Live animals will not be allowed in school district facilities except under special circumstances and only for an educational purpose. Use of animals in classrooms can assist students to learn appropriate care of animals, enhance investigative and observational skills and reinforce curriculum and well being objectives. These guidelines provide direction to staff in the healthy and safe management of animals maintained in classrooms and visiting school facilities.

Permission from the principal will be required of anyone wishing to bring an animal into school district facilities. Appropriate supervision of animals is required when animals are brought into the school district facilities. The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal brought to school. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student's attendance center on the school bus without prior approval from the principal. It is the responsibility of the principal to determine appropriate supervision of animals in the classroom.

**General Practices:**

1. Prior to procuring or bringing animals into classrooms, teachers will:
   a. Carefully consider the purpose for maintaining the animal in the classroom
   b. Review these guidelines and sign the Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A)
   c. Notify the Building Principal of the intent to maintain the animal in the classroom.
   d. Annually providing the Principal with the Acknowledgement Form.
   e. If approved, annually and when beginning a new course, prepare communication (i.e. course registration guide, school handbook, open house and welcome information) stating the intention of keeping the animal in the classroom. The letter should state the purpose and request the parent notify the teacher if their child is allergic to the type of animal to be maintained (example, Appendix B).

   • **For any required class or course, if any parent responds in the affirmative, the animal cannot be maintained in the classroom.**

2. The teacher will be responsible to ensure that the animal is appropriately cared for at all times, including weekends, school breaks and over summer months.
   a. All cages must be able to be secured, especially on the weekends
   b. Accommodations must be made for extreme room temperature fluctuations, especially during the winter months.
   c. Food and water must be provided if the animal is left in the building over the weekend.
   d. Cages will be cleaned on a regular basis utilizing universal precautions and blood borne pathogen guidelines for bagging and disposing of urine, feces and blood contaminated materials. Teachers will be responsible for cleaning cages/dens if students are going to be involved parent permission is required and documented.
e. Animals are to be located in approved containers away from water fountains, sinks where students and staff wash hands, areas where food is prepared, stored or served or areas where first aid materials are stored or first aid is rendered.

f. If the animal cannot be properly cared for at all times, it should not be kept in the classroom.

3. Management of Animal Bites/Scratches
   a. Any animal bite/scratch should be washed with soap and water and the student examined by the nurse. The school nurse shall check the student’s tetanus status and notify the principal immediately. The Principal will then notify the student’s parent.
   b. Any bites/scratches must be reported by the principal or school nurse to Animal Control by calling 242-2720, (after hours number 286-3333).
   c. Animal Control will determine the need for and the method to quarantine the animal following a bite or scratch.
   d. With respect to injuries and liability issues, Iowa Code 673 relates to domesticated animal activities. The Code requires that a domesticated animal professional (designated under the Code to include teachers) post and maintain a sign on the property where domesticated animal activities occur, (see text of sign in Appendix C). The sign must be clearly visible to a participant.

4. Animals trained, or being trained, to assist persons who are physically impaired shall have access to district property.

5. Failure to follow those guidelines will be grounds to have the animal removed from the classroom an/or school facility.
APPENDIX A
Acknowledgement Statement

I ________________________ am interested in maintaining an animal in my classroom.

I have reviewed the guidelines for maintaining animals in the classroom and agree to follow the guidelines.

I understand that failure to comply with the guidelines will lead to the removal of the animal from my classroom.

_____________________________  ___________________________
Employees Signature                Date

_____________________________  ___________________________
Principals Signature                Date
APPENDIX B
Sample letter to Parents

We are considering keeping and caring for a __________________________ in your son or daughter’s classroom. The purpose of keeping this animal is __________________________________________________________.

Please let me know if you have concerns about this or if your son or daughter is allergic to this type of animal. If we determine that anyone has an allergy we will not proceed as we do not want to create any difficulties for anyone in our classroom.

The District has guidelines for appropriate care and management of animals in the classroom and these will be followed.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this with me, please call ____________.

________________________________________________________

Teachers Name                        Phone Number
APPENDIX C:
CLASSROOM SIGN TEXT

WARNING

UNDER IOWA LAW, A DOMESTICATED ANIMAL PROFESSIONAL IS NOT LIABLE FOR DAMAGES SUFFERED BY, AN INJURY TO, OR THE DEATH OF A PARTICIPANT RESULTING FROM THE INHERENT RISKS OF DOMESTICATED ANIMAL ACTIVITIES, PURSUANT TO IOWA CODE CHAPTER 673. YOU ARE ASSUMING INHERENT RISKS PARTICIPATING IN THIS DOMESTICATED ANIMAL ACTIVITY.


Cross Reference: 507 Student Health and Well-Being

Date Approved: October 24, 2016