

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

The Board recognizes that having animals in the classroom can offer valuable student learning experiences but is also concerned with the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and the humane treatment of animals when they are brought to school.

For the purpose of this policy “animals” includes mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, insects, and fish.

- A. Animals may not be brought on to school grounds either during the school day or for an afterschool activity without obtaining prior permission from the building principal. If students need to bring domesticated animals (pets) to school for educational purposes, they must have their teacher request permission from the principal. Animals may not be transported in school vehicles.
- B. No pets will be allowed in school unless proof of current rabies vaccination (if appropriate) is provided. Those that must have proof of current rabies vaccination are cats, dogs, ferrets, cows, horses, and sheep.
- C. No wild animals will be allowed on school grounds unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animal and properly licensed by State or federal agencies as appropriate (i.e., zoo keepers, veterinarians, biologist). Students will not be permitted to handle wild animals.
- D. All animals brought to school must be restrained by the owner/handler. The teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals in school.
- E. If a student is bitten/injured by an animal on school premises, the Principal/designee, school nurse, and parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible. If a staff member or visitor is bitten/injured, the Principal/designee must be notified. The Principal/designee must notify appropriate public health authorities including the Maine Department of Human Services and the Bureau of Health, of each incident.
- F. If a stray wild animal appears on school grounds, children shall not be allowed in the area until the animal has left the premises or is removed by the local animal control officer, game warden or other appropriate official.
- G. Animals kept in classrooms must be housed in appropriate containers and cared for in a safe and humane manner. Only the teacher or students designated by the teacher are to handle these animals. If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, arrangements must be made for their adequate care at all times.

POLICY: IMG

H. No live animals may be used as part of a scientific experiment or for any other purpose where the normal health of the animal is interfered with or where pain or distress is caused. No person may practice vivisection or exhibit a vivisected animal in the schools. Dissection of dead animals shall be confined to the classroom under the supervision of a teacher, for scientific study involving dissection and shall not be for the purpose of exhibition.

Legal Reference: 7 MRSA § 3971
22 MRSA §§ 801-825

First Reading: December 11, 2108
Second Reading: January 22, 2019
Adopted: January 22, 2019