



March 1, 2022

Scott Frohlich, Principal
Harlan Community High School

Dear Mr. Frohlich:

I'm writing to you as a biologist, a parent, and an educator as well as on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals U.S.—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally—regarding a disturbing video recently posted by a presumed student of Harlan Community High School.

The [video](#) shows two students—one of whom is wearing an HC logo T-shirt—using a small fetal pig at the beginning stage of being dissected to dance to the popular TikTok song “Right Foot Creep.”

Behavior that makes light of the suffering and mutilation of animals is disturbing and cause for concern, particularly in the case of young people. This is not funny or “kids just being kids”—there is an [epidemic](#) of young people hurting animals, and the FBI has identified apathy toward animals as a red flag for potential future violence toward humans. As a parent of a teenager, I fully understand the serious implications of such conduct, and as an educator, I recognize that this behavior is at odds with national guidance on the treatment of animals in the classroom. For example, the National Science Teaching Association “encourages districts to ensure that animals are properly cared for and treated humanely, responsibly, and ethically” and advises teachers to “[d]evelop activities that promote observation and comparison skills that instill in students an appreciation for the value of life and the importance of caring for animals responsibly.” Similarly, the National Association of Biology Teachers states that “[b]iology teachers should foster a respect for life.” This video shows that animal dissection is not educational and clearly demonstrates a disrespect for the animals who are being cut apart at Harlan Community High School.

Dissecting animals is a crass, archaic practice that has not changed in a century. At a time when students are facing bullying, trauma, and numerous hardships that will affect them for the rest of their lives, we should be working hard to avoid reinforcing apathy for the plight of others. Beyond the misbehavior by students in the video, the bystander students look uncomfortable and likely understood that it was wrong. **We urge you to investigate the matter immediately and replace all animal dissection at your school with humane, non-animal methods.**

May I hear from you regarding this urgent matter and have your assurance that Harlan Community High School will end animal dissection? PETA would be pleased to send humane science materials such as SynFrog or digital dissection software to facilitate the switch, and we stand ready to help you implement humane science activities.

Sincerely,

Samantha Crowe, M.A.
Science Education Manager

cc: Dr. Jennifer Barnett, Superintendent, Harlan Community School District
James Reischl, President, Harlan Community Schools Board of Education

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)