

**MOUNT PLEASANT COTTAGE SCHOOL UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
LETTER REGARDING NOTICE OF ANIMAL DISSECTION**

Date

Principal's Name

Name of School District

Street Address

City, NY Zip Code

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Observation and experimentation with living organisms in life science education, including hands-on dissection, gives students a unique perspective and opportunity to explore scientific concepts. Dissections are a recommended study method in some life science courses that may occur in our District Schools. Please be assured that all animal materials will be used respectfully and for the purpose of meeting course objectives.

However, we understand that students may have objections to the dissection of animals. New York State Education Law Section 809 requires that schools offer students who express a moral or religious objection to the performing or witnessing the dissection of an animal, either wholly or in part, have an opportunity to undertake and complete an alternative project that has been approved by the student's teacher. Therefore, students expressing either a sincere moral or religious objection to dissection may request an alternative activity by having their parents/guardians send a letter to my attention requesting alternative instruction to dissection.

In cases where students object to dissection, teachers will provide an alternative to actual dissection. This alternate activity will be related to and of comparable rigor to laboratory dissection. Some examples of alternate activities may include the use of computer simulations or research. Students who perform alternative projects will not be penalized.

Parents are encouraged to discuss this issue with their child. Moral or religious objections to the dissection of animals must be submitted to my office, in writing, prior to the beginning of the school year (or by specified date), so that an appropriate alternative activity may be planned for your child. If you have further questions regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

School Principal