

POLICY TITLE: ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS

The Canyon-Owyhee School Service Agency (COSSA) acknowledges its responsibility to permit students and/or adults with disabilities to be accompanied by a “service animal” in its school buildings, in classrooms, and at school functions, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 28 C.F.R. Part 35, subject to the following:

All requests for an individual with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal must be addressed in writing to the superintendent and must contain required documentation of vaccinations. This written request must be delivered to the superintendent’s office at least ten (10) business days prior to bringing the service animal to school or a school function.

Owners of a service dog must provide annual proof of the following vaccinations: DHLPPC (Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Paroinfluenza, Parvovirus, Coronavirus), Bordatella, and Rabies.

Owners of service miniature horses must provide annual proof of the following vaccinations: Equine Infectious Anemia (Coggins Test), Rabies, Tetanus, Encephelomyelitis, Rhinoeumonitis, Influenza, and Strangles.

All service dogs must be spayed or neutered.

All service dogs must be treated for, and kept free of fleas and ticks.

All service animals must be kept clean and groomed to avoid shedding and dander.

Owners of service animals are liable for any harm or injury caused by the animal to other students, staff, visitors, and/or property.

The animal must be a dog or, in specific circumstances, a miniature horse. No other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, will be permitted in schools as a “service animal.”

The animal must be “required” for the individual with a disability.

The animal must be “individually trained” to do work or a task for the individual with a disability.

Special Provisions/Miniature Horses: Requests to permit a miniature horse to accompany a student or adult with a disability in school buildings, in classrooms, or at school functions will be handled on a case-by-case basis, considering:

The type, size, and weight of the miniature, and whether the facility can accommodate these features.

Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse.

Whether the miniature horse is housebroken.

Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

Removal of a Service Animal: A school administrator may ask an individual with a disability or his parents to remove a service animal from a school building, a classroom, or from a school function if any one of the following circumstances occurs:

The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it.

The animal is not housebroken.

The animal's presence would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the service, program, or activity.

The animal presents a direct threat to students, staff, or other individuals.

A service animal must have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, hand signals, or other effective means).

The school system is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal, including walking the animal or responding to the animal's need to relieve itself.

The district is not responsible for providing a staff member to walk the service animal or to provide any other care or assistance to the animal.

Students with service animals are expected to care and supervise their animal. In the case of a young child or a student with disabilities who is unable to care for or supervise his service animal, the parent is responsible for providing care and supervision of the animal.

Issues related to the care and supervision of service animals will be addressed on a case-by-case basis in the discretion of the building administrator.

Use of Animals in Educational Programs

Animals may be brought into the school setting for educational purposes only in accordance with the policies of the District and the procedures established by the Superintendent and/or building principal with regard to the presence of animals.

This policy does not apply to service animals. Students', guests', and/or employees' use of service animals is handled in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and District Policy. Likewise Police and SRO K-9 use is handled in accordance with applicable school search policies and regulations.

To protect students and staff, the following applies to animals brought into the school facilities for educational purposes. The District's Superintendent and/or building principal may place additional guidelines or restrictions upon the presence of specific animals in the school setting. Further, the presence of any animal, whether regularly or periodically housed in a classroom or brought into the school for an isolated or singular visit, requires timely pre-approval from the building principal.

Animals Regularly or Periodically Housed in Classrooms

1. No animal shall be housed in any school classroom without pre-approval of the building principal.
 - A. A classroom teacher seeking to house an animal in the classroom shall submit such request in writing explaining the educational purpose of having an animal(s) in the classroom setting. A separate form must be provided for each animal to be housed in a classroom. All information sought on such form must be completed fully and accurately, to the best of the employee's knowledge.
 - B. The teacher signing this request application is responsible for assuming primary responsibility for the animal and shall be designated as the animal's supervising teacher.
2. Prior to exposing any student to a live animal in the classroom, the supervising teacher shall provide written notification to all parents, including a copy of Form 2580F Student Permission Form for Exposure to Animals to obtain parental/guardian consent.
 - A. Copies of all such completed Student Permission Forms shall be maintained in the classroom by the supervising teacher with a copy provided to and maintained by the building administration.
 - B. The supervising teacher shall consult with any parent/guardian with regard to students who are immunocompromised or have allergies, asthma, or other health concerns relating to contact or proximity to animals.

