

REFUSAL TO HARM OR DESTROY ANIMALS

Parental Notifications

At the beginning of each academic year, the district will notify parents/guardians, in writing, of students' right to refrain from instruction involving animal dissection based on moral objections. (Education Code 48980, 48981)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

In addition, each teacher of a course that uses live or dead animals or animal parts will inform students of their right to refrain from the dissection of animals based on moral objections at the beginning of each semester and at least three weeks prior to the dissection. Students who wish to refrain from such instruction must notify the teacher and provide a note from their parent/guardian substantiating the moral objection. (Education Code 32255.4) (Education Code 32255.1)

Alternative Assignments

A teacher's determination of whether a student may pursue an alternative project or be excused from the project will not be arbitrary or capricious. (Education Code 32255.3)

It is the teacher's responsibility to develop an alternative project which would provide the knowledge, information or experience required by the course of study. Alternative projects include but are not limited to the use of videotapes, models, films, books and computers. The alternative project shall involve time and effort comparable to that required by the original project. Alternative activities to dissection must take place in an alternative location and are to be conducted concurrently with the dissection activities. (Education Code 32255, 32255.1)

Students who participate in an alternative project shall pass all course examinations in order to receive course credit. Students may request an alternative test, however, if a regular examination requires the dissection of animals. (Education Code 32255.1)

This right shall apply to all 9-12 courses, except classes and activities conducted as part of agricultural education that provide instruction on the care, management and evaluation of domestic animals. (Education Code 32255.5, 32255.6)

These clauses do not apply to any other form of dissection activity, other than actual, in-class dissection. They do not apply to simulated, virtual, computerized or other media dissection materials, including, but not limited to, computer simulations, models, films, videos and/or 35 mm or microfilm slides.

Selection of Dissection Specimens

All specimens must be lawfully acquired in accordance with State and local laws.

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Teachers will make good faith efforts to obtain specimens from firms licensed and legally authorized to provide such specimens.

All live organisms shall be housed and cared for in a humane and hygienic manner in accordance to standards. Live vertebrate animals shall not, as part of a scientific experiment or any purpose whatever: (Education Code 51540)

1. Be experimentally medicated or drugged in a manner to cause painful reactions or reduce 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 schools shall be housed and cared for in a humane and safe manner. (Education Code 51540)

The provisions of this section are not intended to prohibit or constrain vocational instruction in the normal practices of animal husbandry. (Education Code 51540)