

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Board to recognize the educational value of caring for and using animals within the classroom and to provide them with a safe and healthy environment.

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**Administrative Detail**

1. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendents to administer this policy in accordance with the Animal Care Procedures Manual 602-A.
2. It is the responsibility of principals to ensure teachers who use animals in experiments or as pets in their classrooms follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

**A. GENERAL**

1. The procedures for the humane treatment and care of animals in the classroom are based on the Animals for Research Act, which deals with the use of animals in research facilities. While schools are not required to be registered with the government as research facilities, it is expected that staff will follow the intent of the Act, as reflected in this policy, when using animals in the classroom.
2. For the purposes of this document "animals" refers to birds, turtles, snakes, lizards, and those living animals that are commonly kept as classroom pets, such as earthworm and ant colonies, rats, gerbils and mice.
3. The Common Curriculum, Outcome #M44, can be achieved in full or in part by involving students in the responsibility of looking after classroom animals. The appropriate objectives within the Common Curriculum are as follows:
  - a) Objective M44 (Math, Science and Technology)  
Grade 3 - investigate the needs of living animals by caring for them (e.g., care for animals and plants in the classroom and at home)
  - b) Grade 6 - analyze different ways in which humans treat living things (e.g., discuss trapping, animal use in agriculture, treatment of pets)
  - c) Grade 9 - evaluate ways in which living things are used/treated by society (e.g., research and evaluate the treatment of animals in pet stores, zoos and commercial aquaria; the use of living things in experiments)
4. Teachers wishing to use animals in the classroom should refer to and be familiar with the appropriate sections of Martin's Criminal Code, as outlined in 602-B.
5. In addition, for comprehensive information on animal feeding, care and maintenance, teachers should refer to the Canada Council on Animal Care's *Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals*, and other resources listed in 602-C and 602-E.

**B. ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE**

1. The Board's Animal Care Committee shall include: an elementary and secondary principal and a veterinarian.
2. The Committee will adhere to the regulations under the Animals for Research Act, as they apply to school boards, as well as the Canadian Council on Animal Care Guidelines.
3. Committee members will meet annually to coordinate and review the activities and

procedures relating to the care of animals in the classroom, including the standards of care and facilities for such animals.

4. As part of coordinating these activities and procedures, Committee members will:
  - a) review this policy and its procedures;
  - b) review the applications for use of animals in the classroom, initially approved by principals.
5. Committee members will be available to principals and teachers for consultation purposes.

#### **C. RESPONSIBILITY OF PRINCIPALS**

1. When considering requests to use animals in classrooms, principals must ensure that teachers have adequate knowledge and commitment to secure the well-being of the animals.
2.
  - a) Principals are responsible for ensuring, to the best of their ability, that animals in the classroom are treated humanely.
  - b) Animals must be kept in appropriate facilities (cages, tanks, etc.), provided with adequate feed and water, and groomed and cleaned as necessary to prevent disease or distress.
  - c) On a regular basis, therefore, principals/designates must observe the quality of animal care in their schools, provide feedback to teachers and respond to any concerns.
  - d) If there is evidence of insufficient care of animals in a classroom, principals will revoke permission for their use.

#### **D. RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS**

1. If wishing 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. Teachers will complete the "Request to House Animals in a Classroom" Form 602-1 and submit it to their Principal.
2. When selecting appropriate animals for the classroom, teachers should refer to the chart, "Suitability of Animals in the Classroom" 602-2. In addition, teachers must consider the following:

- a) ability to ensure the health and safety of the animal at all times;
  - b) health issues, such as allergies of students or other staff members; in the event that a student or staff member has an allergic reaction to a classroom animal, it will be removed from the school;
  - c) maintenance costs, including routine feeding and care and treatment of illness of the animal;
  - d) legal obligation to care for such animals under the *Animals For Research Act* and *Martin's Criminal Code*.
  - e) the normal life span of the animal and its eventual disposition beyond the classroom
3. Teachers will instruct and demonstrate to students the proper care and handling of any classroom animal.
4.
  - a) Animals must be observed on a daily basis to check that they appear healthy, feed and water are available and room and/or water temperature remains in an acceptable range.
  - b) Daily observations will include weekends if this is necessary to ensure the survival of the animals.
  - c) 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.
5. Animals must be caged or supervised. They may not roam freely in a school for extended periods of time.
6. Experiments involving classroom animals are discouraged. Any experiment involving these animals, however, must comply with the *Animals for Research Act* and the *Guide To the Care And Use Of Experimental Animals*.
7. Regulations governing the use of animals in science fairs are included in Regulations for Animal Experimentation, 602-D.
8. Taking wild animals from their home environment is discouraged. If this is done, however, they should be returned within 24 hours.