3. The supervising teacher who has been granted permission to house (an) animal(s) in the classroom shall provide formal classroom instruction to students regarding sanitation in the handling of animals and shall require all individuals handling animals to subsequently wash his or her hands thoroughly with soap and water.
4. Any student handling any animal must be directly supervised by the supervising teacher.
 - A. Only the supervising teacher or students designated by the supervising teacher, with proper permission as detailed herein, may handle a classroom animal.
 - B. Handling of any animals should be age appropriate, considering the disease-related risks of certain animals (i.e. hamsters, guinea pigs, and gerbils – Salmonella bacteria and Lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus; reptiles and amphibians - Salmonella bacteria; farm animals – E. coli, Salmonella, Campylobacter and Cryptosporidium).
 - C. Should any student or employee be injured, including but not limited to animal bites or scratches, associated with the handling of a classroom animal, the supervising teacher is responsible for immediately reporting such event, in writing, to the building principal and assuring the student is directed to the school's office for appropriate medical care.
 1. If appropriate, a District accident/injury report will be completed.
 2. The school's personnel shall notify the student's parent/guardian.
 3. If appropriate, personnel shall notify public health officials.
 4. At no time shall any student be exposed to an inherently dangerous animal or any animal which due to size, nature, or aggression could cause injury to a student.
5. Animals shall be handled humanely and in a healthy environment. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, the supervising teacher shall be responsible for making arrangements for their care and safety.
6. Animals shall be displayed in enclosed cages or tanks or under otherwise appropriate restraints.
 - A. Upon placement in the classroom, the building principal shall inspect the enclosure and ensure that it meets standards for safeguarding the health and welfare of students.
 - B. Under no circumstances shall any student be allowed to clean any enclosure, cage, tank/aquarium, or other holding enclosure for any classroom animal or touch or otherwise come into contact with the materials that have been

removed from any cleaned enclosure, cage, tank, aquarium, or other holding enclosure.

- C. Under no circumstance shall any student be allowed to touch or come into contact with any animal waste.
7. Animals must be clean and free of intestinal parasites, fleas, ticks and mites.
 8. Animals shall not be brought in or obtained from the wild. If sought by the building principal, the supervising teacher shall provide proof of purchase or proof of transfer of the animal in question.
 9. Animals maintained in a school classroom shall not have access to or contact with wild animals.
 10. Classroom animals shall not be permitted to freely roam about any classroom or other area of the school.
 11. No animal shall be allowed in any area of the school where food or drink is prepared or consumed.
 12. Absent pre-approval from the Building principal, food for animals must be stored in air-tight closed containers, preferably hard plastic.
 - A. Feeding of classroom animals shall not occur in the presence of any student.
 - B. The supervising teacher and the building principal shall, at the time the animal comes into the school setting, confer as to the manner and method of feeding of such animal.
 - C. The supervising teacher shall agree with the directive of feeding of the animal or the animal shall not be permitted to be present at school.
 13. The supervising teacher shall be responsible for the proper cleaning and disinfection of any area in which the animal is present.
 - A. The supervising teacher, building principal, and custodial personnel shall confer, at the time the animal comes into the school setting, regarding any necessary precautions for cleaning and maintenance in the classroom and/or around the animal or addressing animal waste.
 - B. The supervising teacher shall be responsible for the disposal of animal waste, using appropriate plastic bags and disposable gloves and sanitary cleansers.
 14. Prior to the animal being brought into the classroom, the supervising teacher is responsible for assuring that no special permits, licenses, or other requirements (i.e. health/medical certification or examinations) are necessary to own and house the animal. If a permit, license, or other requirement does exist associated with the animal, it is solely the supervising teacher's responsibility comply with such

requirements and to provide the building principal with a copy of documentation assuring compliance. Any animal not in compliance shall not be brought into the school's setting. Any health care records associated with the animal shall be maintained in the classroom and is the responsibility of the supervising teacher.

15. At the commencement of each school year the building principal shall be responsible for cataloging any and all animals that are present in classrooms.
 - A. Should a new animal be brought into the school setting, or an existing animal leave the school setting, the supervising teacher is responsible for notifying the building principal.
 - B. The building principal is responsible for providing a copy of the animal catalog to the Superintendent.

16. No animal shall be transported on any school bus.

Visiting Animals to the Schools

1. As part of an educational program, there may be isolated instances in which an animal is brought into the school's setting. Prior to any such animal coming into the school setting, pre-approval must be obtained from the building principal no less than five school days prior to the scheduled event.
2. To seek approval, a written request must be submitted to the principal including the following:
 - A. The date and activity in question;
 - B. Detail as to the relevance of the animal to the educational program;
 - C. The animal(s) requested to be allowed on school property;
 - D. Information as to how the health and safety of students, school personnel, and the animal will be addressed; and
 - E. Copies of current health records and/or proof of current vaccination, as applicable (as detailed herein).
3. All animals must be housebroken.
4. The animal's owner agrees to hold the District, its employees, and agents harmless for any injury to the animal, including death, and any injury to any individual, including the handler, school staff, or school student.

Animal Dissection

1. Experiments on living animals are prohibited; however, behavior studies that do not impair an animal's health or safety are permissible only after having obtained written pre-approval from the building principal.

- A. In order to obtain principal approval, the classroom teacher must submit a written request providing details as to the behavior study to be conducted, the manner and details of the study, and how the health and welfare of students and the animal will be safeguarded.
 - C. Such request shall be submitted no later than five school days prior to the desired start of the behavior study.
2. The dissection of dead animals or parts of dead animals shall be allowed in a classroom only when the dissection exercise contributes to or is part of the approved educational program of the classroom.
 - A. Prior to scheduling any educational dissection, the classroom teacher shall confer with the curriculum director and building principal to address the scheduling and approval of the educational activity. Such discussion shall occur no later than 15 days prior to the scheduled classroom activity.
 - B. All dissection of animals and the parts of dissected animals shall be confined to the classroom.
 - C. Students who object to performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals shall be excused from the classroom during such educational activity without penalty, discipline, or negative impact upon the student's grade. Alternate projects will be assigned to any such non-participating student.

Prohibited Animals

1. Regardless of the desired educational purpose, the following live animals are prohibited in any school facility, for any time or purpose:
 - A. Inherently dangerous animals;
 - B. Any venomous or toxin producing animals;
 - C. Aggressive or unpredictable animals;
 - D. Stray animals or animals with no health or vaccination history;
 - E. Mammals at high risk for having or transmitting rabies; and
 - F. Any animal on the Idaho Invasive Species List for which proper state permitting and documentation of ownership has not been obtained prior to classroom housing (i.e. Snapping Turtle, Red Eared Slider, Mediterranean Gecko, Brahminy Blind Snake, Monk Parakeet, and Nutria).

2. The building principal may prohibit any animal from being present upon the school's property on a case by case basis.

Health and Vaccination Requirements

1. Prior to bringing certain animals into a school building, current health records and/or proof of current vaccinations is required as follows:
 - A. Cats: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against feline distemper/upper respiratory vaccine (FVRCP), feline leukemia, feline chlamydiosis and rabies. The District may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months.
 - B. Dogs: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against canine distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, canine parainfluenza (CPVI), parvovirus, Bordatella, and rabies. The District may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months. The District may also request proof of current licensure of the dog.
 - C. Ferrets: A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of current vaccination against rabies. The District may also request proof of a negative fecal exam or successful treatment for intestinal parasites within the last six months.
 - D. Psittacine Birds (parrots, parakeets, budgies and cockatiels): A health certificate from a licensed veterinarian showing proof of treatment or negative test results for psittacosis (avian Chlamydiosis).
2. The Superintendent shall make the final determination as to whether or not any animal may be present upon school property. When making such a determination the primary factor of consideration shall first be the health and welfare of students.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

ADA Regulations, 28 C.F.R. Part 35 (as amended, 2010)
I.C. § 33-6001 Parental Rights

POLICY HISTORY:

Adopted: 1/22/2013
Originally issued as Policy 415. Revised and reissued as Policy 2580 on January 19, 2022.