

**Regulation #5124
Animals in Schools**

The following guidelines are adopted regarding animals in school buildings or on school grounds. The guidelines set forth in this regulation do not apply to recognized service animals.

- All requests to have animals in the classroom or on school property must be submitted to the Principal or principal's designee in writing. Included in the request should be a description of the activity, type of animal, educational objective/benefit, length of activity, and a plan for the care of the animal. The Principal or principal's designee has the discretion to permit or deny a request at any time.
- Students and staff with allergies or immunodeficiencies must receive special consideration before animals are brought into a school. Prior to any exposure to animals in school, the teacher and principal should be aware of any medical or emotional condition which could be exacerbated by exposure to those animals. Appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be accorded to protect the health and well-being of such individuals.
- Parents/guardians must be notified in writing prior to any activity in which animals are directly involved with students. Passive animal displays, such as an aquarium or terrarium in a common area, are exceptions and do not require parental notification.
- Proper evidence of rabies immunization must be provided for any animal brought onto school grounds or into school buildings if the animal falls within the class of animals requiring the vaccine by state statute.
- Any animal brought to school must be appropriately contained by leash, cage or suitable carrier. No animals are allowed free range in any school facility. The Principal reserves the right to limit the presence of certain animals to exterior school grounds only.
- Animals are not allowed on school buses

Animals used in educational presentations

- No wild (non-domesticated) or protected animals will be purposely brought to school or grounds by anyone other than an authorized or licensed handler/unless under the control of an individual
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trained in the care and management of the animals and subject to the provided documents as detailed below:

- Exhibitor's license issued by the US Department of Agriculture (mammals only)
- An official interstate health certificate signed by a veterinarian and dated no earlier than 60 days prior to entry into Connecticut (mammals only)
- Permit from the DEEP Wildlife Division authorizing the exhibitor to import or possess a wild bird, wild mammal, reptile, amphibian or invertebrate (where applicable)
- List and description of the animals to be exhibited
- Exhibitor's written statement that describes how the animals will be exhibited, securely confined when not on display, and prevented from having direct contact with people or being approached by the public. Direct contact between animals and students will only be permitted if such contact is an integral part of the program's objectives and with prior written consent of the Principal and parents/guardians of students involved.

Animals in the classroom

- Animals will be allowed to be housed in the classroom only for a specified and appropriate educational purpose for the time necessary to achieve the educational goal. The staff member must receive written approval from the Superintendent and building principal prior to housing any animal in the classroom.
 - The following animals shall not be kept in the classroom under any circumstance: Bats, Parrots, parakeets and other psittacine birds, Red-eared turtles, skunks, ferrets, raccoons, poisonous animals or insects, and insects that sting or bite.
 - The Superintendent reserves the right to reject any and all requests to house an animal in a school building.
 - Animals residing in the classroom shall not be sent home with students during weekends or holidays.
 - The staff member is responsible for developing a plan for the food, housing and general comfort of an animal before it is brought into the classroom.
 - The staff member is responsible for ensuring the animal housing is kept in a clean, sanitary condition, free of odor.
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- Teachers must emphasize hand-washing with soap and water by students (and staff) immediately after handling animals and prior to any further school or classroom activity. Eating/drinking will not be allowed during activities involving animals.

Deceased Animals

- Non-living animals may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes such as artistic study or scientific observation or dissection. Care should be taken to observe strict hand-washing protocols or scientific procedures to prevent any contact with zoonotic diseases.