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## Funding for Classroom Pets and Therapy Dog Visits Available to Teachers

*Beginning August 1st, teachers can apply for grants to enrich student learning with classroom pets and therapy dogs.*

**FOREST HILL, Md. — June 7, 2024** - The [Pet Care Trust's Pets in the Classroom grant program](#) and Dogs in the Classroom program will be accepting applications for the 2024-2025 school year beginning August 1, 2024.

The Pets in the Classroom grant program, which was established by the Pet Care Trust, provides funding for a small animal or pet supplies to pre-kindergarten through 9th grade teachers in both private and public schools who desire to introduce a pet into the classroom or who already have a pet in the classroom. Interested teachers are invited to apply.

While classroom pets are a valuable teaching tool, many teachers have very limited resources for the support of classroom animals. Through the Pets in the Classroom grant program, teachers have the option of obtaining a pet from one of the program's participating retailers — Petco, Petsmart, Pet Supermarket, Pet Supplies Plus, and Petland — or of purchasing their pet from a local pet store through a rebate grant. Past grant recipients are not eligible to receive funding for a new classroom pet, but are welcome to apply for a sustaining grant, which provides up to \$50 to maintain an existing classroom pet or purchase another classroom pet. With different grant types available, each teacher has the opportunity to choose the grant that is right for him or her through a direct, no-hassle application on the Pets in the Classroom website ([www.PetsintheClassroom.org](http://www.PetsintheClassroom.org)).

The Dogs in the Classroom program, in partnership with Pet Partners and other leading national therapy dog organizations, strives to bring well-trained and thoroughly screened therapy animal teams to schools in an effort to improve the health and well-being of students. Both programs were established by the Pet Care Trust to provide children with an opportunity to interact with pets — an experience that can help to shape their lives for years to come.

In addition to grant funding, the Pets in the Classroom website offers a wealth of resources for teachers, including pet care sheets, informative articles, coloring sheets, and guidance on what to consider when getting a pet. The website also provides standards-based lessons with a significant focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). This resource is crafted to enrich the educational

experience by helping teachers integrate pets into their educational strategies, enhancing learning through interactive and hands-on experiences.

Studies indicate that classroom pets provide a variety of benefits to students. These studies reinforce thousands of teachers' experiences that classroom pets: aid in improving school attendance, encourage nurturing, build self-esteem, promote empathy, teach responsibility, stimulate learning, enrich the classroom experience, and become friends. One little pet can help shy kids open up, slower readers build confidence, rough children develop nurturing tendencies, and uninterested students gain a new desire for learning.

Since the program's inception in 2010, Pets in the Classroom has issued 246,704 grants. This means that an estimated 9.8 million children have experienced the joys and benefits of pet care through the program. As teachers look for more ways to support their students in the upcoming school year, the Pets in the Classroom grant program is ready to help by providing funding for classroom pets to pre-K – 9th grade teachers across the U.S. and Canada beginning August 1.

Learn more about the Pets in the Classroom grant program by visiting [www.PetsintheClassroom.org](http://www.PetsintheClassroom.org).