

## Poway Unified School District

### ANIMAL MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

#### I. General

Board Policy 6.22 prohibits animals on campus, with few exceptions. State law also requires the District to minimize safety and health risks from *all* sources including animals.

To maintain healthy and safe school facilities, the numbers of animals on school property must be minimized. Failure to do so creates liability associated with animal attacks, bites, infections from microbiological pathogens, and allergic reactions by sensitive individuals.

**Animals should not be brought into classrooms unless required by curriculum in biology or animal husbandry laboratories.** Their use as classroom pets or mascots is prohibited. For “show-and-tell” activities, consider using photographs or videos.

#### II. Acquisition for Instructional Purposes

When acquired for laboratory teaching purposes, select the *fewest number* of appropriate animals for your specific needs. Do not acquire animals/organisms that are poisonous, aggressive, vicious, prone to biting, or that have unusual maintenance, dietary, or supervisory needs.

Laboratory animals must be certifiably disease free. This can be accomplished by purchasing from a reputable, licensed animal supply business, or obtaining a veterinarian’s examination and written certification.

#### III. Management

After acquisition, animals should be managed closely and used only for the purpose for which they were obtained. Do not loan them to others. Staff and students must be trained in handling and care procedures.

Never allow animals to roam free on campus or within rooms. They must be properly caged. Never permit them to be taken home, as this serves to extend the District’s liability in a way that we cannot control, and creates the need for another health examination before the animals can be readmitted on campus.

Be aware of and support the particular animal’s behavior and natural feeding and sleeping habits. For example, if a naturally nocturnal animal is forced to stay awake all day and be subjected to handling, this could have several adverse effects. Its health could deteriorate, rendering it more susceptible to infection by parasites and disease organisms, and the stress may make it more apt to bite people.

Never permit anyone to tease or provoke animals, such as poking them with pencils or fingers through their cages.

*Supervise all student contact with animals!*

#### **IV. Personal Protection**

**Never permit staff or students to handle animals without appropriate gloves.** Several biting incidents occur each year, typically involving snakes and rodents, and all are preventable by wearing gloves. Leather or rubber gloves are recommended.

#### **V. Care and Maintenance of Laboratory Animals**

Ensure adequate housing/habitats are provided and consistent with the laboratory animal's particular needs.

Meet nutrition needs with correct amounts of recommended food for each species, supplied at correct intervals. Ensure continuing care through weekends and holiday periods.

Keep cages clean, routinely disposing of waste products and bedding materials. *Do not throw these in the classroom trash can; they must be separately bagged and placed directly in the dumpster.* Use kitty litter or other absorbent material to control urine. Remember that unclean cages breed bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other pests.

Observe Education Code 51540 in the treatment/care of all animals. Also follow the requirements of Health & Safety Code 1650-1662.

The publication Science Safety Handbook for California High Schools is an additional source of guidance on animals in science classrooms.

#### **VI. Control of Stray Animals**

It is important that stray animals, including but not limited to dogs and cats, be removed from school property as soon as possible. The major threat to people is from rabies. Local animal control departments should be contacted if help is needed.

To prevent or minimize the consequences of dog attacks on students or staff, the guidelines shown below should be followed when dogs stray onto school property. Call 911 if an attack occurs and emergency assistance is needed.

1. Immediately report stray animals to school management. Be observant for and report evidence of unusual behavior.
2. Consider all stray dogs as potentially dangerous and keep students away from them. Never approach an unfamiliar dog.
3. Never run from a dog and scream.
4. Remain motionless when approached by an unfamiliar dog (“be still like a tree”).

5. If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (“be still like a log”).
6. Never play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
7. Avoid direct eye contact with an unfamiliar dog.
8. Students and employees should be warned never to pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff the person first.
9. Do not disturb a dog who is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
10. If bitten, immediately report the bite to school management and follow the procedures in the “Bites” section of *Guidelines for School First Aid*. The *Guidelines* publication is a flip-chart booklet distributed by the Poway Unified School District Health Services Department.

## **VII. Neighborhood Pets**

Many dog owners like to walk their pets on school property, sometimes allowing them to run free and romp. This activity is prohibited and appropriate signs should be posted at entry points to the campus.

With courtesy and tact, please inform pet owners of this policy.

### References

Board Policy 6.22

Board Procedure 6.82.1

Board Procedure 6.83.1

District Injury and Prevention Plan

Labor Code Section 6401.7

California code of Regulations, Section 3203

Health & Safety Code, Section 1650. et seq.

Government Code Sections 815.6; 830(a); 835

Law Revision Commission Comment to Government Code Section 830, entitled “Children Using Public Property Not Held to Adult Standard of Due Care”

Health & Safety Code Sections 05400(a) and (b) (Public policy as stated by the Legislature regarding indoor air quality.)

Section VI information courtesy of the Massachusetts Medical Society, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 30, 1997, Vol. 46, No. 21.

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