

DISSECTION AND OBSERVATION OF ANIMALS

- 1.0 Dissection in elementary school is prohibited. Dissections in middle school or high school are allowed to provide a deeper and more enriched experience to students than would be available through alternative methods of instruction.
 - 1.1 Dissections must have clear educational goals relating to standards and be accompanied by rubrics for evaluating student work. Middle schools and high schools will collaborate so that students do not repeat dissections performed in earlier grades.
- 2.0 Dissection in middle school and high school must follow the requirements below. Objectives and instructions for the dissection must be clearly written.
 - 2.1 Dissection specimens should be of the lowest phylogenetic order appropriate to demonstrate the desired concepts and objectives.
 - 2.2 Law prohibits formaldehyde or formalin from being on school grounds. Because most dissection specimens are initially preserved in formaldehyde or formalin and then rinsed with various chemicals to reduce the formaldehyde content, teachers may only use vendors who can verify that the formaldehyde content of preserved specimens has been reduced to 0.3% or less.
 - 2.3 Teachers must provide two weeks advance notification to parents and students of any dissection.
 - 2.4 If a parent or student chooses not to participate in a dissection, that student must be given the opportunity to participate in an alternate activity. The alternate activity should provide a similar opportunity to learn concepts, the same academic challenge, and employ the same rigorous standards as the dissection. The student shall not be penalized in any way for choosing an alternate activity.
 - 2.5 Teachers shall instruct students on the safe and proper usage of dissection equipment. Teachers should carefully monitor the cleanliness, distribution and collection of dissection equipment to ensure student safety and to reduce the risk of injury and infection.
- 3.0 When purchasing dissection specimens through scientific supply companies, every effort shall be made to acquire specimens that were not collected from the environment. Teachers should consider the environmental impact of the choices they make regarding the specimens they choose to dissect. Depletion of the environment through specimen collection is a serious issue, worthy of consideration when deciding on what dissections to perform.
- 4.0 Vivisection in elementary school and middle school is prohibited. Vivisection is permitted at high school when learning objectives cannot be fulfilled through any other instructional means. Vivisection is subject to the same requirements in this policy as dissection and must be conducted according to generally accepted humane and responsible methods.
- 5.0 Observation of live animals is permitted provided the studies are not intrusive, do not interfere with the animal's well-being, or cause it suffering. In general, procedures causing suffering in humans are considered to cause suffering in other animals.
 - 5.1 Supervision by a teacher is necessary at all times. This supervision shall include monitoring of the health, care, and handling of the animals. The teacher and students shall also adhere to any applicable laws, regulations, permits, and policies.
 - 5.2 Prior to obtaining animals, the teacher shall develop a plan for the animal's procurement and ultimate disposition. The teacher shall also inform his/her principal prior to conducting the activity.