9. Animals in the classroom must be maintained in a manner to prevent disease or unplanned pregnancy, whenever possible.
10. Dead animals must be disposed of in an effective and sanitary manner.
11. Staff may bring in animals for single days with the permission of the principal.

Request to House Animals in a Classroom

*Permission from the school principal must be received before any animal is housed overnight in a school. Teachers should make application in advance of the date that they wish to introduce the animal.*

Once signed by the teacher and approved by the principal, a copy of this form must be kept on file by the Principal until September 1 of the next year.

**School**

**Teacher**

**Grade/Department**

**Principal**

Name of "backup" teacher who will assume responsibility for the care of the animal(s) when the applicant is unavailable.

Type of animal(s)

Sex

Number

Source of the animal(s). Name and address are required. (The capture of wild animals is discouraged. These should be returned to their home environment within 24 hours)

Brief rationale for having the animal(s) in the classroom. If the animal(s) is/are to be used in any kind of experiment, including maze experiments, a detailed explanation must accompany this application.

What will happen to the animal(s) at the end of its stay in school?

**Declaration of the teacher applying to house an animal in the classroom, and of the "backup" teacher:**

1. I have read and will comply with the regulations of the DSB No. 18 Animal Care Policy. I realize that the treatment of classroom animal is covered under the Animals For Research Act and am I aware of the provisions in Martins Criminal Code.
2. Provision will be made for **daily observation and care**.
3. I will train my students in the proper handling and care of the animal(s) and will do my utmost to ensure the well being of any animals under my supervision.
4. I will check that the animal(s) will not cause an adverse health hazard for students and others who might be affected, before bringing the animal into the school.

Teacher

Backup Teacher

**Principal** I support this application and have made the following agreement with the teacher regarding costs involved in housing the animal(s).

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING  
THE SUITABILITY OF SPECIFIC ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

<u>Animal</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Red-Eared Slider Turtles	Live 15-20 years, grow to 30 cm, need a large and special environment. Can spread salmonellosis. Acceptable for a day visit, children must wash hands after handling.	Not recommended.
Hamsters	Live 2-3 years. Easy to feed and maintain but are nocturnal and prone to nip.	Not recommended.
Guinea Pigs	Live 5-7 years, easy to feed, sociable, awake during the day. Best kept in pairs of the same sex from birth. Need exercise and a large habitat.	Recommended. Probably the best classroom pet.
Gerbils	Live 4-6 years. Easy to feed, seldom bite, active day and night. Fast moving difficult for young children to handle. Need large habitat, 20-23°C. Keep in pairs of the same sex from birth.	Recommended for older students.
Rabbits	Live 7-12 years, great variety of sizes, easy to feed, sociable, awake during the day, require a calm environment, a large habitat and exercise outside the habitat each day.	Recommended for older students. Dwarf breeds require less room.
Domestic Rats and Mice	Live 4-6 years, sociable, easy to feed, seldom bite, intelligent, curious, active day and night. Difficult for young children. Best kept in pairs of the same sex from birth.	Recommended for older students.
Wild exotic species		Not to be kept in the classroom.
Wild indigenous animals (snakes, lizards, frogs etc)	These species are dwindling in numbers	To be returned to their home environment within 24 hours.
Chicks	Need special equipment	Not recommended. Provision must be made for return to a farm before the eggs are obtained.
Birds	There are many health problems in humans associated with birds	Not recommended.
Fish	Fish are easy to look after <b>when the correct equipment is available</b>	Recommended.

