



NABT Position Statement

The Use of Animals in Biology Education

The study of organisms, including nonhuman animals, is essential to the understanding of life on Earth. NABT recommends the prudent and responsible use of animals in the life science classroom. Biology teachers should foster a respect for life and should teach about the interrelationship and interdependency of all things.

Classroom experiences that involve nonhuman animals range from observation to dissection. As with any instructional activity, the use of nonhuman animals in the biology classroom must have sound educational objectives. Any use of animals must convey substantive knowledge of biology and be appropriate for the classroom and for the age of the students. Biology teachers are in the best position to make this determination for their students.

NABT encourages the presence of live animals in the classroom with appropriate consideration to the age and maturity level of the students (elementary, middle school, high school, or college). NABT supports experiences with live animals when these experiences are conducted within the established guidelines of proper care and use of animals, as developed by the scientific and educational community. (See the "Principles and Guidelines for the Use of Animals in Precollege Education" of the Institute of Laboratory Animals Resources of the National Research Council). [footnote 1]

The classroom teacher is responsible for determining what activities will be most effective in meeting the educational objectives of a class. NABT encourages teachers to be approachable and responsive to substantive student objections to dissection and to provide appropriate lessons for those students. At the same time, NABT urges teachers to be aware that alternatives to dissection have their limitations. NABT supports the use of these materials as adjuncts to the educational process but not as exclusive replacements for the use of actual organisms.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, August 2008. This policy supersedes and replaces all previous NABT statements regarding animals in biology education.

1. Copies of the "Principles and Guidelines" may be obtained from the ILAR at 500 Fifth Street NW, Washington, DC 20001, phone 202 334-2590, e-mail: ILAR@nas.edu. The Principles and Guidelines may be downloaded at http://dels.nas.edu/ilar_n/ilarhome/index.shtml.

The states listed below have laws or regulations governing the use of animals in the classroom. No regulation or policy could be found for those not appearing on the list.

California

- California Education Code Section 32255-32255.6 governs the use of animals in the classroom. The term “animal” is defined and appropriate uses of animals and animal parts are detailed. It can be found at:
<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/cacodes/edc/32255-32255.6.html>

Florida

- Check Florida Education Statute 233.0674 of 988 (California Education Code § 32255 et sq.) It governs biological experiments on living things and is located at:
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_Mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch0233/Sec0674.htm&StatuteYear=1997
- The statute can also be found at:
http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1003/Sec47.HTM
- The statute states that it should not be interpreted to limit instruction but goes on to state: “PENALTY.—In the event that any instructional employee of a public high school or area technical center knowingly or intentionally fails or refuses to comply with any of the provisions of this section, the school board, acting as a board, may suspend, dismiss, return to annual contract, or otherwise discipline such employee as provided in s. 230.23(5)(f) in accordance with procedures established in chapter 231.”

Illinois

- The State of Illinois has posted a document that offers dissection alternatives. This is located at http://www.isbe.net/ils/science/pdf/alternatives_dissection_1998.pdf.
- The actual legislation can be found at
[http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1016&ChapAct=105%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B112%2F&ChapterID=17&ChapterName=SCHOOLS&ActName=Dissection Alternatives Act.](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1016&ChapAct=105%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B112%2F&ChapterID=17&ChapterName=SCHOOLS&ActName=Dissection%20Alternatives%20Act)
- (Dissection Alternatives Act 105 ILCS 112 et sq) Illinois Public Act 91-0771 amended the Alternative to Dissections Act.

Maine

- The use of animals in public and private schools is regulated by statute. Vivisection of animals in K-12 schools is prohibited. Dissection of dead animals must be confined to the classroom and the students engaged in the study and must not be for exhibition. Experiments on live vertebrate, except eggs, are restricted. Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 7, § 3971 For more information go to:
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/RegPrivSchl/maine.html>
- For a PDF of the Informational letter sent to superintendents go to: file://localhost/tohttp://www.hsus.org/web-files:PDF:ARI:Maine_school_dissection_policy.pdf

Massachusetts

- Massachusetts has established a policy on dissection and dissection alternatives as part of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This policy can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/math/111405newpolicy.html>
- A document that provides further information regarding animal use in the classroom is located at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/math/111405guidance.pdf>

