

October 15, 2008

Chad Weiden, Assistant Principal
Social Justice High School

One page via e-mail

Dear Mr. Weiden:

On behalf of PETA and our more than 2 million members and supporters, congratulations on the upcoming opening of Social Justice High School—Pride Campus. As an openly gay man myself, I recognize that you are in a unique position to demonstrate the importance and value of thinking critically about our choices and interactions with traditionally oppressed groups. That's why I hope that you will take it a step further and embrace this opportunity by offering only vegetarian fare at the new Pride Campus.

It is only because of prejudice that animals killed for food on today's factory farms suffer miserable lives and nightmarish deaths. Their feelings are entirely discounted, even though they experience fear, love, grief, joy, and pain, just as all of us do. They are torn from their families and denied every natural urge, forced to live in cramped, filthy warehouses for their entire lives. They will never feel the warmth of the sun on their backs, smell fresh air, or play. Believe it or not, in our "enlightened society," chickens and turkeys' throats are cut while they are still conscious, and they are often scalded to death in defeathering tanks. Pigs' tails and testicles are cut off without any painkillers. When fish are dragged from the ocean depths, they undergo decompression—which causes their internal organs to rupture—before they suffocate.

Leaders of social justice movements have historically recognized that the liberation of one oppressed group is linked to the liberation of other groups. Steven Simmons, a PETA staffer and gay rights activist who died of AIDS back in the mid '90s, wrote, "It's time for us to end this hierarchy of who has the right to live, who deserves not to suffer, who should be respected, [the idea] that there's a limit to the amount of compassion that we can have for our fellow creatures." As you urge your school's students to embrace each unique individual, won't you also please encourage them to have compassion for today's most vulnerable group—animals?

We would be happy to arrange for a professional chef who has worked with major corporations to give your cafeteria staff free consultations on how to prepare tasty, healthy, and humane vegetarian meals. Thank you for your consideration. We wish you every success.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M McGraw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "M" being particularly large and stylized.

Michael McGraw
Director of Media Relations