

CARLISLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PROGRAMS

TITLE: ALTERNATIVES TO
DISSECTION

ADOPTED: May 18, 2006

REVISED: March 18, 2021

105.3. ALTERNATIVES TO DISSECTION

Purpose

Dissection is an integral part of the biological/life science curriculum and is considered a valuable learning activity to attain specific course objectives. [1]

Under proper supervision, dissection is a hands-on activity for which there is no adequate substitute. Therefore, the Board encourages all students to participate in dissection to increase their comprehension of the concepts covered and to develop skills and techniques used by biologists.

The Board recognizes, however, that a student may have valid reasons to request an alternative to dissection.

In addition to dissection, this policy shall include vivisection, incubation, capturing, harming, or destroying animals or any parts thereof.

Definitions

Animal shall mean any living organism of the kingdom Animalia in the phylum Chordata, organisms which have a notochord. The term also includes an animal's cadaver or severed parts of any animal's cadaver.

The term **alternative education project** also includes alternative test. A student has the right to refuse any test which may involve or necessitate harmful use of an animal or animal part.

Guidelines

District staff shall notify students and their parents/guardians of the right to decline to participate in an education project involving the harmful or destructive use of animals. Notice shall be given not less than three (3) weeks prior to the scheduled course exercise which involves the use of animals.

A student requesting an alternative to dissection must follow the guidelines outlined below:

1. A letter signed by the student and parent/guardian requesting an alternative education project must be presented to the student's teacher at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled course exercise

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which involves the use of animals.

2. The student and his/her teacher shall meet to discuss an alternative education project to be completed in place of the dissection.
3. The student shall not be discriminated against based upon his/her decision to exercise the right of an alternate education project afforded the student. Lowering a grade because a student has chosen an alternate education project or test is strictly prohibited.

An alternative education project may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Observation of the dissection in lieu of the actual dissection work.
2. Use of diagrams and models instead of preserved specimens to complete written laboratory sheets.
3. Completion of supplementary reports on the anatomy and physiology of the specimens being studied.
4. Completion of other assignments as provided by the teacher which may include videotape programs, films, computer simulations, or activities from laboratory manuals.

The deadline for completion of the alternative education project shall be the same as the completion of the actual laboratory experience. The teacher shall use the grade on the alternative education project in place of the dissection grade.

Legal References:

1. SC 1523

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