

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

Animals can be part of enrichment activities relating to a particular learning experience in the curriculum. Animals can be both an effective instructional tool and therapeutic with positive benefits such as bonding and developing caring skills and responsibility in students. However, the concern for the health and safety of the children as well as for the humane care and treatment of the animal requires that the animal's owner assumes responsibility for all necessary aspects of maintenance, transportation and care for the animal as well as care for school district property.

Based on the recommendation of the Wisconsin Humane Society, only healthy animals may be brought to a school. Responsible adults must supervise the animal and minimize the handling of those animals by all students, particularly by younger students. Improper handling is unfair to the animal and may cause injuries to the student, staff or the animal.

The practice of keeping animals in the classroom should be carefully considered prior to introducing an animal to any school environment. State statutes do allow for the use of "service animals." The potential for adverse affects from animals, however, such as allergic reactions, scratches and/or bites, asthmatic reactions, infections and infestations exist. Therefore, schools must take into consideration students and staff with allergies and their special needs when deliberating on bringing an animal into that environment. Attention to the potential for these adverse reactions is a necessary safeguard for the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and the animals involved. The building principal will make the final decision as to whether or not an animal may be allowed in the school.

This policy does not directly relate to the practice of keeping animals in special facilities such as a biology lab. In all circumstances proper procedures must be observed so that all animals are maintained in a humane manner.

LEGAL REF:	State Statutes:	121.02(1)(e) 174.056 252.21
	Federal laws:	ADA 28 CFR Section 38.302 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 504 [IDEA]

APPROVED: June 2006