

RELIGION AND THE SCHOOL

The District protects and supports the right of each individual to personal religious and ethical development, but prohibits the promotion of any specific religion.

The curriculum includes the study of religions and the impact of religious beliefs and practices in literature, history and the arts. Consideration of religious ideas and ideals as moral and ethical forces in our culture and in formulating personal values also is included in the curriculum, as is the constitutional guarantee for free exercise of religious beliefs.

Some specific implications of these commitments are as follows:

1. Discussion or study dealing with the recognition of religious holidays is appropriate when it builds common understanding and respect. Material or curriculum should not be presented in the context of religious celebrations. Religious celebrations are defined as worship or religious services of any kind, religious exhibits, and the presentation of religious music or religious symbols primarily for devotional purposes.
2. Use of religious materials or displays is appropriate when it is integral to a subject in the curriculum or related to the study of religions.
3. Music and art with a religious text or of a religious origin comprises a substantial portion of literature. The presentation of religious music and art primarily for its content, literary importance or historical value is appropriate. The presentation of this music should not be made under circumstances which might reasonably suggest it is being offered for devotional purposes or as a religious celebration. When music teachers select religious or seasonal music for study or performance, careful consideration and scrutiny should be given to lyrics, the age of the performers and the religious beliefs, practices and traditions of other faiths.
4. Acknowledgement of major religious holidays is appropriate when scheduling instruction and district activities, with the object that students and staff not be required to choose between participation in school activities and celebration of religious holidays. The student shall not be penalized.
5. Teaching about the impact of religious practices and beliefs, both in our society and in the lives of individuals, is appropriate when it fosters mutual understanding, respect for the values and beliefs of others, and knowledge about religions and religious practices.
6. On recognized religious holy days when school is in session, instruction may continue as usual.

Adopted: February 25, 2009

Reaffirmed: January 23, 2013

Reaffirmed: April 6, 2016