

Animals as Part of the Instructional Program

The North Kitsap School District has adopted a policy regulating animals on school property, either visiting or residing in a classroom. Prior to granting or denying requests to include animals in the school's instructional program, the principal shall evaluate the following issues:

- Form 2029F-1 must be completed, signed and turned in to the principal.
- Form 2029F-2 must be submitted for dogs, including attachments; proof of liability insurance (homeowner's insurance), proof of vaccination, and proper licensing.
- There must be an educational benefit to be gained by the inclusion of the animal in the instructional program.
- Only animals, mammals, birds, fish and reptiles bred in captivity should be allowed in schools due to the wide variety of diseases carried by "wild" animals, mammals, birds, fish and reptiles.
- There is an appropriate plan for the control of the animal(s).
- All animals will be contained in cages or on restraints. No animals will be allowed to roam free. Dogs must be on a leash at all times on school property.
- Handling of any animal in the classroom is only allowed with adult supervision.
- Any health concerns involving students, staff or other animals have been thoroughly addressed, for instance allergies or the transmission of disease from the animal.
- Children may be allergic to animals and their parents must be notified ahead of time.
- Animals must have current vaccinations appropriate to the species.
- Classroom animals are a common cause of indoor air quality problems. If adverse indoor air quality is a concern, remove all animals and live specimens from the school until the issue is adequately addressed.
- First aid kit and emergency contact procedures should be available.
- Notify local health department immediately if any animal bites occur on district property, and complete an incident report.
- The animal's health, safety and well-being have been appropriately evaluated.
- Cages should be lockable and cleaned daily or as appropriate.
- Ensure all classroom animals are properly cared for on weekends, holidays, and summer and winter breaks. Dead, sick or diseased animals and/or feces-ridden cages are not conducive to a healthy classroom environment for the students.
- Sanitary issues have been addressed, the treatment of animal wastes and personal hygiene of students or staff in contact with the animals.
- Keeping and handling of live animals in classrooms shall be in a designated area only. Designated areas shall include impervious, cleanable surfaces with spot ventilation directly to the outside of the building if appropriate.

- Hands should be washed after handling animals, cages, bedding, etc. Hand-washing facilities and soap should be readily available.
- Schools should not “own” a pet dog for the classroom. Dogs, except as provided in policy 2030, are not intended to be an everyday part of the classroom. Occasional use of dogs for purposes which provide educational benefit is permissible if requirements in this procedure are met.

According to Washington State Law (*RCW 16.08.040*), the owner of any dog which shall bite or injure anyone while such person is in or on a public place or lawfully in or on a private place shall be liable for such damages as may be suffered by the person bitten, regardless of the former viciousness of such dog or the owner’s knowledge of such viciousness. The dog owner is personally held strictly liable for the damage inflicted on any persons injured or harmed by the dog physically or emotionally in any manner.

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