



**MOOSONEE DISTRICT
SCHOOL AREA BOARD**

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE EDUCATION PROGRAMS: #225	
Effective	November 24, 2015
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LIVE ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

PURPOSE

The Moosonee District School Area Board recognizes the educational value of teaching students to observe animals in the classroom. Teaching students to provide attentive care for animals can also add an important learning dimension to the school program.

This administrative procedure provides assistance in the selection of suitable animal species and guidelines for appropriate care of animals in the classroom. It also sets out Board expectations for student safety.

DEFINITIONS

Animals: For the purposes of this administrative procedure, “animals” refers to guinea pigs, gerbils, fish, and those living animals that are commonly kept as classroom pets.

Distress: Distress, with respect to an animal, means any sickness, injury, or physical pain or suffering resulting from abuse or neglect.

PROCEDURES

1. General Expectations

1.1 Staff must request and have permission granted to bring a live animal into classrooms/spaces and follow expectation set out in this Administrative Procedure.

1.2 Teachers who have live animals in their classrooms must ensure that specific curriculum expectations have been identified.

1.3 Teachers and/or staff must ensure proper provision have been made for the safety of students and the well-being of the animals in their classroom/spaces.

1.4 Only relatively small animals which are easily confined, maintained, and handled should be kept in the classroom. Common examples are tropical fish and small mammals such as gerbils, hamsters, mice, and rats. Larger animals such as rabbits, dogs, and cats shall not be kept in the classroom.

1.5 Only animals known to be in good health and free of disease will be brought into the classroom. Teacher/staff bringing animals into a classroom/spaces will be responsible for this.

1.6 To guard against bites and scratches, it is wise to use gloves when handling any animal. However, accidents do occur and the staff must be prepared to deal with bites and scratches that students might receive while handling the animals.

1.7 Before an animal is permitted in the classroom/spaces, the staff member must develop a plan to provide care on weekends, extended weekends, and holiday periods.

1.8 When planning to have animals in a classroom/space, staff must:

- a) ensure the health and safety of the animal at all times;
- b) be aware that health issues, such as allergies of students or other staff members; if a student or staff member has known allergy or has an allergic reaction to an animal brought into the school building, the following actions will occur:
 - the animal will be removed from the spaces the students/staff are assigned to
 - should the above not be sufficient, the animal will need to be removed from the school building
- c) be responsible for the maintenance costs, including food and care and treatment of the animal

2. Preventing Illness or Injury

2.1 Students and all staff members should be instructed to wash their hands after contact with animals, animal products or feed, or animal environments.

2.2 Animals must be kept in enclosed cages, tanks, or tanks.

2.3 Every cage, tank, or pen must be capable of being sanitized regularly, and must be constructed and maintained in a way that minimizes the transfer of disease- producing agents.

2.4 Animal cages, pens or tanks must not be cleaned in sinks or other areas used to prepare food and drinks.

2.5 Students if they are performing cleaning tasks, this must be done under staff supervision.

3. Responsibilities of the Principal

3.1 When considering requests from staff to bring animals into classrooms/spaces, the principal must ensure that staff member has adequate knowledge for the well- being of the animal. The principal is responsible for ensuring, to the best of their ability, that animals in classroom/spaces are treated humanely.

3.2 If there is evidence of insufficient care of animals in a classroom/space, the principal may revoke permission for their presence in the school building.

4. Responsibilities of Teachers and/or Staff

4.1 The staff member will submit a letter of request to the Principal for consideration and must provide details in the letter to all the conditions under section 5.2

4.2 If they want to use animals in the classroom, teachers will, in advance, satisfy principals that the animals will be cared for in a humane manner and that the facilities within the classroom are adequate for the health and safety of the animals.

4.3 Teachers will instruct and demonstrate to students the proper care and handling of any classroom animal.

- 4.4 Animals must be observed daily to check that they appear healthy, that feed and water are available, and room and/or water temperature remains in an acceptable range.
- 4.5 Daily observations will include weekends if this is necessary to ensure the survival of the animals.
- 4.6 As an alternate measure to weekend observations, teachers may want to make prior arrangements with parents of students in their class to temporarily house an animal over the weekend. If this occurs, the teacher must be satisfied that the animal will be safely transported between the school and home. A list of proper care techniques provided for the student and parents will help to ensure that the animal receives the proper care.
- 4.7 Animals must be caged or supervised. They may not roam freely in the classroom or school.
- 4.8 Experiments involving classroom animals are not allowed.
- 4.9 Under no circumstances should wild vertebrate animals or domestic animals of unknown origin be brought into the classroom.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legal:

Education Act, Section 265 Duties of Principal: Attention to the Health of Pupils
Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools, Section 20 Duties of Teachers: Reasonable Safety Procedures
Sabrina's Law, 2005 An Act to protect anaphylactic pupils
Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act

Board:

Board Policy GOV-01 Board Philosophy, Goals, and Values
Board Policy GOV-10 Environmental Stewardship
Administrative Procedure 317 Anaphylaxis

Ministry Resources:

Ontario Ministry of Education (2011) Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations.
The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1 to 8 and Kindergarten Programs