

ANIMALS IN THE SCHOOLS

Prior to bringing any animals into the schools, other than service animals, the building administrators must approve the use of the animals for teaching or training of students in accordance with the following regulations.

1. Nonhuman primates, rabies vector species (including raccoons, bats, skunks, coyotes or foxes), wolves or wolf-dog hybrids, aggressive or unpredictable animals, stray animals with unknown health and vaccination history, venomous or toxin-producing spiders, insects, reptiles and amphibians, dogs, cats and ferrets that are under 16 weeks of age and dogs, cats or ferrets that are not current on rabies vaccinations are not permitted in the school building under any circumstances.
2. Ferrets, reptiles, amphibians, chicks, ducklings and hatching eggs are not permitted in classrooms with children under five years of age.
3. Students are to be instructed not to bring personal pets to school at any time for any purpose.
4. In addition to all other requirements in this policy, it is permissible for the class to have one or more animals as classroom pets under the following conditions:
 - A. the animal is not venomous or vicious;
 - B. no one is allergic to the animal;
 - C. proper examinations and immunizations have been given by a veterinarian;
 - D. arrangements have been made for housing the animal safely, comfortably, cleanly, and in a manner that does not disrupt the classroom environment;
 - E. arrangements have been made for the proper care of the animal when school is not in session and
 - F. rules have been established for the handling and treatment of the animal.
5. Whenever live animals are to be used as part of a study, prior approval of the principal is required and the following rules apply.
 1. A science teacher or other qualified adult supervisor must assume primary responsibility for the purposes and conditions of the study.
 2. Studies involving animals should have clearly defined objectives.
 3. All animals used in the studies must be acquired in accordance with law.
 4. The comfort of the animal used in the study should be of paramount importance.
 5. When animals are kept on school premises over vacation periods, adequate housing must be provided and a qualified individual must be assigned care and feeding responsibilities.
6. If animals are to be used as part of an experiment, such as dissection in a science course, the administration should notify parents so that individuals who find such activity unpleasant or objectionable may be given a different assignment.

7. Animal cages and containers are equipped with properly fitting lids and are free from excessive accumulation of animal waste.
8. Hand washing facilities are available and immediately used when animals are handled.
9. Animals are not permitted to roam in the school building, except for therapy animals or animals used for other human assistance.
10. Animals are not permitted on surfaces where food or drink is prepared or consumed.
11. All animal feed is tightly sealed and labeled in containers separate from human food.

In compliance with Federal law, the Board permits the use of service animals in the schools for those individuals with qualified disabilities. Service animals must:

1. be on a harness, leach or other tether or be under the control of the handler either through voice commands, signals or other means;
2. be housebroken; and
3. be up-to-date on vaccinations.

In the rare case the animal is aggressive or disruptive and not housebroken, the school may exclude the animal.

Approved: October 16, 2001

Reviewed: June 18, 2008

Revised: August 17, 2011

Columbia Schools, Columbia Station, Ohio