Michigan

- Michigan is pursuing student choice legislation. House bill 4254 regarding dissection choice was introduced in 2005 and referred to the House Education Committee. You can read the bill at: [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(3finm055dwgpdvml4pttt55\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2005-HB-4254](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(3finm055dwgpdvml4pttt55))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2005-HB-4254)

New Jersey

- New Jersey Statute 18A:35-4.25 Refusal to participate in certain school activities related to animal dissection, etc. governs all public school students from kindergarten through grade 12. For the full text of the statute go to: http://www.hsus.org/web-files/PDF/ARI/New_Jersey_Dissection_Choice_Law.pdf
- New Jersey Statute 18A:35-4.24 Definitions relative to alternative education projects. As used in this act: Alternative education project means the use of video tapes, models, films, books, computers, or any other tools which provide an alternative method for obtaining and testing the knowledge, information, or experience required by a course of study. For the full text of the statute go to: http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2004/Bills/AL05/266_.PDF

New Mexico

- New Mexico State Board of Education Policy requires that all science classes that include dissection activities as part of the curriculum must provide virtual dissection techniques as alternative activities for any student who is opposed to real dissections for ethical, moral, cultural, or religious reasons. For more information go to Section (8) page 6.30.2 at: http://www.ped.state.nm.us/div/sipds/health/dl/112805_docs/6.30.2_NMAC_FINAL_09_16_05_-_Emergency_Drill_-DORIS.pdf_-_search="dissection"

New York State

- New York State Education Law, Article 17 Instruction in Certain Subjects Section 809 Instruction in the humane treatment of animals. The law governs what is acceptable regarding the use of animals in the classroom. This regulation can be found at: <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcode.pl?frame=right2&type=srchres&case=/data/ny/code/claws/30/41.htm>
- There is also a waiver that must be filed by a school before the performance of certain specified types of lessons or experimental studies on live vertebrate animals in school or during an activity conducted under the school's auspices. This waiver must be filed and approved before the activity can be performed. The application form for this waiver is located at: http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/mst/809_5Wav.pdf.

Ohio

- The Ohio Department of Natural Resources – Division of Wildlife has published “A Guide to Using Animals in the Classroom.” It is extremely comprehensive and covers everything from obtaining scientific collecting permits to how long an animal may be kept before it is no longer permitted to return it to the wild. This guide can be found at: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/Portals/9/pdf/pub009.pdf>
- Laws and Regulations governing the State ownership of wild animals and multiple education resources is located at:
http://dnr.state.oh.us/Home/wild_resourcessubhomepage/Educator_Resourceslandinpgpage/Aguidetousinganimalsintheclassroom/tabid/17487/Default.aspx

Oregon

- Oregon currently has Senate Bill 383 sponsored by Senator Deckert. It addresses dissection and dissection alternatives. It can be found at:
<http://72.14.205.104/search?q=cache:xCBylZIQ7T0J:www.leg.state.or.us/05reg/measpdf/sb0300.dir/sb0383.en.pdf+Enrolled+Senate+Bill+383+Sponsored+by+Senator+DECKERT&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=us&client=firefox-a> and
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/05reg/measpdf/sb0300.dir/sb0383.en.pdf>

Pennsylvania

- Public or nonpublic school pupils from kindergarten through grade twelve may refuse to dissect, vivisect, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals, or any parts thereof, as part of their course of instruction. For the full text of Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1523, Pupil's Right of Refusal; Animal Dissection go to:
http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:dh9FmTtrc_YJ:www.dli.state.pa.us/landi/lib/landi/laws-regulations%5CImc%5Cact88-92.pdf+Pennsylvania+School+Code,+Section+1523.+Pupil%27s+Right+of+Refusal:+animal+dissection&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us&client=firefox-a **Note:** Introductory information is located in the first paragraph. More details can be found on page 8 of the document.
- For the PDF version go to:
http://www.hsus.org/webfiles/PDF/ARI/PA_school_dissection_statute.pdf

Rhode Island

- Rhode Island Statute Section §16-22-20 discusses a student's right to refuse to dissect and the requirement that the teacher provide an alternate project. For the full text go to: <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/16-22-20.htm>

