

Policy Information

Series 7000 - Instruction

Animals in the BOCES

Policy # 7180.1

POLICY

2020

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ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION
Instruction

SUBJECT: ANIMALS IN THE BOCES (INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES)

Observation and training opportunities utilizing animals gives students unique perspectives of life processes. Animals and animal materials should be used respectfully and for the purpose of meeting course objectives.

The Board, in recognizing the educational uses of animals in the classroom, requires that permission be obtained from the Building Principal before animals are brought into the BOCES or classrooms. It is the Building Principal's responsibility to ensure that there is an appropriate educational purpose if any animal is housed in a classroom. Animals are not to be transported on BOCES buses or DOT vehicles with the exception of service animals.*

This policy does not apply to service animals required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This policy also does not apply to service animals assigned to law enforcement or fire protection entities.

Study and Care of Live Animals

Any BOCES which cares for or uses animals for study shall ensure that each animal in the BOCES be afforded the following:

- a. Appropriate quarters;
- b. Sufficient space for normal behavior and postural requirements of species;
- c. Proper ventilation, lighting, and temperature control;
- d. Adequate food and clean drinking water; and
- e. Quarters which shall be cleaned on a regular basis and located in an area where undue stress and disturbance are minimized.

Only the teacher or those students designated by the teacher are to handle the animal.

It will be the responsibility of the principal or designee to develop a plan of care for those animals housed in BOCES in the event of an emergency BOCES closing or in the event the animals remain in the classroom on days when BOCES is not in session.

Authorized Area(s)

Animals will be allowed on campus only if there is a direct connection to the academic program or demonstrated therapeutic purpose, such as Animal Science and/or Living Environment.

Animals that have been approved by the principal or designee to be on campus for instructional use must be housed in the Animal Science indoor and outdoor designated spaces. Animals are not permitted to walk throughout the building, unless they are on a leash and being cared for by their handler for a therapeutic purpose.

Therapy dog handlers must provide evidence that the therapy dog is certified as such by a recognized national association and that the handler is qualified as a therapy dog handler.

General Guidelines

Parents must be consulted to determine any special considerations needed for children who are immunocompromised, have allergies, or asthma. Written parental permission must be obtained for those children who opt-out of that section of the program.

As a learning objective for the Animal Sciences and Living Environment classrooms the care of and handling of animals is a necessary component.

All animals which are brought into BOCES will be clean and free of disease or parasites, including fleas, ticks and mites.

Proper holding containers must be in good working order. Any cages, tanks, etc. utilizing electricity must be preapproved by the O&M Office.

Anyone in contact with animals, their products or their environment must wash hands.

All students must be supervised during student-animal contact.

Animals should be handled humanely.

Specific areas in the BOCES must be designated for animal contact.

Animals are not allowed to roam or fly free in the classroom at any time.

Animals are not allowed in areas where food or drink is consumed.

Food for animals must be stored in an air tight closed container, preferably hard plastic, to prevent spills and attracting nuisance animals and insects.

Prohibited Animals

The following animals will not be allowed on any Campus:

1. Venomous or toxin-producing spiders, insects, reptiles and amphibians
2. Wild or exotic animals
3. Mammals at higher risk for transmitting rabies (e.g. bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and coyotes)
4. Non-human primates
5. Stray animals
6. Aggressive or unpredictable animals

Protocol for Animal-Related Injuries

All bites, scratches or other injuries acquired by students or staff must be immediately and thoroughly washed with soap and warm water for at least one minute and reported to the BOCES nurse for first aid and

recommendation for further medical evaluation and parental contact.

Administrators must be notified immediately of the injury and an incident/accident report will be completed by the staff member responsible at the time of the injury and forwarded to the BOCES nurse.

If students receive a bite or scratch from a wild animal, animal control will be notified as well as the parents. Medical evaluation by the student's primary provider will be recommended for all injury sustained from wild animals.

Therapy Dogs

A therapy dog is a dog that is trained to aid the emotional and physical health of patients in hospitals, nursing homes, retirement homes and other settings and is actually used for such purpose. A therapy dog must be maintained under the care and supervision of a qualified therapy dog handler while at Genesee Valley BOCES.

In order to be approved to visit any Genesee Valley BOCES program, facility or BOCES grounds, Genesee Valley BOCES must be provided with a copy of the dog licensure; certificate of rabies, distemper, other vaccinations, and a certificate of good health provided by a licensed veterinarian; documentation of the dog's training and certification as a therapy dog; and documentation of the handler's training and certification as a therapy dog handler.

Exclusion or Removal from BOCES

Animals may be excluded from BOCES property and buildings if a BOCES administrator determines that:

1. The animal presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the BOCES; or
2. The animal's presence otherwise interferes with the educational process.

The Owner shall be required to remove the animal from BOCES premises immediately upon such a determination.

Dissection of Animals

Any student expressing a moral or religious objection to the performance of witnessing of the dissection of an animal, either wholly or in part, shall be provided the opportunity to undertake and complete an alternative project approved by the student's teacher; provided, however, that such objection is substantiated in writing by the student's parent or legal guardian. Students who perform alternative projects shall not be penalized.

Instruction in the Humane Treatment of Animals

Students must receive instruction in the humane treatment and protection of animals and the importance of the part they play in the economy of nature as well as the necessity of controlling the proliferation of animals that are subsequently abandoned and caused to suffer extreme cruelty.

This instruction may be joined with work in literature, reading, language, nature study, or ethnology.

Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 United States
Code (USC) Section 12101 et. seq.
Education Law Section 809
8 New York Code of Rule and Regulations
(NYCRR) Section 100.2(c)(8)

