

Animals in Classrooms

Section 1. General. Live animals with the exception of fish in aquariums are only to be in the school for educational purposes. No live animal will be allowed to stay in a classroom longer than the school year or during an extended school break of more than two (2) days. At no time will animals considered dangerous be brought into the classrooms.

Section 2. Service Animals. A service animal is a dog or, in some cases, a miniature horse, that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to the following:

- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired to sounds.
- Pulling wheelchairs or carrying/picking up things for individuals with mobility impairments.
- Assisting individuals with mobility impairments with balance.
- Assisting an individual during a seizure.
- Alerting an individual to the presence of allergens.
- Retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone.
- Assisting an individual with a neurological disability by preventing accidents or mishaps.

The following are examples of animals that do not meet the definition of a service animal:

- An animal that provides emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship.
- A "therapy animal" or "emotional support animal."
- A pet.
- An animal whose purpose is to deter crime.

In the event that an individual with a disability brings a service animal into the school, notification shall be given to parents of the individual's classmates to inform that the animal will be present for a specific purpose in assisting another student with a disability.

The school shall not be responsible for the care or supervision of the service animal at school. The care and supervision of the service animal is the responsibility of the individual with a disability.

The School reserves the right to ask that an animal undergo additional training or be removed if it does not fit the definition of a service animal or has become disruptive. For example, a properly trained service animal will remain at its owner's feet. It does not run freely, bark or growl at other persons or animals, bite or jump on people, or urinate or defecate inside buildings. An animal that engages in such disruptive behavior shows that it has not been successfully trained to function as a service animal in public settings. The School also reserves the right to remove and/or bar an animal if the animal's displayed behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or if its presence would require a fundamental alteration to the service, program, or activity. Should a service animal be excluded from a school for this reason, the school shall offer the individual with a disability the option of attending the school without the service animal on school premises.

Service animals are permitted on school buses and in classrooms to perform the functions for which they are trained.

Section 3. Animals in Classrooms. When an animal is to be brought into a classroom a note will be sent home with the students of that class notifying the parents that an animal will be present. If known in advance this will be done at the beginning of the school year. Parents are to notify the teacher or principal if their student is allergic to the animal. Upon such notice, the principal will confer with the teacher and determine what options are available which may include changing to a different species with no allergy problems or not having an animal in the classroom. The school will not reveal the name of the student with allergy issues to students or parents. If after an animal is brought into the classroom, the parent finds their student is allergic to the animal, the school will work with the parent and teacher to resolve the issue. If necessary, housekeeping will clean all surfaces in the classroom to remove any animal dander that may still cause an allergic reaction by the student.

Section 4. Educational Purposes. Examples of educational purposes where animals would be in the classroom are:

1. Animals used in health class to demonstrate effects of different diets.

2. Animals used in biology to show developmental changes or diversity.
3. Eggs incubated to show development.

Examples of educational purposes where animals are in the classroom for one day or less:

1. Pets/animals brought into the classroom to allow students exposure to a variety of species.
2. Pets/animals used to demonstrate obedience training.

The principal, when requested by a teacher, has the authority to determine if it is appropriate to bring an animal into the classroom.

Section 5. Cleaning. Cages shall be cleaned by the teacher in charge of the animal and not any student on a routine basis to avoid offensive odors or pest issues. Aquariums with fish are to be maintained by the teacher in charge of the aquarium including cleaning as needed.

Section 6. Feeding. When appropriate, teachers may allow students to handle and/or feed the animals.

Legal Reference:
410 I.A.C. 33-4-7