

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NO: 4912

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CATEGORY: **Instruction, Miscellaneous**

EFFECTIVE: **12-15-85**

SUBJECT: **Instructional Use of Live Vertebrate Animals**

REVISED: **10-21-2002**

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. To outline administrative procedures covering the instructional use of live vertebrate animals in elementary and secondary schools.
2. **Related Procedures:**
 - Classroom safety 5150
 - Criteria for instruction and for adoption
and use of instructional materials 4050
 - Materials for instructional use in schools, general 4500
 - Stock supplies and materials 2410

B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

1. **Reference:** Board policy: F-1500, F-3850; Education Code Sections 51210, 51220, 51540, 60042.
2. **Legal Provisions**
 - a. **Education Code Section 51540** states:

In the public elementary and high schools or in public elementary and high school school-sponsored activities and classes held elsewhere than on school premises, live vertebrate animals shall not, as part of a scientific experiment or any purpose whatever:

- (1) Be experimentally medicated or drugged in a manner to cause painful reactions or induce painful or lethal pathological conditions.
- (2) Be injured through any other treatments, including, but not limited to, anesthetization or electric shock.

Live animals on the premises of a public elementary or high school shall be housed and cared for in a humane and safe manner.

The provisions of this section are not intended to prohibit or constrain vocational instruction in the normal practice of animal husbandry.

Note: The dictionary defines *animal husbandry* as “the branch of agriculture specializing in the breeding, raising and care of farm animals.”

- b. **Education Code Section 60042** provides that when adopting instructional materials for use in schools, governing boards shall require such materials as they deem necessary and proper to encourage thrift, fire prevention and the humane treatment of animals and people.

C. GENERAL

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Science Department, Curriculum and Instruction Division, Institute for Learning.
2. **Definitions**
 - a. **Live vertebrate animals:** Those organisms classified as vertebrates in the standard taxonomy system (e.g., mice, rats, hamsters, snakes, frogs, fish, and turtles).
 - b. **Injure:** To inflict bodily hurt on, impair the soundness of, or inflict material damage or loss on.
 - c. **Pathological:** Any condition due to or involving disease.
 - d. **Instructional use:** Keeping live vertebrate animals at a school, whether housed in a classroom or in a separate facility, including:
 - (1) Student observation in the animals' normal quarters, as well as teacher and student use in the classroom.
 - (2) Off-campus use of such animals, whether by students or adults, in activities assigned by a teacher and/or presented by the student for credit or participation in any school-sponsored activity.

Note: Students working under supervision of professional scientists in nonschool laboratories must, in addition to observing provisions of Education Code Section 51540, abide by rules and regulations of the establishments involved.

- e. **Animal care supervisor:** This person may be a teacher trained in the care and handling of experimental animals, a consultant with expertise in this area or, in the case of behavioral studies made at a student's home, an informed parent/guardian aware of the need and requirements for humane treatment.
3. **Purposes/Objectives.** The basic aims of any instructional use of live vertebrate animals are to achieve an understanding of life processes and to further knowledge. Experiments involving live vertebrate animals must have clearly defined objectives requiring the use of animals to demonstrate a biological principle or answer scientific questions. Such experiments *shall* be conducted humanely and with a respect for life.
 4. **Regulations/Limitations**
 - a. The development of new or use of existing surgical techniques, experiments in toxicology or research on live vertebrate animals carried to a lethal conclusion are prohibited.
 - b. Use of protista and other invertebrates *shall* be encouraged wherever appropriate; humane considerations shall be included.
 - c. To assure humane treatment of animals, an animal care supervisor *shall* take primary responsibility for their treatment and housing.
 - d. All live vertebrate animals *shall* be lawfully acquired from an approved source.
 - e. Comfort of the animals *shall* be a prime concern. Cage (e.g., aquarium) size; number of animals per unit; temperature range of the place where animals are housed; feeding, watering, and cage (e.g., aquarium) cleaning schedules (*including weekends and holidays*) and the type of bedding must be appropriate to the species used (Procedure 5150) and *must be approved by the animal care supervisor*.
 - f. Under appropriate supervision, use of a hollow needle to draw blood from or inject a nonpathological substance (i.e., saline solution, hormones, vitamins) into a live vertebrate animal is **not** an injury and is permitted *providing* it does not adversely affect the animal's health.
 5. **Responsibilities**
 - a. **The school principal and superintendent** are legally responsible for assuring compliance with the provisions of Education Code Section 51540.

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- b. **Teachers** who use live vertebrate animals for instructional purposes shall assure their humane treatment under the provisions of Education Code Section 51540 and shall provide clear instructions in such use to their students, while helping the students to develop a caring awareness of all living organisms.
- c. **Science Department** shall issue yearly reminders of Procedure 4912 to principals, elementary school teachers, and secondary school science teachers.
- d. **Students** who use live vertebrate animals in independent research to be presented for entry and display at a school science fair *shall*, in addition to meeting requirements of this procedure, *complete and display with their projects* the current Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair “Certification of Humane Treatment of Live Vertebrate Animals,” Form GSDSEF-2, E-1.

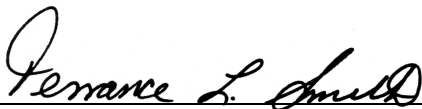
D. IMPLEMENTATION (Section C.)

E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES

- 1. Certification of Humane Treatment of Live Vertebrate Animals, Form GSDSEF-2, available online at www.gsdsef.org.

F. REPORTS AND RECORDS

G. APPROVED BY



Chief of Staff, Terrance L. Smith
For the Superintendent of Public Education