

Students

REFUSAL TO HARM OR DESTROY ANIMALS

Any student who has a moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying animals shall have the right to refrain from participating in instruction which involves such activities and shall not be discriminated against because of a decision to exercise this right. (Education Code 32255.1)

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression)
(cf. 6142.93 – Science Instruction)

This right to refrain from instruction involving harmful or destructive use of animals 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)

At the beginning of each academic year, Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians, in writing, of students' right to refrain from instruction involving the harmful or destructive use 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)

A student who wishes to refrain from such instruction shall notify the teacher and shall provide a note from his/her parent/guardian substantiating the objection. (Education Code 32255.1)

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 recordings, 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)

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)

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