

Live Animals on School Property

This policy addresses the presence of live animals, other than such service and/or emotional support animals as may be required by law, in the Bethany Public School District (District) classrooms and/or on school property. The Bethany Board of Education (Board) complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding the use of service and/or emotional support animals on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Board recognizes that there are concerns associated with animals, both wild and domesticated, in the classroom and/or on school property. The Board also recognizes that under proper conditions, animals can be an effective teaching aid. The following guidelines are adopted regarding all animals including but not limited to mammals, birds, reptiles/amphibians, fish, and insects, in the classroom or on school property.

- The Superintendent or designee has the discretion to permit or deny the presence of animals for reasons outlined in this policy or for other reasons as deemed appropriate.
- Animals will not be on school property for non-instructional purposes to be housed as pets, mascots, etc.
- All requests to have animals in the classroom or on school property must be submitted to the Principal in writing. Included in the request should be a description of the activity, type of animal, educational purpose or benefit, length of activity, and a plan for the care of the animal.
- Prior to introducing an animal to the classroom or on school property, consideration should be given to the identified needs of individuals with documented allergies and/or other conditions that may be impacted by the presence of live animals. Accommodations will be accorded to protect the health of such individuals, in accordance with law.
- Parents/guardians must be notified in writing prior to any activity involving animals.
- No domesticated animals, including dogs, cats, primates, or livestock shall be allowed in school or on school property unless proof of appropriate and/or current rabies vaccination is provided in advance. Any domesticated mammal that is too young to be immunized for rabies will not be allowed on school property.
- No wild animals such as skunks, raccoons, bats, groundhogs, monkeys, fox, or other dangerous animals shall be allowed unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animals such as zookeepers, docents, or veterinarians, etc.
- 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 students and faculty.
- Each teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students under the teacher's 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.

INSTRUCTION

6163.3(b)

- It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide a plan for care for classroom housed animals including care on weekends and during an emergency closure. No animals shall be housed at school unless the teacher involved is familiar with the appropriate care, feeding, and handling of the animal. All animal waste products must be cleaned from cages on a daily basis by an adult such as a teacher, assistant, volunteer, etc. Cages will not be cleaned by students and students will not have direct contact with animal waste products.
- Each teacher is responsible for the proper control of animals brought to the classroom for instructional purposes. This includes keeping the animals in appropriate cages or containers for the protection of the animal and individuals.
- No animals will be allowed on District property during the school day including thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the school day and thirty (30) minutes after the end of the school day.
- Supervised handwashing for a minimum of twenty (20) seconds with soap and water will be required for students after handling animals. Hand washing will be conducted immediately after the activity has ended and prior to any further school or classroom activity. Eating and/or drinking will not be allowed during the animal exhibition or during activities involving animals.
- No student will be required to handle an animal as part of an instructional activity.
- The school administration and parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible if an individual is bitten or stung by an animal or any incident occurs that could have an adverse effect on the physical or emotional health of any individual. The animal will be removed by handlers. The supervising teacher will complete a written report describing the incident.

Legal references: Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221
 Connecticut State Agencies Regulations § 26-55-6

Policy adopted: September 9, 1991
Policy revised: June 10, 2015
Policy revised: March 13, 2019
Policy revised: January 8, 2020
Policy revised: December 14, 2022

Source: CABE & BPSD