Use of Pesticides

Pests are controlled to protect the health and safety of students and staff, maintain a productive learning environment, and maintain the integrity of District buildings and grounds. While pesticides protect individuals and District property from pests that may be found in District buildings or on District grounds, the pesticides themselves may present some health and environmental hazards when used. Therefore, it is the intent of the Board to assure the development of integrated pest management procedures to provide for a responsible approach to control pest problems in District buildings and on District properties.

The term “pesticide” means any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pest.

The term “pest” means any living organism injurious to other living organisms, except humans, viruses, bacteria or other microorganisms in or on other living organisms other than plants, which is declared to be a pest pursuant to the New Mexico Pesticide Control Act, NMSA 1978, §§ 76-4-1 through 76-4-39.

The Superintendent, in consultation with the District Facilities Director and Nurse Coordinator, shall develop procedures for pest management with consideration for reducing the possible impact of pesticide use on human health and the environment, including people with special sensitivities to pesticides.

Procedures will include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. No pesticide may be applied to public school property and no pest control device, as defined in the New Mexico Pesticide Control Act, may be used on public school property except those pesticides and devices currently registered for legal use in the state by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.

B. No pesticide may be applied to public school property except by those persons certified in the applicable category and currently licensed by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture or by employees under their direct supervision.

C. Pesticides will only be applied in or on the outside of school buildings when a pest is present, and will not be applied on a regular or calendar basis unless it is to treat an infestation and is a part of a pest management system being implemented to address a particular target pest. A pest is considered to be present when it is observed directly or can reasonably be expected to be present based on finding evidence, such as droppings, body parts, or damage that is typically done by the pest. This section does not apply to pre-construction termite treatments or the use of outdoor herbicides.

D. Pesticides that are applied in a liquid, aerosolized or gaseous form through spraying, aerosol cans, bombs, fumigation or injections into the ground, foundation or plants will not be applied on public school property when students, staff or visitors are present, or may reasonably be expected to be present within 6 hours of the application.
In emergency cases, where a pest infestation threatens the health or safety of the occupants of public school property, and which requires the immediate application of a pesticide to remediate, students, staff and other school occupants will be removed from the treatment area prior to the application. Small amounts of gel or liquid pesticides applied to cracks and crevices or baits used to treat pest infestation are exempt from this use restriction.

E. At the beginning of each year, and when new students register, schools will develop a list of parents and guardians who wish to be notified prior to pesticide application during the school year. These parents/guardians will be notified in writing prior to pesticide application. General notification of anticipated pesticide applications will occur by posting or dissemination of notices, by oral communication or other means of communication. In emergency cases where a pest infestation threatens the health or safety of the occupants of public school property, no pre-notification is required. Immediately following the application of a pesticide in emergency cases, signs will be posted indicating the location where an application was made.

F. Written records of pesticide applications will be kept for three years at each school site and be available upon request to parents, guardians, students, teachers and staff.

G. If any part of this policy is found to be in conflict with the provisions of the Pesticide Control Act, the remainder of the policy will remain in full force and effect.

Rio Rancho Public Schools
Adopted: November 8, 2010