

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 core curriculum classroom instruction, thus reducing the presence of animal allergens in the classroom.

Animals may be used as a core educational tool, when and where appropriate, however, alternative teaching methods should be utilized whenever possible. Employees are prohibited from bringing animals into the workplace for any non-core curriculum instructional purpose.

The school district will permit the use of service animals by an individual with a disability in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and in accordance with Policy 535 – Service Animals in Schools.

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. 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. Requested animals will not be exposed to the general classroom setting. The intent is to have the animal displayed in a neutral area of the school, (gym, outside).
- D. A building administrator and school nurse are responsible for approving or denying any “Request for Animals in the School Setting”. The principal 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.
- E. The building administrator, a school nurse, the director of special education and the director of buildings and grounds will develop a plan for service animals on a case by case basis. They will be responsible for approving or denying service animal requests.
- F. 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
Buffalo, Minnesota 55313

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