**Humphrey, the Hamster**

**Our Class Pet Information and Permission Slip**



Dear Parents and Students,

 Over the years, we have had a few different pets in my classroom. This year we will again be having a hamster named **Humphrey,** who has been with us in namesake for several years. She is an adorable, lovable, and good-natured little hamster. She is named after the Humphrey book series by Betty G. Birney.

Classroom pets have many benefits:

**Pets Bring so Many New Ways to Learn**

Whether it’s Math (“How much does a hamster weigh?”) or Science, (“What does a hamster eat?”) or Grammar (“What words would we use to describe our pets?”), students will approach learning all these subjects with a new enthusiasm and interest.

**Pets Enrich the Classroom Experience**

Studies show:

• Even children with no exposure to animals or nature in their home environment can see, feel, touch and make connections to the wide world of animals.

• Observing and caring for an animal instills a sense of responsibility and respect for life.

• A pet brings increased sensitivity and awareness of the feelings and needs of others—both animals and humans.

• Kids learn that all living things need more than just food and water for survival.

• Students will see directly how their behavior and actions affect others.

• The presence of animals tends to lessen tension in the classroom.

 We take our children’s safety seriously. Humphrey has been to the veterinarian and she safe to be around children.

Throughout the school year each student will have the job of class “pet caregiver”. This student will be in charge of helping me care for Humphrey throughout the week in the classroom.

I will also need volunteers to bring Humphrey home over the weekends and holiday breaks to care for her. If you would like to **allow your child** to bring our hamster home over the weekend **please fill out the permission slip on the next page** and return it to school with your child.

As is the case with all pets, it is important to ensure proper handling and care. Although hamsters (especially Humphrey) are generally “kid-friendly” they may scratch or bite. It is important that the student take care not to let our hamster be bothered by other pets and younger children.

Because hamsters are in the rodent family and could be tempting for cats, please do not sign up to care for Humphrey if you have indoor cats at your home **unless** you can guarantee to take all precautions to protect her.

All necessary care items will be sent home with your child for the weekend you sign up for along with instructions for care.

**Weekend Care:**

• keep cage clean

• provide adequate water

• provide fresh food

**Classroom Pet Care Rules:**

• I will treat our class pets with kindness and respect.

• I will be gentle with our class pets.

• I will not do anything intentionally to our pet that will cause her to bite or scratch.

Most Sincerely,

Mrs. Sharon Stingley

3rd Grade Teacher

Northwoods Elementary

Pet Care Permission Slip…Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will properly care for our class pet at school and over the weekend.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will treat the class pet with kindness and respect.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be gentle with the class pet.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not do anything intentionally to our pet that will cause her to

 bite or scratch.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parents- Please check beside the appropriate boxes:

**At School Care:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I give permission for my child to assist their teacher in caring for the

class pets at school. I will not hold the teacher, school, or district responsible

if my child is injured in any way.

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO**, please **DO NOT** allow my child to handle the class pets.

**At Home Care:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I give permission for my child to care for the class pet over a weekend.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will help my child properly care for the class pet over the weekend.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not hold the teacher, school, or district responsible if my child is injured

in any way.

Please check only weekend dates that are **NOT** good for your family to hamster-sit:

O Friday, November 30

O Friday, December 7

O Friday, December 14

O Friday-Thursday, December 21-27

 (E.R. & first half of winter break)

O Thursday-Thursday, Dec 27-Jan 3

 (second half of winter break)

O Friday, January 4

O Friday, January 11

O Friday, September 28 (E.R.)

O Friday, October 5

O Friday, October 12

O Friday, October 19 (E.R.)

O Friday, October 26

O Friday, November 2

O Friday, November 9

O Friday, November 16

O Tuesday, November 20 (5 days)

Parent Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_