of parents/guardians if required.

___ Parent consent (signatures) attached.

5. Alternate Plans
If requested by a parent/guardian, develop alternate plans and/or modifications for the animal.

___ Alternative plan and/or modifications attached.

6. Principal Signature Date Agreement
Agree to implement policy as stated. Obtain principal consent to implement plan.

I have reviewed the Animals in the School Policy and will implement the procedures in the policy.

___ I have reviewed this request and the attached documents. I give my consent to the presence of the animal(s) described.
___ I do not approve of this plan. Reasons:

__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

Requestor Signature Date

Principal Signature Date

Principal consent is valid for up to one semester; the request may be reviewed and renewed if appropriate.

Maintain file with attachments in main office
Dear Parents and Families:

This letter is to inform you about animals that may be in your child’s school this year. Animals are used to help children learn about nature and the environment. They may visit school during programs or presentations that your child will attend for a brief time with his/her classroom.

Animals may also be used in individual classrooms to increase students’ interest in learning. A positive bond between an animal and a child can support academic, social, and emotional growth. In these instances, the animal may be present for up to a semester at a time with the possibility of extensions. Your child’s teachers will have planned carefully to be sure that children and animals have a safe learning environment. You will receive additional notification from your child’s teacher if animals will be in your child’s classroom for more than a brief visit. You will be asked to give your consent for your child to participate in learning activities with the animal.

Some children have health problems when they are near animals. Children with allergies may get a runny nose, a scratchy throat, or have itchy eyes, ears, or skin. Children with asthma may wheeze, cough, or have chest tightness. Some children may develop allergies from being in a classroom every day with an animal. If other people in your family have allergies, the risk for your child may be greater. Some children who have a predisposition to allergies may develop symptoms after being in a classroom every day with a fur bearing animal.

If you are concerned about the presence of animals in your child’s school or classroom, please let us know. Talk with your health care provider to decide whether classroom animals are a health problem for your child. Talk to your child’s teachers, the school nurse, or me about your concerns. Tell one of us about your child’s allergies, asthma or other concerns you may have. Changes can be made in the ways animals are handled when your child is present. Animals may be removed at any time.

Together, we can make school a safe and healthy environment for your child.

Sincerely,

_________________________     ___________________________
Principal            School
Appendix F

Animals on School Premises
Parent/Guardian Information and Consent

Date: x

From: (Name and Title)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Animals are permitted on school premises when there is an instructional purpose based on Madison Metropolitan School District academic standards and when the presence of the animal will directly support learning or social-emotional objectives. Animals are used to help students learn about nature and the environment. They may also be used in classrooms to increase students’ interest in learning. A positive bond between an animal and a child can support social and emotional growth.

As your child’s teacher, I am planning to bring an animal into our classroom as described below. My principal has given tentative approved for this plan.

Number and type of animals:

Instructional purposes and activities:

Animal location and enclosure while at school:

Length of time animal will be at school (date(s)/time(s)):

Some children have health problems when they are near animals. Children with allergies may get a runny nose, a scratchy throat, or have itchy eyes, ears, or skin. Children with asthma may wheeze, cough, or have chest tightness. Some children may develop allergies from being in a classroom every day with an animal. If other people in your family have allergies, the risk for your child may be greater. Some children who have a predisposition to allergies may develop symptoms after being in a classroom every day with a fur bearing animal.

Please report any observable symptoms or concerns your child may exhibit because of the animal to the school nurse, the Principal, or me so that an alternative plan for the animal can be developed. Please also indicate your consent for your child to participate in classroom activities with animals using the form below. Return your response to me by ___________(date).

□ I give my permission for my child to be in the classroom during activities with animals as described above.
□ I have concerns about my child’s health and/or safety or for other reasons I do not give my consent. I can be reached at: ____________________.

________________________________________
Child’s Name

________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature

________________________________________
Date

Additional Comments: