

CODE: IMG

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

The Kittery School Committee recognizes that animals can enhance student learning experiences, but is equally concerned with the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and the humane treatment of animals.

The following guidelines shall apply to the presence of animals in the Kittery schools:

- A. The presence of an animal in the classroom must be directly related to the instructional program. The length of time the animal is expected to be present will be specified in advance.
- B. Permission must be obtained from the building principal before animals are brought to school by anyone.
- C. The principal or classroom teacher will notify parents than an animal will be present so that any health concerns can be addressed in advance.
- D. Animals may not be transported in school vehicles.
- E. No animals will be allowed in school unless proof of current rabies vaccination (if appropriate) is provided.
- F. No wild animals will be allowed in school unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animal and properly licensed by state or federal agencies as appropriate (i.e., zookeepers, veterinarians, biologists, Maine Fish and Wildlife personnel). Students will not be permitted to handle wild animals.
- G. All animals brought to school must be under the control of the owner/handler. The teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals in school.
- H. Animals are not to be kept in classrooms as pets.
- I. If a student is bitten/injured by an animal on school premises, the building principal, school nurse and parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible. If a staff member or visitor is bitten/injured, the building principal must be notified. The building principal must notify appropriate public health authorities and the Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, of each incident. An accident/injury report must also be completed and forwarded to the Superintendent.

- J. If a stray or wild animal appears on school grounds that may pose a threat to student safety, children shall not be allowed in the area until the animal has left the premises or is removed by the local animal control officer, game warden or other appropriate official.
- K. No animal may be used as part of a scientific experiment or for any other purpose in which the normal health of the animal is interfered with or where pain or distress is caused. No person may practice vivisection or exhibit a vivisected animal in the schools. Dissection of dead animals shall be confined to the classroom and to the presence of students engaged in the study of dissection and shall not be for the purpose of exhibition.
- L. Service animals will be permitted in school and on school buses in (see policy IMG A) accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

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Legal Ref.: Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.) 7 MRSA § 3971, 22 MRSA §§ 801-825

Cross Ref.: IMG A – Service Animals in the Schools

Adopted: January 7, 1986

Revised: July 5, 1994; December 19, 2000; April 23, 2002; November 5, 2013