

6141.4/Responsible Use of Animals in the Classroom

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **6000**
CATEGORY: **Instruction**
POLICY CODE: **6141.4/Responsible Use of
Animals in the Classroom**

RESPONSIBLE USE OF ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

Policy Statement

The Board of Education encourages the observation of and the experimentation with living organisms in order to give students unique perspectives of life processes that are not provided by other modes of instruction. Studying animals in the classroom enables students to develop skills of observation and comparison, a sense of stewardship, and an appreciation for the unity, interrelationships, and complexity of life. This study, however, requires appropriate, humane care of the organism.

Carefully developed dissection laboratories can lead to an increased appreciation of living things. Such activities demonstrate the complexity of organisms and highlight the structures and processes that interrelate living things. These activities can promote and support substantive understanding of the structures, functions, and classifications of organisms.

It is understood that there are individuals who have personal beliefs opposed to dissection. Those who teach and promote the teaching of science need to be sensitive to the view of students and their rights to their beliefs.

Adopted: 7/28/1992
Revised: 7/16/2002, 7/11/2017

References

- National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). "Position Statement on Responsible Use of Live Animals and Dissection in the Science Classroom." NSTA, March 2008.
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6144.1: Exemption of Students from Instruction

Regulations

I. Live Animals

Teachers are expected to be knowledgeable about the proper care of organisms under study and the safety of their students and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Animals to be maintained in the classroom must be obtained from and certified as healthy by licensed animal suppliers.
- Acquisition and care of animals must be appropriate to the species.
- Student classwork and science projects involving animals must be under the supervision of a science teacher or other trained professional.
- Teachers sponsoring or supervising the use of animals in instructional activities, including acquisition, care, and disposition, will adhere to local, state, and national laws, policies, and regulations regarding the organisms.
- Teachers must instruct students on safety precautions for handling live animals and establish a plan for addressing such issues as allergies and fear of animals.
- Plans for the future care or disposition of animals at the conclusion of the study, as well as during school breaks and summer vacations, must be developed and implemented.
- Laboratory activities must be conducted with consideration and appreciation for the organisms.
- Laboratory activities must be based on carefully planned objectives consistent with the Board-approved curriculum guide for the course of study.
- Laboratory activities must be appropriate to the maturity level of the student.
- All animal bites, stings, or scratches shall be reported immediately to the school nurse and school principal, and a local health authority should be consulted for advice. The student's teacher shall inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the injury and complete a student accident report form.

II. Restrictions

- Any animal causing an allergic reaction in a student or staff member must be removed from the classroom or, if necessary, from the building.
- Venomous or vicious animals or known carriers of the rabies virus are prohibited.
- Birds shall not be kept in schools unless they have been tested and certified as psittacosis-free.
- Known carriers of salmonella shall not be kept in schools unless the supplier provides written documentation that the animal is salmonella-free.

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- Wild animals shall not be brought into schools unless they are under the direct supervision of a trained representative of a conservation agency or public zoo.

III. Dissection of Preserved Specimens

Dissection activities must be conducted with respect and appreciation for the organism in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Dissection activities must be carefully developed and implemented to align specific teaching objectives with the student's maturity level.
- Specimens for dissection activities will be selected from domesticated species, commercially raised and prepared for such purposes.
- Dissection activities must be conducted in a clean and organized workspace using proper laboratory procedures and equipment within an appropriate physical environment with the proper ventilation, lighting, furniture, and equipment, including hot water and soap for cleanup.
- Personal safety protective equipment, such as gloves, chemical splash goggles, and aprons, should be available and used by students, teachers, and visitors to the classroom during dissection activities.
- The teacher should address such issues as allergies and squeamishness about dealing with animal specimens.
- The teacher must ensure that sharp instruments, such as scissors, scalpels, and other tools, are used safely and appropriately.
- The disposal of all animal tissue remains must be carried out using appropriate hygienic procedures.