**MARTIN'S CRIMINAL CODE, 1994**

This is part of a Federal Statute, in the Criminal Code of Canada, which is enforced by the Ontario Provincial Police.

446. (1) Every one commits an offence who

- (a) wilfully causes or, being the owner, wilfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal or bird;
- (b) by wilful neglect causes damage or injury to animals or birds while they are being driven or conveyed;
- (c) being the owner or the person having the custody or control of a domestic animal or a bird or an animal or bird wild by nature that is in captivity, abandons it in distress or wilfully neglects or fails to provide suitable and adequate food, water, shelter and care for it;

(2) Everyone who commits an offence under subsection (1) is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.

(3) For the purposes of proceedings under paragraph(1)(a) or (b), evidence that a person failed to exercise reasonable care or supervision of an animal or a bird thereby causing pain, suffering, damage or injury was caused or was permitted to be caused wilfully or was caused by wilful neglect, as the case may be.

## RESOURCES ACCOMPANYING THIS POLICY DOCUMENT

Reference is made in the document to:

*Animals for Research Act*, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990, Chapter A.22, April 1993

Canadian Council on Animal Care. *Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals*. 2 Volumes. Ottawa, Ont.: CCAC 1980-1984.

Volume 2 of this Guide contains detailed information on the characteristics and requirements of many animals that a teacher might be considering for classroom use.

Other resources worth considering include-

*Humane Leader*, Newsletter of the B.C. Humane Education Society, Fall 1994

*The Classroom Pet: Delight or Disaster*, Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

*Humane Education*: a two part series by David Selby; reprinted with permission from Green Teacher, Vols. 39 and 40.

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## YOUTH SCIENCE FOUNDATION

### REGULATIONS FOR ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION IN SCIENCE FAIRS

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1. Biological experimentation is essential for an understanding of living processes. Such studies should lead to a respect for all living things. Capable students, anxious to pursue careers in biological sciences must receive the necessary encouragement and direction. *All aspects of the project must be within the comprehension and capabilities of the student undertaking the study.*
2. Lower orders such as bacteria, fungi, protozoa and insects can reveal much basic biological information. If experiments are to be conducted on living subjects for Science Fair projects then only lower orders of life may be used.
3. *Vertebrate animals are not to be used in experiments for projects for Science Fairs,* with the following exceptions:
  - a) Observations of normal living patterns of wild animals in the free living state or in zoological parks, gardens or aquaria.
  - b) Observations of normal living patterns of pets, fish or domestic animals.
4. *No living vertebrate animal shall be displayed in exhibits in Science Fairs.*
5. Cells such as red blood cells, other tissue cells, plasma or serum purchased or acquired from biological supply houses or research facilities may be used in Science Fair projects.
6. Observational type studies only on chicken egg embryos may be used in Science Fair projects. If normal egg embryos are to be hatched, satisfactory humane considerations must be made for disposal of the chicks. If such arrangements cannot be made, then the chicken embryos must be destroyed on the 19th day of incubation. No eggs capable of hatching may be exhibited in Science Fairs.
7. All experiments shall be carried out under the supervision of a competent science teacher. It shall be the responsibility of the qualified science teacher to ensure the student has the necessary comprehension for the study to be undertaken. Whenever possible, specifically qualified experts\* in the field shall be consulted.

\* for information and names of qualified experts write to:

Canadian Council on Animal Care  
151 Slater Street  
Suite 1105  
OTTAWA, ON K1P 5H3

Youth Science Foundation  
Animal Care Committee  
151 Slater Street, Suite 302  
OTTAWA, ON K1P 5H3

Accepted by Regional Representatives, Canada-Wide Science Fair May 23, 1975.

**CANADIAN COUNCIL ON ANIMAL CARE  
GUIDING PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE OF ANIMALS IN THE  
CLASSROOM AT THE PRE UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

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**I. PURPOSE**

These guiding principles have been prepared by the Canadian Council on Animal Care. They are recommended for use of Departments of Education and Boards of Education across Canada in order to ensure adequate safeguards exist for the proper care and use of animals in experimentation in the classroom, in the schools, in their jurisdiction.

