

ALTERNATIVES TO BIOLOGICAL DISSECTION

The Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee recognizes that divergent opinions exist among parents and students regarding the appropriateness of using dissection as a means of achieving certain instructional goals in the biological sciences. Therefore, in order to ensure that legitimate objections to dissection are taken into account while at the same time protecting the integrity of the instructional program, the following procedure shall be observed:

- A. In instances where students and/or parents object to dissection on ethical or moral grounds, a written request, pursuant to the procedure developed under G. below, from the student and/or parents of the student wishing to be excused from dissection shall be submitted to the teacher in whose class the dissection is to occur. The request shall state the reasons for requesting that the student be excused from dissection. The team leader for the science department will make him/herself available to advise the students and/or parents in following the practiced outline in this policy;
- B. The teacher, in consultation with the Team Leader, shall review the request. (In instances where the Team Leader is the teacher to whom the request is submitted, he/she shall consult with the school principal.) Those reviewing the request may wish to schedule an interview with the parent(s) and/or student in order to gain information needed to reach a decision;
- C. If the request is approved, an alternative activity, closely related and/or comparable rigor, will be assigned in lieu of the laboratory dissection. The alternatives may include such activities as computer simulations and research;
- D. If the request is disapproved, the student and/or parent(s) may appeal the decision in accordance with the School Committee's policy on complaints about the curriculum or instructional program.
- E. The student will be responsible for and evaluated on the material covered in the alternative activity;
- F. The alternative activity will carry credit equivalent to the dissection activity; and
- G. The Superintendent will ensure that sufficient means are put in place to annually inform students and parents about the availability of alternatives to dissection and the procedure for requesting such alternatives.