

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #877 POLICY

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose

INDEX TITLE Education Programs SERIES NO. 600

POLICY TITLE Animals in the School Setting CODE NO. 640

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for the use of animals in the school setting.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school board realizes the use of animals as a positive educational tool, when and where appropriate. However, the school board is also aware of the need to employ alternative teaching methods as a means to improve indoor air quality.

The purpose of this policy is to coordinate district-wide efforts to improve indoor air quality by eliminating pets not directly used for classroom instruction, thus reducing the presence of animal allergens in the classroom.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

“Guidelines for Animals in the School Setting” have been developed to promote and support a safe and healthy learning environment for all children and staff. All staff need to be aware of the potential for adverse health problems resulting from the presence of or contact with animals in the school setting. Health considerations may include, but are not limited to the following – allergies to animals, illness transmission between animals and people, injuries from animals, indoor air quality, and animal care recommendations.

As noted in the guidelines, the age of the student should guide decisions about which animals should be in the classroom setting. Administration and school staff will decide in advance who will be responsible for the animal and what role the animal has in the student’s learning experience. Protocol for animal use should be evaluated based on the potential for learning new information or for teaching skills or concepts that could not be possible through use of an animal alternative. Students and faculty involved in animal use must be able to demonstrate skills and knowledge adequate to comply with all guidelines in this protocol.

- A. All staff hold the responsibility for ensuring animals in the school setting are properly cared for following the “Guidelines for Animals in the School Setting,” and subsequently notifying appropriate staff if compliance with these guidelines is lacking.
- B. All teaching staff are responsible for:
 - 1. Following the “Guidelines for Animals in the School Setting.”
 - 2. Completing a “Request for Animals in the School Setting” (Form #640B) prior to any district core curriculum based animals being brought into any district facility.
 - 3. Maintaining the “Student Acknowledgement for Animals in the School Setting” forms (Form 640A) for each student in the classroom prior to any approved animal being brought into the school setting.
 - 4. Ensuring the animal will be removed from the classroom when the request has expired or the applicable section of district core curriculum is completed.
- C. The building principal or administrator is responsible for approving or denying any “Request for Animals in the School Setting” and is responsible for enforcement of this policy and the “Guidelines for Animals in the School Setting.” The administrator may require removal of animals from classrooms for any reasons deemed appropriate.
- D. Persons wishing to express concerns with the implementation of the policy and guidelines are to initially contact the principal or site administrator. If the concerns are not resolved, said concern will be referred to the director of buildings and grounds. The director of buildings and grounds, as the person responsible for health and safety matters in the district, will have final jurisdiction.

IV. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy will be referred to in all school personnel handbooks.
- B. This policy will be referred to in all student handbooks.

Legal References: Minn. Stat § 123B.57

**Administrative Offices
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