*These guidelines are not for use by students preparing projects for exhibit in Science Fairs.* Students preparing projects for Science Fairs must adhere to the Youth Science Fair Regulations for Animal Experimentations, prepared and distributed, by the Youth Science Foundation, Suite 302, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5H3.

**II. PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Biological experimentation involving animals in the classroom is essential for an understanding of living processes. Such studies should lead to a respect for all living things. All aspects of the study must be within the comprehension and capabilities of the student undertaking the study.

Lower orders of life are preferable subjects for experimentation at the pre-university level. Such lower orders as bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and insects can reveal much basic biological information, and they should be used for experimentation, wherever and whenever possible.

**III. CARE OF EXPERIMENTAL ANIMALS**

The care of experimental animals in the school should embody the principles laid down in the Care of Experimental Animals, A Guide for Canada, as prepared and distributed, by the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

The following principles are necessary in order to provide optimal animal care:

- A. The maintenance of animals in a classroom shared by students on a long term basis, is not recommended. Therefore, animal quarters specifically for housing of animals should be provided.
- B. All experimental animals used in teaching programs must be properly cared for. Animal quarters should be made comfortable by provisions for sanitation, protection from the elements and have sufficient space for normal behavioural and postural requirements of the species. The living quarters shall have surfaces that may be easily cleaned, good ventilation and lighting, well regulated temperatures and cages of sufficient size to prevent overcrowding. Animals must be protected from direct sunlight or other environmental factors which may disturb the well-being of the animal.

**CANADIAN COUNCIL ON ANIMAL CARE**  
**GUIDING PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE OF ANIMALS IN THE**  
**CLASSROOM AT THE PRE UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

- C. Food should be palatable, of sufficient quantity and balance to maintain a good standard of nutrition. Animals shall not be allowed to go below the maintenance level of nutrition. *Clean drinking water shall be available at all times.* Containers for food and water should be of a design, made specifically for that purpose.
- D. Colonies and animal quarters shall be supervised by a science teacher experienced in animal care. The students and other animal care staff shall be trained and required, to handle the animals gently and humanely.
- E. All animals must be disposed of in a humane manner. If euthanasia has to be carried out, an approved humane method must be used and carried out by an adult experienced in the use of such procedures.
- F. The use of animals must comply with existing local, provincial or federal legislation.
- G. The procurement and use of wild animals and birds must comply with the Migratory Birds Convention Act of Canada, the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (ratified by Order In Council, July 3, 1975) as well as any existing legislation at the Provincial level concerned with wild animals and exotic species.

**IV. EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES**

- A. All experiments should be carried out under the supervision of a competent science teacher. It is the responsibility of the qualified science teacher to ensure the student has the necessary comprehension for the study to be undertaken.
- B. Students should not be allowed to take animals home to carry out experimental studies. All studies involving animals must be carried out in a suitable area in the school.
- C. All students carrying out projects involving *vertebrate animals* must adhere to the following guidelines:
1. No experimental procedures shall be attempted on a vertebrate animal that should subject it to pain or distinct discomfort, or interferes with it's health.
  2. Students shall not perform surgery on vertebrate animals.

602-E

## CLASSROOM AT THE PRE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

3. Experimental procedures shall not involve the use of:
    - a) microorganisms which can cause diseases in man or animals
    - b) ionizing radiation
    - c) cancer producing agents
    - d) drugs or chemicals at toxic levels
    - e) alcohol in any form
    - f) drugs that may produce pain
    - g) drugs known to produce adverse reasons, side effects or capable of producing birth deformities
  4. Experimental treatments should not include electric shock, exercise until exhaustion, or other distressing stimuli.
  5. Behavioural studies should use only reward (positive reinforcement) and not punishment in training programs.
  6. If egg embryos are subjected to experimental manipulations, the embryo must be destroyed humanely two (2) days prior to hatching. If normal egg embryos are to be hatched, satisfactory humane considerations must be made for disposal of the young birds.
- D. The use of anaesthetic agents, by students, is not recommended and in the case of some anaesthetics nor permitted by law.
- E. Information on the care, housing and management for individual species, as well suitable experiments for use at the pre-university level, may be obtained from the Canadian Council on Animal Care, 151 Slater Street, Suite 1105, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5H3.