

These guidelines allow for animals to be kept as pets in the classrooms of Waunakee Community School District. The following provides suggestions for management of pets in the classroom. It is intended to provide common sense guidelines for successfully maintaining a pet within the learning environment.

POSITIVE VALUE OF PETS IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1. Students learn about different animals and their care.
2. Students become confident in handling animals.
3. Students gain a sense of responsibility, empathy and appreciation as they care for an animal.
4. Animals can offer security and friendship for a child.
5. Animals add a sense of community to a classroom as they communicate about the animal and its needs to other students within the classroom.
6. Taking responsibility for a pet develops a sense of caretaking and enhances a child's belief that they are capable and important.
7. Animals provide an impetus for further learning about the world around us.
8. Students develop good observation skills.
9. Student may write and read about their animal.
10. Students learn about animal behavior and instincts.

GUIDELINES

1. Information about children's allergies should be obtained.
2. A communication, explaining the type of pet and general information about the pet, should be sent home to parents.
3. Handling the pet shall remain optional.
4. Animal(s) must be humanely and properly housed in cages, aquariums, etc. specific for the species. A stress-free environment should be provided for animals. There should be an area for an animal to hide if it does not want to be handled.
5. Appropriate handling of the pet shall be taught.
6. Care and feeding of the pet may be shared by interested students.
7. Cleaning of the pet's environment may be shared with interested students in a way that is safe and healthy for the pet and students.
8. Cages shall be kept clean and free of unnecessary odors.
9. Cleaning animal cages shall never be the responsibility of custodians or teaching assistants.
10. Waste materials from the animals should be bagged separately.
11. Pets shall be supervised at all times.
12. If any individual is bitten or scratched by an animal and the skin is broken, the affected area should be cleaned thoroughly with soap and water and then the incident must be reported to the parents and principal.
13. Keeping the pet may need to be reassessed if a child develops allergies or a new student with allergies enters the classroom.

