

Animals in Schools**Policy 6214**

Animals may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes. However, they must be appropriately and humanely cared for, and properly handled. No staff member shall bring any animal (for this purpose animal shall include insects or any living thing such as a butterfly larvae or viable egg but not plants) onto school grounds or to a school sponsored activity or authorize any other individual to do so without the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Permission may be sought by completing the Request to Bring an Animal to School Form.

Administrative Guidelines

The Board of Education recognizes that under proper conditions, animals can be an effective teaching aid. The Board also recognizes that there are medical and physical concerns associated with animals, both wild and domesticated, in the classroom and/or on school property. The following guidelines are adopted regarding all animals (mammals, birds, reptiles/amphibians, fish, and insects) in the classroom or on school property.

All animals in the classroom or on school property will be treated in a humane fashion.

All requests to have animals in the classroom or on school property must be submitted to the principal in writing using the Request to Bring an Animal to School Form. The principal has the discretion to permit or deny the presence of animals. The principal will then forward the request to the Superintendent of his/her designee

Parents/guardians must be notified in writing prior to any activity involving animals

Students and teachers with allergies must receive special consideration before animals are brought into a school. Prior to any exposure to animals in school, the teacher should be aware of any condition such as allergies, which could be exacerbated by exposure to animals. Appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be accorded to protect the health of such individuals.

All requests to take field trips involving animals must be submitted to the principal in writing. In determining whether to grant the request, the principal shall be guided by the district policy on field trips and shall also take into consideration any known allergies among the students and the possible side effects of the planned exposure to animals.

No domesticated animals, including dogs, cats, ferrets, primates, or livestock, shall be allowed in schools unless proof of appropriate and/or current rabies vaccination and other appropriate immunization is provided.

No wild animals (e.g. skunks, raccoons, bats, groundhogs, monkeys, or fox etc.) shall be allowed unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animals (zookeeper, docents, veterinarians, etc.). Under no circumstances will students be allowed direct contact with these animals.

All animals brought for exhibit must be restrained by the owner/handler.

No poisonous animals are allowed unless brought in cages/containers that prevent contact with student and faculty.

Each teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students under his/her direction whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals in the school.

Animals will be allowed to be housed in classrooms only for a specified and appropriate educational purpose for the time necessary to achieve the educational goal.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide a plan of care for classroom housed animals including care on weekends and during emergency closure. No animals shall be housed at school unless the teacher involved is familiar with the appropriate care, feeding and handling of the animals.

Each teacher is responsible for the proper control of animals brought to the classroom for instructional purposes, including the effective protection of students. This includes keeping the animals in appropriate cages or containers for the protection of the animal and individuals.

No animals will be allowed free range in the facility.

Supervised handwashing for a minimum of twenty seconds with soap and water will be conducted by students after handling animals. Handwashing will be conducted immediately after the activity has ended and prior to any further school or classroom activity. Eating/drinking will not be allowed during the animal exhibition or during activities involving animals.

At no time should animals be transported by school bus.

The principal and parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible if an individual is bitten by an animal or any incident occurs which could have an adverse effect on physical or emotional health. The supervising teacher will complete a written report describing the incident.

Manchester Public Schools
Request to Bring an Animal to School

Submitted by: _____ Date of Request _____

Type of animal: _____ Date(s) animal in school _____

Note: The written request should be filed a minimum of 30 school days in advance of the date the animal is to be brought to school to ensure sufficient time for processing. Untimely requests may be denied without review.

Educational reason for bringing animal to school: _____

Who will be responsible for the animal in school? _____

Where in the school will the animal be located? _____

How long will the animal be in school? _____

If overnight or weekends, who will care for the animal during those times? _____

What interactions will there be between the animal and students or staff members? _____

Does the person bringing the animal own the animal and will the animal be returned to that person after the school visit? If not, what will happen to the animal? _____

Has a veterinarian approved this animal as safe to bring into the school environment in the circumstances described

in this report? If so, provide whether documentation of this review and approval.

Do you have proof of appropriate vaccinations of the animal? If so, please attach.

How will the animal be restrained or caged while on school grounds?

If the animal will be kept in the classroom, who care for the animal during the school year and thereafter? Where will the animal go on weekends and school breaks? Who will care for the animal outside of school hours?

Who will be responsible for feeding, care, and cleaning up after the animal during and outside of school hours?

Where and how will the animal's waste be deposited or disposed of? _____

What cost is the school expected to cover with regard to the animal such as purchase of food or supplies? _____

Note:

Animals in Classrooms

CT Department of Public Health

Environmental Health Section

Tools for Schools (TfS)

1-17-2108

- CT DPH generally discourages animals in the classroom, especially feathered, hairy or furred animals that produce dander, fur and other animal waste products.
- May cause asthma episodes/attacks or allergic reactions in some students and staff.
- Reptiles and fish are less of a concern although it is important to prevent bacterial infections like Salmonella.
- Suggest that animals may be kept in another area other than a classroom where students are allowed to visit.