Utah

- In April 2004, the Utah State Science Education Committee established guidelines for the responsible use of animals in the classroom. These guidelines also address the use and disposal of bacteria, human body fluids, and laboratory safety. For information regarding parental consent prior to dissection, classroom visitations by individuals bringing animals from zoos or similar institutions, and the release of animals raised in the classroom go to:
http://72.14.205.104/search?q=cache:M6UC_pUvwzEJ:www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/Science/pdf/UseOfAnimalsInClassroom.pdf+UTAH+GUIDELINES+FOR+RESPONSIB

[LE+USE+OF+ANIMALS+IN+THE+CLASSROOM&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us&client=firefox-a](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/fishing)

- Additional information is available from the:
 - Specific information governing the release of animals raised in the classroom is available from the Department of Natural Resources is located at:
<http://wildlife.utah.gov/fishing>.
 - Information about “Collections, Importation, Transportation and Possession of Zoological Animals” may be found online at:
<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r657/r657-003.htm>

Vermont

- The text of VT H. 711, § 912. Pupil's Right of Refusal; Animal Dissection can be found at: <http://www.hsus.org/web-files/PDF/ARI/vermont-dissection-law.pdf>
- Also check the State of Vermont Department of Wildlife Regulation #881, Governing the importation and possession of wild animals. It can be found at:
http://72.14.205.104/search?q=cache:Y_u29YNAZF4J:www.vtfishandwildlife.com/library/Forms_and_Applications/Importation_Application/Regulation_881.pdf+Vermont+use+of+animals+regulations&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=us&client=firefox-a and
http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/library/Forms_and_Applications/Importation_Application/Regulation_881.pdf
- Another useful site is sponsored by the Department of Health and has information about Animals and Field Trips. It is located at:
http://healthvermont.gov/family/animals/field_trip.aspx

Virginia

- Code of Virginia § 22.1-200.0 addresses “Alternatives to dissection.” It is located in PDF format at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2004/inf161a.pdf> and as an html at <http://leg1.state.va.us/000/cod/22.1-200.01.HTM>

Wyoming

- As far as can be determined, Wyoming does not have any regulations governing the use of animals in the classroom. The State Board of Agriculture district representative was contacted but never replied. Most Wyoming life science educators follow the science fair guidelines as put forth by ISEF. In addition, city/county animal control laws govern every school.

Federal Regulations and Dot Gov Resources

Animal Welfare Act and Regulations *

Wording of the law

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/legislat/usdaleg1.htm>

Animal Welfare Center (AWIC) *

Browse by Subject including Research Animals, Farm Animals, Zoo, Circus and Marine Animals, Companion Animals, Government and Professional Resources, Alternatives, Literature Searching and Databases, Pain and Distress and Human Endpoints and Euthanasia among other resources.

http://awic.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?tax_level=1&info_center=3

Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act

S3880 (109th) Full Text of the Legislation

http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:s3880enr.txt.pdf

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare(OLAW)*

OLAW Fast Facts, Policies and Laws, Guidance, Education, Resources, About and more.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm#LAB>

Public Health Service Act

Title 42-The Public Health and Welfare Chapter 6A-Public Health Service

Scroll to Subchapter III-National Research Institutes

Part H General Provisions: Animals in Research 289d

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/laws/phsvact/phsvact.htm>

Associations

Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International*

A comprehensive informational set of over 25 links to comprehensive resources about the topic of animal research.

<http://www.aaalac.org/resources/studentinfo.cfm>

American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS)*

Browse Association, Certification, Publications, Online Resources including the Learning Library, IACUC.org, Kids 4 Research and much more

<http://www.aalas.org/index.aspx>

Principles and Guidelines for the Use of Animals in Precollege Education

http://www.aalas.org/pdf/precollege_education.pdf

American Physiological Society (APS)*

Position Statement on Animals in Teaching

http://www.the-aps.org/pa/resources/policyStmnts/paPolicyStmnts_teaching.htm

<http://www.apa.org/science/anguide.html>

Additional Resources

American Biology Teacher: Student-Centered Deliberations of Ethical Care & Use of Animals
Vol. 69, No. 7, Sept. 07, pp 416-21 by John Pecore, Melissa Demetrikopoulos, and Kyle Frantz*

American Biology Teacher: Scalpel or mouse? (66:408-411 2004) and is discussed on page 149 (page 6 of the pdf file). by Cross and Cross. *

National Academies Press (NAP) *

A list of books available for purchase on various Lab Animal Research topics

<http://www.nap.edu/topics.php?topic=316>