

Williamson County Board of Education



Adopted Date:
8/20/01; Rev. 1/18/18

4.8011

DISSECTION

1 Animal dissection can be a vitally important hands-on activity to provide students in science with
2 visual, tactile experiences in studying the structure and function of the internal organs and systems
3 of animals. The Board approves and supports animal dissection within the following guidelines:
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- 5 1. No dissection involving actual animal specimen will be done by students below grade 7.
6 Note: inanimate models and/or audio-visual/computer-based software and/or teacher
7 demonstrations may be used.
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- 9 2. The Board recognizes that dissection can be an integral component of high school science
10 courses.
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- 12 3. Animal specimens for dissection will be limited to commercially available samples of
13 invertebrates (insects, worms), fishes, frogs, fetal pigs, cats, or animal organs. Prepared
14 specimen for demonstrations can be used and are not considered as dissection.
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- 16 4. The inclusion of dissection in a specific course will be noted in writing in the course
17 description available to parents and students in school program or curriculum
18 handbooks/guides or in other student handbooks or printed announcements provided to
19 parents and students prior to or at the beginning of the course.
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- 21 5. An individual student may request to be exempted from actual hands-on involvement in
22 animal dissection in Life Science and Biology I courses, according to the following
23 limitations:
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- 25 a. The request must be in writing within the first two weeks of the student's initial
26 attendance in the course, except in cases of allergic reactions.
27 b. Written documentation must be included with the request, explaining and
28 substantiating the request for the exemption. Requests for exemption must be
29 signed by the parent/guardian.
30 c. The request will be reviewed and approved (or rejected) in writing by the teacher of the
31 course, the department chairman, and the school principal within thirty days after the
32 student presents it to the teacher.
33 d. The only acceptable grounds for the approval of such an exemption will be at least one
34 of the following: (1) ethical or moral objection to the activity; (2) physical (health) allergy
35 to any substance involved in handling the specimen.
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- 37 **NOTE:** In advanced courses (i.e., Biology II and Anatomy/Physiology), dissection is
38 required, with NO exemptions.
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- 40 6. The Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools and a committee of high school
41 science teachers will develop a plan with specific procedures and materials for providing a
42 substitute laboratory activity of comparable difficulty for students approved for such an
43 exception under item #5 of this policy.
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