

Santa Barbara School Districts

Administrative Regulation

AR 6163.2

Instruction

ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

All animals brought to school must be:

1. In good physical condition
2. Vaccinated against transmittable diseases
3. In clean, safe and suitable cages or containers or otherwise appropriately controlled

Students bringing animals to school must first obtain the consent of the teacher and the parent/guardian.

Although housing animals in classrooms is popular, care should be taken in the selection of such animals as well as the ongoing maintenance and handling. Some animals are not appropriate choices to house on campus because of the potential risk. They are listed below along with the disease they can transmit.

- Poisonous animals (spiders, snakes, venomous insects)
- Wild (non-domestic) animals (especially those at high risk for rabies; armadillos, hedgehogs, opossums, and wild rodents)
- Wolf-hybrids (crosses between wolf and dog)
- Stray animals (dogs and cats – particularly those less than one year of age)
- Baby ducks and chicks
- Hamsters are not recommended for classroom use because they are nocturnal and are more likely to bite during daylight
- Aggressive animals (an animal displaying unprovoked threatening behavior should be removed from the classroom)
- Wild (non-domestic) birds, snapping turtles, bats or skunks

An effort should be made to minimize student handling of animals, especially in elementary classes, in order to reduce the risk of transmission of disease, bacteria, and ringworm. Limited student handling also reduces the risk of bites and/or allergic reactions/aggravations. Students should not be charged with cleaning pens and/or cages unless gloves are worn and strict procedures are followed. This activity significantly

increases the risk of disease transmission and allergic reactions/aggravations if not controlled properly.

Good housekeeping and safety practices are essential in providing a safe environment for both students and animals.

- Pens and cages should be cleaned regularly and the classroom should be free from animal debris and droppings
- Human food should not be allowed in areas where animals are kept or where animal food is stored
- Frequent hand washing should be promoted, especially after handling an animal and prior to eating
- Student should never “kiss” animals
- Gloves should be considered when handling some animals
- Pens and cages should be located so as not to cause a hazard from electrical extension cords and overloaded circuits

Animals shall not be brought to school on school buses without express permission of the principal or designee. Such permission shall not be required for seeing-eye dogs or service dogs needed by students.

(cf. 5131.1 – Bus Conduct)

Students shall not bring poisonous or wild animals to school. If wildlife specimens are used in a biology class, protective gloves and a face shield shall be worn by anyone handling these specimens and the animal’s saliva and neurological tissue shall be treated as infectious.

All animal specimens used for science should be acquired from a reliable scientific company or from a veterinarian who can certify the specimen is free from disease, bacteria, or parasites. Dead animals found by the side of the road or from a non-certifying source should not be brought into the classroom.

(cf. 5141.23 – Infectious Disease Prevention)

Animals brought to school by students shall generally be taken home the same day they are brought to school.

With the consent of the principal or designee, animals may remain at school longer under the following conditions:

1. The animal shall remain in the classroom only for the number of days needed to achieve the educational goal.

2. The teacher shall provide a plan for the proper care, sanitation, feeding and handling of the animal.
3. The teacher shall be responsible for the animal's care in the event of any school closure and may allow students to take class pets home over weekends.
4. The teacher shall be familiar with any potential dangers caused by the animal and shall give special consideration to any students who have allergies to certain animals.

Regulation: SANTA BARBARA ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS
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