

REFUSAL TO HARM OR DESTROY ANIMALS

The Yolo County Board of Education and the Yolo County Office of Education support the right of students to refrain from participating in instruction which involves dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying animals when they have a moral objection to such activities.

Students shall not be discriminated against because of a decision to exercise this right. (Education Code 32255.1)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

After notifying the teacher of his/her objection pursuant to law and administrative regulations, the student shall be excused from the project and may be provided an appropriate alternative project. The County Office encourages staff, whenever possible, to provide an alternative project that teaches the same knowledge and skills as the original project. In any case, staff shall ensure the effective use of students' time by providing instructional activities relevant to the course of study.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32255-32255.6 Student's right to refrain from harmful/destructive use of animals

48980 Parental notification at beginning of term

48981-48984 Method and content of notification; signature required

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At the beginning of each academic year, the Yolo County Office of Education shall notify parents/guardians, in writing, of students' right to refrain from instruction involving harm or destruction of animals. (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 shall inform students of their right to refrain from the harmful or destructive use of animals. (Education Code 32255.4)

Students who wish to refrain from such instruction shall notify the teacher and shall provide a note from their parent/guardian substantiating the objection. (Education Code 32255.1)

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

If the teacher believes an adequate alternative project is possible, he/she may work with the student to develop and agree upon 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 video tapes, models, films, books and computers. The alternative project shall involve time and effort comparable to that required by the original project. (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 harmful or destructive use of animals. (Education Code 32255.1)

This right shall apply to all K-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)