

Sarah Finnie
Principal
Tahayghen Elementary School

Dear Ms. Finnie:

I'm writing on behalf of PETA U.S.—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally, and PETA U.S. is the world's largest animal rights organization. We share the concerns of many parents whose children were exposed to traumatic and disturbing violence during a “science lesson” that apparently involved breaking the neck of a live rabbit and then dissecting the animal in front of horrified children.

While it's too late to help this rabbit—or to erase the violence that these students witnessed—TeachKind, PETA's humane education division, urges Tahayghen Elementary to ensure that nothing like this ever happens again by replacing animal dissection with superior, animal-free teaching methods. We would be happy to provide you with information on technology that would meet your needs and offer guidance on adopting new study methods for your classrooms.

Watching or participating in dissection—let alone seeing an animal be killed directly in front of them—is deeply traumatic for many students. Studies show that as many as 25% of secondary students object to dissecting animals. It can even deter some—particularly female students—from taking science classes and pursuing careers in biology or the medical field. No student should have to face the pressure of being asked to watch or participate in an activity that harms animals as part of their education.

Advanced, non-animal dissection methods—including interactive software programs such as The Digital Frog, eMind, and SynFrog, a hyper-realistic, dissectible frog model—are readily available and have every advantage over dissecting dead animals. Students who use these tools perform *better* in learning assessments than those who dissect animals, according to peer-reviewed literature. These methods make teachers' lives a little easier, too, by saving time and money: They require little to no setup or cleanup and no toxic chemicals, and—unlike dead animals—they can be used repeatedly.

Please, protect animals *and* vulnerable children from violence by switching to cruelty-free dissection methods. TeachKind would be happy to provide you with more information and help in any other way we can. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Samantha Suiter
Manager of Science Education

