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## Students Experience Joy through Classroom Pets in 2021-22 School Year

*The Pets in the Classroom grant program concludes another year of impacting education, helping teachers bring the joys and benefits of interacting with pets to their students.*

Millions of students have experienced the joys and benefits of companion animals in the school setting, thanks to the Pet Care Trust's [Pets in the Classroom grant program](#). The program, which offers grants from August 1<sup>st</sup> through June 1<sup>st</sup> every school year, has concluded its grant cycle for the 2021-22 school year by providing 19,100 grants to teachers to purchase and maintain classroom pets. Since the program's inception in 2010, Pets in the Classroom **has issued grants to 202,697 teachers, impacting over 8.1 million students** across the U.S. and Canada.

Pets in the Classroom provides funding for a small animal or pet supplies to pre-kindergarten through 9th grade teachers in both private and public schools. The program was established by the Pet Care Trust with the knowledge that, while pets are a valuable teaching tool, many teachers have very limited resources for the support of classroom animals. Of the grants awarded this school year, 49% have been awarded to teachers at Title 1 schools and 45% have been awarded to teachers who teach students with disabilities.



Especially in the last few years, teachers have been coping with students experiencing emotional and behavioral problems –anxiety, difficulty focusing, self-control problems, and more. Pets in the Classroom is one of the tools teachers have been able to utilize to give students emotional support during school, whether in-person or through remote learning.

[Studies](#) prove and thousands of shared teachers' experiences show the many benefits that pets can provide to students. Classroom pets have been a much-needed resource for students requiring social-emotional support — from children who were able to overcome anxiety, to those whose anger and behavioral issues subsided after a classroom pet helped them learn empathy, to those who needed extra encouragement in learning, and more. As teacher Emily Reeg stated, "I see struggling readers jump up and grab their book box when it is their turn to read to Estella [leopard gecko]. I see my quieter students take leadership roles when it is their turn to care for her. My class culture, as a whole, is very caring and peaceful and I attribute that to what we have learned having a class pet."

In addition to aiding teachers in providing the transformative power of classroom pets, Pets in the Classroom strives to be a resource to teachers through their website ([www.petsintheclassroom.org](http://www.petsintheclassroom.org)), which features over 300 lesson plans (including video lessons teachers can share with their classes), 12 animal care sheets, and a detailed chart containing an extensive list of animals, the recommended experience level, diet recommendations, etc. to guide teachers in deciding which type of classroom pet to get.

To learn more about the program, visit [www.petsintheclassroom.org](http://www.petsintheclassroom.org).