

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

It is the intent of the MSAD 15 Board of Directors to provide a healthy learning environment for all children in Gray and New Gloucester. The Board recognizes the educational benefit children can derive from having pets. Pets can be a calming factor and caring for pets teaches responsibility. At the same time the Board recognizes that some children have allergies caused by animals and the health of these children needs to be protected. This policy establishes the guidelines for each Principal's decision about animals in school, including mammals, birds, insects, fish and reptiles.

Generally, only caged animals are permitted in school. Animals are not permitted in rooms used by all students, such as the library, offices and specialist rooms. Caged animals are permitted in classrooms only after the teacher has checked school health records of all students regularly in the classroom to be certain there are no problems. Teachers are responsible for keeping animals in good health and keeping cages clean for any animals in their classrooms. The Principal can exclude an animal from school if, in the judgment of the Principal, it is in the best interest of students to do so. An exception to this policy will be granted if the IEP of a child requires it (See IHBA Individualized Education Programs Policy.)

The Principal will determine when exceptions to the above paragraph may be granted, for special lessons or assemblies such as a demonstration by the State Police. This will be done with consideration of health needs of children. If a child brings a pet in under such circumstances, parents are responsible for transportation of the animal between home and school. Under no circumstances is an unrestrained animal permitted in school.

Cross Reference: IHBA Individualized Education Programs Policy